

AN EVALUATION OF THE UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC
LEAGUE AIMS AND ACTIVITIES IN THE CONFERENCE
B ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF JOHNSON COUNTY
TEXAS, FOR THE YEAR 1947-1948

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The problem is to study the aims of the University Interscholastic League of Texas and evaluate them in the light of the aims of education as set up by authorities in the fields of education and to study the present method of conducting the League activities in Johnson County and evaluate the activities in the light of the aims of education and the data obtained from superintendents in the Conference B schools of Johnson County.

Method of Procedure

The method of conducting this study has been to consult authorities, through research, in the field of education to obtain a criteria for evaluating the League's aims and activities.

Then a study was made of Interscholastic League publications to learn the plan for conducting the League's activities and the objectives that are sought through them.

Questionnaires were taken to superintendents in Johnson County and conferences were held with them to secure information as to how these schools prepare for and carry on the League activities and what these educators think is desirable or undesirable in the League and why.

Definition of Terms

The terms to be used in this study are defined to give clarity to their use. The term League is synonymous with The University Interscholastic League of Texas, and the term "Leaguer" is synonymous with "Interscholastic Leaguer", which is the official newspaper of the League. The term Constitution and Rules refers to The Constitution and Rules of the University Interscholastic League. The term "meet" means the gathering together of pupils for the purpose of engaging in scheduled contests. An "event" is a part of a contest. For instance, track and field is a contest made up of six events for the grade school.

Limitations of This Study

This study is confined to the League activities in the elementary school, and especially to the League activities of the elementary schools of Johnson County for the school year of 1947-1948. It includes research reading to determine League aims and to evaluate these aims. The League activities are also evaluated in the light of a selected criteria from data obtained through personal interviews with superintendents of Johnson County Conference B. schools. These data are in the form of information concerning the League program in Johnson County schools for 1947-1948 and a survey of opinions obtained from these superintendents concerning the value of the League activities in their schools.

No attempt is made to evaluate the activities from the elementary teachers' point of view or from elementary pupils' point of view, except in the way that these points of views are reflected in the thinking of the superintendents and in the actual information obtained from them.

Only the Conference B schools of Johnson County are studied.

Related Studies

In 1927, Roy Bedichek made a study of interscholastic non-athletic contests. His treatment was limited to six specific contests sponsored by the League. He did not include a study of the organization and administration of the various units of the League, except from the standpoint of local school organization preparatory to the competitive eliminations.¹

In 1935, P. C. Stanley made a study of the organization and control of high school interscholastic athletics. In his study he made an analysis of the constitution and by-laws and rules and regulations of the state high school interscholastic athletic associations of the forty-eight

¹Dupre, Charles Albert, The University Interscholastic League: A Survey of Its Organization and Administration, p. 15, citing Roy Bedichek, "Interscholastic Non-Athletic Contests," (Unpublished Master's thesis of the University of Texas, 1927), pp. 1-37.

states. His study was confined to the athletic contests in the various states.²

In 1935, P. L. Whitton developed the history of the University Interscholastic League. His study was limited to the historical development of the League, and no attempt was made to evaluate the 1935 organization and administration of the League.³

In 1936, Charles Albert Dupre made a critical survey of the organization and administration of the League to determine its contribution to the education of pupils. No attempt was made in his thesis to evaluate the individual contests held at the various meets.⁴

In 1938, Lee Edwin Simpson made a survey to determine the educational value of the League to the school child in Texas in relation to the expenditure of time and means. He did not attempt to present an educational plan for the League, but showed conditions of the League set-up at that time and drew certain conclusions from them. His study was limited to a period of ten years beginning with 1927 and extending through 1936.⁵

²Ibid., p. 14, citing P. C. Stanley, "Organization and Control of High School Interscholastic Athletics," (Unpublished Master's thesis of the University of Texas, 1933), pp. 1-12.

³Ibid., p. 15, citing P. L. Whitton, "History of the Interscholastic League in Texas," (Unpublished Master's thesis of the University of Texas, 1935), pp. 1-26.

⁴Ibid., pp. 12-14.

⁵Lee Edwin Simpson, "Survey of Practices and Procedures of the Administration of the University Interscholastic League of Texas to Determine the Educational Value of Such Procedures," (Unpublished Master's thesis of North Texas State Teachers College, 1938), p. vi.

In 1940, Hubert W. Deane made an evaluation of the University Interscholastic League in which he studied the reaction of school administrators in State Supervisory District No. 1 of Texas as to whether or not the League meets the requirements for an extra-curricular activity and whether or not the League is a desirable and worthwhile activity for students to engage in, in connection with their school work and activities. This study included all the activities of the League except football and basketball, and was limited to the reactions of administrators of the districts in State Supervisory District No. 1, which at that time consisted of twenty-four Panhandle counties.

Deane concluded, among other things, that there is a general opinion that the League costs too much in time and money for the value derived by the students, that emphasis seemed to be placed on winning the contest at the cost of character building, that a plan might be worked out for a field day or play day which would eliminate the animosity and jealousy between schools and students caused by county championships, that there is a general feeling that a few individuals are getting specialized training while a large percent of the student body receives little or no training.⁶

⁶
Abstracts of Master's Theses 1932-1935, The West Texas State Teachers College, Bulletin No. 114, (August, 1944), pp. 57-58.

Also in 1940, Escoe Lamar Webb made an analysis of the League activities in the elementary schools of Texas in the light of modern objectives of education. He evaluated the reaction of elementary school teachers and principals in activities as they affect children, teachers, and the community. He concluded from his study that the activities of the League do not meet modern objectives of education and recommended that elementary schools discontinue the League's program of contests and adopt a play day in its place.⁷

In 1941, C. Odell Head made a study of the University Interscholastic League in the accredited schools of Supervisory District No. 2 of Texas. He studied the method then current of conducting League contests and evaluated these contests by obtaining data from administrators, patrons, and students in Supervisory District No. 2.

Among other things, Head found that administrators in the district studied seemed to believe that it would be wise to discontinue League Contests, but patrons and students did not believe such a course to be wise.⁸

⁷ Escoe Lamar Webb, "Analysis of the Interscholastic League Activities in the Elementary Schools of Texas," (Unpublished Master's thesis of North Texas State Teachers College, 1940), p. 57.

⁸ Abstracts of Master's Theses, 1932-1944, The West Texas State Teachers College, Bulletin No. 114, (August, 1944), p. 72.

In 1943, Margaret Jones Frisby made an evaluation of the declamation contest as an educational procedure. No other contest was treated in her thesis.⁹

Source of Data

The data for this study have been secured from a variety of sources. Personal interviews were held with all the superintendents of Johnson County Conference B schools. In these interviews information was secured, through a questionnaire, as to how the schools prepare for the contests, how much time was spent in the preparation, how many pupils participated as compared with the total grade school enrollment, and what the superintendents believed to be desirable or undesirable in the League program.

Information concerning the League, its aim and its plan, was secured from The Constitution and Rules of the University Interscholastic League, Bulletin No. 4727 (July 15, 1947); The Interscholastic Leaguer, Volume XXXI, (February, 1948); and from the University of Texas publication by Charles Albert Dupre, The University Interscholastic League: A Survey of Its Organization and Administration, Bulletin No. 3632, (August 22, 1936).

⁹Margaret Jones Frisby, "An Evaluation of the Declamation Contest as an Educational Procedure," (Unpublished Master's thesis of the North Texas State Teachers College, August, 1943), p. 1.

Other source materials used in this study are:

The Curriculum of Democratic Education; ¹⁰ Integration, Its Meaning and Application; ¹¹ Group Education for a Democracy; ¹² Elementary Suggestive Outline, Texas State Department of Education, Bulletin No. 451, (1944); and Course of Study for Years One through Three, Texas State Department of Education, Bulletin No. 391, (1938).

¹⁰ Charles C. Peters, The Curriculum of Democratic Education.

¹¹ Thomas L. Hopkins, Integration, Its Meaning and Application.

¹² William Heard Kilpatrick, Group Education for a Democracy.

CHAPTER II

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE AIMS AND THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY INTER- SCHOLASTIC LEAGUE

There have been a great many ideas advanced in recent years concerning the aims and objectives of education. It is not the purpose of this writing to set forth these ideas. Rather it is an attempt to summarize the most prevalent and the most valid of these philosophies, so that a criteria for evaluating the University Interscholastic League aims and activities may be obtained.

A Philosophy of Education

The essence of the new philosophy of education can be found in one sentence, "We learn to live by living."¹ This philosophy embodies a far different idea than that contained in the traditional subject-matter-to-be-memorized idea, but even before the modern trends in education began to appear, even before this idea was formulated into words this philosophy was a workable one. We have always learned to live by living; we have always learned to do by doing. Yet we do not principally learn with reference to the future, but we principally learn with reference to that which is immediately

¹Charles C. Peters, The Curriculum of Democratic Education, p. 8.

at hand.² Still the experience at hand greatly affects experiences to come. We prepare for a happy and effective day tomorrow by living happily and effectively today.

"The process of education consists in the practice of doing, which makes future doings of the same type more competent because effective responses have been pre-practiced for them."³ This doing consists of more than overt actions. It includes vicarious experiences that one has when he reads or watches others do something. It includes thinking, for thinking is merely tracing in imagination the expected sequence of events that will come from the proposed line of action.⁴

So doing can be an activity of the mind or the body, and certainly any intelligent action is of both. And it is intelligent doing to and through which the school should attempt to guide its pupils - intelligent action today that looks forward to better living tomorrow.

Franklin Bobbitt says that:

The purpose of education is to bring each human being to live, as nearly as practicable, in everything that he does in the way that is best for him. The method of education is for each individual to carry on all his activities all the time, as far as possible, in the way that is best for one of his nature, age, and situation. In the education of any person, the good life is both the objective and the process --

²William Heard Kilpatrick, Group Education for a Democracy, p. 67.

³Peters, op. cit., p. 14.

⁴Ibid.

to live rightly each day is the best possible way to learn how to live rightly each succeeding day."⁵

To live rightly each day involves thinking and "there is no higher obligation than to so educate a child that increasingly, he can and will think for himself reliably and ethically."⁶

Hopkins speaks of intelligent behavior as integration.

He says that:

Integration is a shorthand word used to designate intelligent behavior. Each individual is born into a culture composed of a great variety of aspects - economic, aesthetic, physical, religious, and the like-all of which are more or less complex and inter-related. In developing to maturity and old age, his life is conditioned by his growth needs and the accumulated experience of the culture in meeting these needs. This means that the culture affects him and he in turn affects the culture. Or, in other words, he is constantly in the process of interacting with his environment. . . . Since life is an ongoing process, and since education is concerned with the improvement of life and living, it would seem that education must be concerned with improving the ongoing, interacting, adjusting process. . . . From the educational viewpoint then, integration must be the shorthand word to describe the process involved in this intelligent ongoing, interacting, adjusting behavior."⁷

⁵John Franklin Bobbitt, The Curriculum of Modern Education, p. 5.

⁶Kilpatrick, op. cit., p. 168.

⁷Thomas L. Hopkins, Integration, Its Meaning and Application, pp. 1-2.

Effect of Modern Educational Philosophy
on Curriculum Construction

With the shift from emphasis on subject-matter teaching to an emphasis on improvement of life and living, curriculum planning has undergone drastic changes. These changes have taken on a variety of forms.

The correlated curriculum.--The correlated curriculum is one which relates one subject to another in its teaching procedure and is only a step away from the traditional subject-matter method.⁸

The broad-fields curriculum.--The broad fields curriculum is made up of a few broad fields rather than a large number of small subjects, and affords greater pupil and teacher control of the teaching and learning situations than does the correlated curriculum.⁹

The core curriculum.--The term core curriculum has been used to describe a variety of curricula. In some cases it has been used to describe a curriculum requiring certain subjects of everyone but allowing some variability of content and activities within the subjects to meet the varying needs of individuals.¹⁰

Sometimes it has been used to describe the correlation or integration of broad fields. This correlation may be done in

⁸ Ibid., p. 201.

⁹ Ibid., p. 210.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 237.

three ways. First, unification may be made by relating the broad fields to certain generalizations or understandings growing out of the content of all the fields.

Second, unification may come by relating the content of the broad fields to some ultimate goal, such as the cardinal objectives of education.

Third, a unification may come by relating each field to goals arising out of the child's present needs, both immediate and future. With this last plan, teachers and pupils have freedom in determining their needs and how they shall be met within certain general limitations.¹¹

The schools in Houston, Texas furnish a good example of this last plan. There, integration is defined in terms of the child rather than in terms of subject matter, and the curriculum is considered to be a means toward the end of aiding the child in becoming better integrated with his special environment.¹²

The experience curriculum.---Perhaps the experience curriculum is one of the most desirable deviations from the traditional subject matter curriculum. It is a series of purposeful experiences growing out of pupil interests and moving toward a more adequate understanding and participation in the surrounding culture and group life.¹³

¹¹Ibid., p. 238.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., p. 253.

It is a curriculum which is in harmony with the philosophy that education is concerned with the improvement of life and living, and has basic principles which are worthy of mention here. The experience curriculum is built on the assumption that (1) learning takes place best when the child himself is dealing intelligently with the situations he meets in his environment, (2) that pupils and teachers should cooperate under teacher guidance in the selection, development, and direction of the experience, (3) that the true guide should bring into the learning situation an integrating personality, a varied and intelligent interaction with the culture, an understanding of the process whereby children become more intelligent in their interactions with culture, and a capacity, desire and realization of continued growth, (4) that the direction involved in the learning process is toward a more intelligent participation in the environment in which the child is located, (5) that the experience curriculum usually begins with a clarification of philosophy, (6) that the experience curriculum is centered in the interactive process and is directed toward making that more intelligent for all individuals concerned, (7) that since the curriculum is planned for growth development and improvement in the life and living of all individuals concerned, the curriculum must be ever changing.¹⁴

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 253-259.

The experience curriculum has not been put into practice in its entirety in any one school because of certain limitations in school situations, but there is an unlimited number of schools all over America operating effectively part of the time with another plan.¹⁵

Hopkins believes that the experience curriculum offers the greatest possibilities for meeting the integrating needs of pupils and teachers,¹⁶ and the influence of this philosophy of education can be seen in recent revisions of courses of study all over the country, even though the experience curriculum has not been adopted in its entirety.

Guiding Principles of the Texas Curriculum
Revision Movement of 1938

The Texas Curriculum Revision Movement of 1938 has set forth six guiding principles for curriculum development that are in harmony with the philosophy of the experience curriculum. They are as follows:

1. The curriculum shall provide educative experiences adapted to the fundamental needs of each child of whatever race, type, or mental aptitude.
2. The curriculum shall provide educative experiences for effective participation in social life and which will serve to perpetuate and improve the ideals and practices of our democratic society.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 259.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 274.

3. The curriculum shall be conceived as a body of dynamic experiences.
4. The curriculum shall be conceived as a program of study and activity subject to teacher guidance.
5. The curriculum revisions program shall be conceived as an experimental program.
6. The curriculum shall not be subverted to special interests.¹⁷

The six guiding principles might be stated in six terms:

1. Individuation
2. Socialization
3. Dynamic teaching
4. Teacher guidance
5. Experimentation
6. Democratic construction

As with any group of guiding principles, there is an evident overlapping in these just stated. For instance, democratic construction would necessarily involve individuation and socialization.

The course of study that resulted from the Texas Curriculum Movement in 1938 fused subject matter into units of work, large centers of interest, or areas of experience. These units represent important aspects of life and use as needed the subject matter usually classified as history, geography, civics, and other studies.

Certain skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics are considered necessary tools of work and together with music, art, health, homemaking, and dramatics are to

¹⁷ Course of Study for Years One Through Three, Texas State Department of Education, Bulletin No. 391, (1938), p. 11.

provide pupils with a means of giving expression to the social insights and appreciations acquired.¹⁸

The course of study for grades one through three does not prescribe in detail the method to be followed or the material to be covered. Suggestions and materials are provided which should help the teacher, but the teacher is allowed to go outside the list when she is able to provide more suitable experiences for her pupils. The sample units are provided for illustrative purposes, and are not meant to be standards, or to be used in any definite order. The program is flexible and suggestive, and is provided as an aid to Texas teachers in meeting the needs of their particular situations. In the unified program there is to be a merging of subjects and the child's school day is not to be broken into disintegrated parts.¹⁹

Revision of Texas Course of Study
in 1944

As stated in the guiding principles for curriculum planning, the course of study published in 1938 was experimented, and in 1944 another bulletin was published by the Texas State Department of Education under the direction of Edgar Ellen Wilson, Director of Elementary Education, which is an Elementary Education Suggestive Outline. This issue is a revised edition of the tentative outline previously

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 12-13.

published, and contains in the single bulletin an outline of the courses of study for all the elementary school. Its courses of study are organized on the same general plan as the courses outlined in the 1938 edition. It is a five-core area plan with related subjects under each area, and the five core areas are related. It is suggested that in the development of a unit, subjects listed under each core area may be used.

In explaining the five core area the bulletin states that:

"The general curriculum pattern for Texas emphasizes the five most important fields of educational opportunity. It is truly dynamic and life-centered. The five core area includes the most significant aspects of modern civilization and hold the most in prospect for the growing individual. The field of Language Arts marks the step that differentiates human life from all other animal kind and provides the basic medium for all human understanding and cultural progress. The field of Social Relations, just now coming into its own as a field of study, marks the bounds of cooperative endeavor and opens the road to rational control of community life or social endeavor. Security and success in the Home and Vocation are essential to individual welfare and to social stability. The field of Creative and Recreative Arts mark the acme of individual development in which health, character, individuality, and self-expression not only make the most of man but also contribute the most to society. The command and appreciation of Nature, Mathematics, and Science with the accompanying freedom from want, fear, superstition, disease, and ignorance unfetter the human mind and give man both mastery of and respect for the physical environment in which he lives.²⁰

²⁰ Elementary Education Suggestive Outline, Texas State Department of Education, Bulletin No. 451, (1944), pp. 27-28.

An examination of the foregoing explanations of the core area reveals that the guiding principles were basically the same as those used in the 1938 tentative course of study.

The purpose of the foregoing summary of educational philosophy, the purpose of the statement of the guiding principles for curriculum development and the discussion of the tentative courses of study of 1938 for the Texas schools and the revised edition for 1944 has been that criteria may be found for evaluating the aims and activities of the Interscholastic League as they are carried on at the present time in the schools of Johnson County.

Criteria for Evaluating the Aims of the University Interscholastic League

Since the guiding principles of the Texas Curriculum Revision Movement are in harmony with the philosophy of education; as set forth by authorities in the field of education; since the State Curriculum Executive Committee was made up of competent educators in the state of Texas,²¹ and since the committee employed the services of teachers over the state to assist in the preparation of this course of study, it is concluded that the guiding principles for

²¹The Texas State Curriculum Executive Committee of 1938 was composed of W. A. Stigler, Director, and Chairman, J. C. Matthews, North Texas State Teachers College, R. H. Brister, President of T.S.T.A., H. D. Fillers, E.S.T.A. Curriculum Commission, and Fred C. Ayers, General Consultant. Course of Study for Years One through Three, Texas State Department of Education, Bulletin No. 391, (1938), p. 1.

curriculum revision will make a sound criteria for evaluating the aims and activities of the Interscholastic League.

Since the League is a part of the school program it should be guided by the same principles, its activities should contribute to the same end product, that the school aims to reach.

So, restating the principles used in formulating the present courses of study for the State of Texas, the League aims can be evaluated by answering the following question:

1. Does the League aim to provide educative experiences that are adapted to the fundamental needs of the child?

This criterion will necessarily overlap with other criteria to follow but a generalized criterion of fundamental needs, for the sake of clarity, requires some explanation here.

Kilpatrick says that the inclusive aim of education cannot be split up into a number of separate items with each one to be sought by itself, because the child is one and he is learning all the ways he is reacting, but that as we consider the future lives of our pupils we can, at least roughly, recognize some learnings that are more important than others.²² Kilpatrick's lists of these more important learnings are given here:

(a) The emotional attitudes that make up the well-adjusted personality: the sense of inner security, an

²²

Kilpatrick, op. cit., pp. 102-103.

acceptable recognition among one's fellows, the ability and disposition to face reality without evasion, absence of hurtful inferiority complexes and the like. (Kilpatrick says that no other learning got at the expense of these can be justified.)

(b) Physical health.

(c) Ability to get on well with other people, to be able and disposed to treat other courteously and justly, to be able to share in discussion and come to conclusions, to be able and disposed to cooperate effectively in action.

(d) Appreciation and understanding of current social life in order to be able to take effective part in operating a democratic society.

(e) In general, the disposition and ability to act on thinking.

Kilpatrick lists of lesser importance vocational preparation and such learnings as customarily make up the secondary school curriculum. ²³

Considering all these items as fundamental needs of the child there is a definite overlapping of this criterion with others to follow.

2. Does the League aim to provide educative experiences for effective participation in social life?

(This criterion is a subdivision of the second principle given in the Guiding Principles for Curriculum

²³
Ibid., pp. 103-104.

Development from which these criteria are taken. The other part of the principle is given in criterion number 3.)

3. Does the League aim to perpetuate and improve the ideals and practices of our democratic society?

4. Does the League aim to provide dynamic experiences?

5. Does the League aim to provide a program that is subject to teacher guidance?

6. Does the League aim for its program to be subject to change to meet the growing and changing needs and interests of the school children?

(This is a restatement of the principle of experimentation.)

7. Does the League aim for its program to be so constructed as to give opportunity for a wide range of experiences to a majority of the school pupils?

(This is a restatement of the principle which states that the curriculum should not be subverted to special interests.)

Criteria for Evaluating the Activities of the University Interscholastic League

The criteria for evaluating the activities of the League will be similar to the criteria for evaluating the aims, so if the aims prove to be desirable and the activities do not prove to be so, then the difficulty may be found in

either the plan for obtaining the objectives that were set up or in the way these plans have been carried out.

In the criteria for evaluating the activities of the League, criterion number 8 has been added, because of existing criticisms of the League. The other items are the same as those for evaluating the aims except that they apply to the activities.

1. Do the League activities provide educative experiences that are adapted to the fundamental needs of the child?

2. Do the League activities provide educative experiences for effective participation in social life?

3. Do the League activities improve and perpetuate the ideals and practices of our democratic society?

4. Do the League activities provide dynamic experiences?

5. Do the League activities provide experiences that are subject to teacher guidance?

6. Are the League activities subject to change to meet the growing and changing needs and interest of the school children?

7. Do the League activities provide a wide range of experiences for the majority of the school pupils?

8. Do the League activities, as conducted, place too much stress on winning the contest rather than on playing the game well.

Chapter III will be devoted to a description of the League and an evaluation of its aims, while Chapter IV will discuss and evaluate the activities of the League in Johnson County as reported in interviews with superintendents of that county and in questionnaires taken to them.

CHAPTER III

A DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE AND AN EVALUATION OF ITS AIMS

The Organization of the League

The University Interscholastic League is organized under the auspices of the Bureau Of Public School Service, Division of Extension, University of Texas.¹ It sponsors among the public schools of Texas inter-school competitions in various fields of literary and athletic endeavor.

For contest purposes, the state of Texas is divided into regions, the regions are divided into districts, and the districts are made up of member-schools of the League which are located conveniently to each other.

The contest provided for the elementary school are held in the district meets and winners do not progress to regional or state meets,² so an understanding of the district organization will be sufficient for this study.

Although the rules for all the League contests are set forth by the State Executive Committee of the League,

¹Constitution and Rules of the University Interscholastic League, The University of Texas, Bulletin No. 4727, (July 15, 1947), p. 9.

²Ibid., p. 14.

the organization and administration of the districts is delegated to a district executive committee which is made up of representatives from member-schools in the district. This committee works in cooperation with the State Office, yet it makes decisions in such contest rulings as are listed as optional in the Constitution and Rules, and takes care of its own meet by providing a time and a place for holding the meet, by securing directors and judges for the contests, by corresponding with the member-schools concerning the arrangements made, and by seeing that the meet is conducted in an orderly manner.³

Aside from representation on the district executive committees, member-schools have the opportunity of influencing the policy of the State Executive Committee through the State Advisory Council of the League. This council is composed of members selected by the member-schools to represent them on the council and has the duty of studying proposed legislation and recommendations for changes in the League program and of making recommendations to the State Executive Committee for legislation it considers vital to the best interests of the League.⁴ The council cannot change the policy of the League; it only recommends changes, and final authority is left with the

³ Ibid., p. 11.

⁴ Ibid.

State Executive Committee which is appointed through the University of Texas.⁵

The League has made changes from time to time and contests have been added in both the literary and athletic divisions so that the opportunity for participation is much greater than it was in 1913 when the League was first organized.

For the elementary school in the district meets the League now sponsors seven literary contests which have eleven divisions, and four athletic contests which have fourteen divisions. Twenty-one of these twenty-five events are designed for pupils of the junior age group, age ten through fourteen. Contests designed for the sub-junior age group are declamation and story-telling. For the junior age group there are declamation, ready writers, spelling and plain writing, number sense, choral singing, music appreciation, tennis, volleyball, track and field, and playground baseball. All the contests are open to both boys and girls except track and field, which is open only to boys.

The contests are of three general classifications: (1) contests entered on individual basis, as pupil against pupil, (2) contests entered in teams of two, and (3) contests where groups larger than two are entered.

The declamation, story-telling, ready writers, and

⁵Ibid., p. 10.

tennis singles contests are entered on the individual basis. The number sense, spelling and plain writing, and tennis doubles are entered in teams of two. All the other contests except music appreciation require more than two contestants on a team. Participation in the music appreciation contest is based on the enrollment in the grades for which the contest is designed.⁶

Though only a certain number may be taken to the district meets to compete in most of these contests, all pupils passing three-fourths of their school work are eligible for participation in the initial school try-outs.⁷

For a more complete understanding of the organization of the district meets and of the rules governing them, the reader is referred to the current publication of the Constitution and Rules of the University Interscholastic League.

The Aims of the League

The League sets forth as its main objective the fostering "among the public schools of Texas inter-school competitions as an aid in the preparation for citizenship."⁸ In this statement the aim and the method are given. The aim is preparation for citizenship and the method is inter-school competitions in various fields of literary and athletic endeavor.

⁶ Ibid., p. 83.

⁷ Ibid., p. 18.

⁸ Ibid., p. 9.

No general objective is given for the literary events as such, but in the description of each contest in the Constitution and Rules an objective is sometimes stated or implied, and specific objectives are sometimes found in the Leaguer in connection with articles concerning the different activities. The objectives that could be located will be given below and where no objective was stated or implied for a contest it will be assumed that the objective for that contest is synonymous with the general objective of aiding the schools in their preparation for citizenship. Needless to say, all the contest are designed to meet the general objective as well as any specific objective that may have been set up.

The stated purpose of the declamation contest is

to incite competitive effort in mastering the thought of worthwhile selections and acquiring the art of conveying that thought effectively to an audience. . . . the League contest may be used to motivate training in this important art, to improve standards, to furnish helpful comparisons as between schools, and to stimulate intensive effort on the part of the pupils who choose to enter.⁹

The story-telling contest is judged on spontaneity, originality, and naturalness of delivery, and the Leaguer states that this contest should give valuable training in public speaking.¹⁰

⁹ Ibid., p. 32.

¹⁰ "Story-telling Contest Offers Opportunity for Beginners" Interscholastic Leaguer XXXI (February, 1948), 1.

Compositions written in the ready writers' contest are judged on excellence in interest, organization, and correctness of style,¹¹ so these skills could be considered as specific aims.

Academic skill in spelling and plain writing is the evident objective of the spelling and plain writing contest.

Speed and accuracy in arithmetical computation without the aid of paper and pencil is the skill to be gained from the number sense contest.¹²

The aim of the choral singing contest is reflected in the code that is set up for the Regional Competition-Festival which is the music competition for high school groups. This code is as follows:

Participation in the League Competition-Festival implies that each member school shall observe all the implications of fair play, courtesy and sportsmanship. Achieving the ultimate in excellence of a performance shall be the goal instead of "winning." The competition is designed to motivate music education throughout the year rather than to "prepare for a contest." Directors shall use the Competition-Festival to encourage and teach music appreciation, technical ability, stage deportment, audience deportment and good citizenship in general. Competition-Festival should assume and maintain a regular position as an agency for education and character building in the general educational philosophy of the Public Schools.¹³

The music appreciation contest is designed for schools

¹¹ Constitution and Rules of the University Interscholastic League, The University of Texas, Bulletin No. 4727, (July 15, 1947), P. 50.

¹² Ibid., p. 54.

¹³ Ibid., p. 67.

that do not have a regular music teacher, but the League believes it could be conducted to advantage in any school. Certain instructions are included in the Constitution and Rules for the use of the contest which reflect its purpose. These instructions follow:

The material is selected to provide a full year's instruction in music appreciation. The teachers who will have charge of this instruction should secure all the material at the beginning of the school term and teach it as a regular part of the school curriculum to every child in the grades for which it is intended. Immediately preceding the dates for the District Meet, the teacher should conduct a review of all the material, then have an elimination contest to provide contestants who will participate in the meet. In this way all the students will be able to take advantage of the opportunities which are inherent in this type of activity. The teacher should not wait until a few weeks preceding the contest, secure her material and then concentrate on training a small team for the competition. Most of the value of this activity will be lost if this procedure is followed.¹⁴

The League gives the following as the purpose for its athletic program.

1. To assist, advise and aid the public schools in organizing and conducting inter-school athletic contests.
2. To devise and prepare eligibility rules that will equalize and stimulate wholesome competition between schools of similar rank and reinforce the curricular program.
3. To equalize and regulate competition so that the pupils, schools and communities may secure the greatest social, educational, and recreational returns from the contests.
4. To help the schools make athletics an integral part of the education program.
5. To preserve the game for the contestant and not sacrifice the contestant to the game.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 82-83.

6. To promote the spirit of sportsmanship and fair play in all contests.
7. To promote among the players, schools and communities a spirit of friendly rivalry and a respect for the rules of the contest.¹⁵

Concerning the athletic program the League further states that it is vitally interested in the welfare of every participant in the athletic contests, and urges that every contestant, for his own protection, be given a thorough examination by his family physician before participation in the athletic games.¹⁶

In addition to the above purpose, some of the athletic games have codes which are set up for participants which stress good sportsmanship and fair play. The baseball code is the only one of these which applies specifically to a grade school contest, and it is such a complete and general statement of good sportsmanship that it could be applied to almost any athletic game the League sponsors. Because of this fact and because the baseball code seems to define very adequately the League's conception of good citizenship through games, the baseball code is cited here.

The baseball code means to play the game in the spirit of fairness and clean sportsmanship; to observe all rules and not attempt to take unfair advantage of the other team. It means to accept decisions of officials without protest; to treat your opponents as your guests, and to put clean play and real sportsmanship above victories. It means the ability to win without boasting and to lose without grudge. Victory is no great matter. The important

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 87.

¹⁶ Ibid., p

thing is the manly striving to excel and the good feeling it fosters between those who play fair and have no excuse when they lose.¹⁷

Though the League has set out to aid the schools in promoting good citizenship, certain dangers are inherent in its method which should be mentioned here. A great deal of skill is required in the wise use of granting honors and awards for desirable activities. William Heard Kilpatrick has made a concise summary of the place of honors and awards in character building in his book Group Education for A Democracy in which he says:

1. In the degree that our young people seek any reward purely for the sake of reward and think only of it and practice only selfish satisfactions, in that degree does the system of offering rewards build not moral character but selfishness. To use rewards and honors must be counted as immoral unless in fact the original satisfaction of the external reward gradually gives way to an inner satisfaction in the activity itself or in the helpful effects of the activity on others. To use rewards and honors in and of themselves cannot be defended as a means of building desirable characters.

2. If the attention of the Young people is not on the reward itself, but on the approval of others won by the reward, we have probably taken a step upward in the scale of morals. But even here there is a question. If the approvals received is merely self-centered we have progressed but little, if any, above plain selfishness.

3. If the rewards and honors are used like scaffolding in house building, as temporary devices to get desirable action started so that we may later remove the scaffolding and leave the house standing in its own strength, then we may say the results are good. But the test is this: Can the scaffolding be removed? Will the building stand alone? Are we in fact building positive interest that no longer demand or wish rewards or honors.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 109.

4. There are certain incidental effects of rewards that can be positively good. The definite suggestions of desirable activities may be of great assistance. A mere trial of these will often suffice to bring inherent satisfaction and so add an abiding interest of life. The possibility of thus increasing the interest of our young people is most commendable. Accompanying these is the matter of standards. The definite directions for judging what is done may be of great value in building useful standards of excellence. Increased interest and higher standards are most desirable features in every character.¹⁸

The League reiterates again and again throughout its Constitution and Rules that it does not plan for the awards and honors to be put foremost, that schools should stress good sportsmanship and skills to be gained from competitive endeavor. Honors and awards are useful only when they are used to raise the standard of excellence, enlarge the interests of the pupils, and lead the pupils to interests which have inherent satisfactions independent of external incentives.

Evaluation of the Aims

From this description of League aims an evaluation can be made of them with the criteria set up in Chapter II.

1. Does the League aim to provide educative experiences that are adapted to the fundamental needs of the child?

Kilpatrick's list of basic needs--emotional stability, physical health, social competency, social understanding and the like--may be considered as requisites of good

¹⁸William Heard Kilpatrick, Group Education for a Democracy, pp. 138-139.

citizenship, and since the League is designed to aid the schools in preparing students for citizenship, the answer would be yes to this question. It must be remembered that the League is not designed to supplement the regular curriculum in supplying these educative experiences, but to supplement it in such a way that the child will have more of the wholesome educative experiences than he would have had without the League program.

2. Does the League aim to provide educative experiences for effective participation in social life?

Citizenship is essentially a social institution, and this is especially true of any democratic arrangement, so the citizenship aim would fit this criterion, too. Specific plans for social participation may also be seen in the League's arrangement for group activities where children work and play together under such codes as the baseball code where fairness and good sportsmanship are foremost.

That effective social participation is sought is seen in the athletic purpose of equalizing and regulating the contest in order that the greatest social, educational, and recreational returns may be secured.¹⁹

3. Does the League aim to perpetuate and improve the ideals and practices of our democratic society?

¹⁹ Constitution and Rules of the University Interscholastic League, The University of Texas, Bulletin No. 4727, (July 15, 1947), p. 53.

Since it is the democratic way upon which citizenship ideals in America are based, this criterion becomes the first aim of the League. The perpetuation and improvement of the ideals and practices of our democratic society can be considered as synonymous with citizenship preparation.

4. Does the League aim to provide dynamic experiences?

Dynamic may be defined as forceful, potent, or intensive. In the case of pupil experiences, any wholesome activity in which the child enters voluntarily and with enthusiasm could be considered as dynamic. It would necessarily be dynamic to merit such interest.

The League does not set forth any specific aim to this effect, but it does imply this aim when it says that one purpose of the athletic contests is to equalize and regulate the athletic contests so that the children and community may secure the greatest social, educational, and recreational returns from the contests.²⁰ Any great social, educational, and recreational returns would be dynamic experiences.

5. Does the League provide a program that is subject to teacher guidance?

In every contest offered there is a definite need for teacher guidance, and in many cases the League gives definite instructions for teacher guidance. An example of this instruction was seen in the discussion of the aim of the

²⁰ Ibid.

music appreciation contest. Other examples may be found by examining the contest instructions found in the Constitution and Rules for the League.

6. Does the League aim for its program to be subject to change to meet the growing and changing needs and interests of the school children?

The League has made a provision whereby member-schools may influence the policy of the League through a State Legislative Advisory Council which they elect to study and recommend proposed changes to the State Executive Committee.²¹ Final authority for change rests with the State Executive Committee, but changes have been made from time to time in the history of the League which are proof that an effort has been made to meet the growing and changing needs and interests of the children.

7. Does the League aim for its program to be so constructed as to give opportunity for a wide range of experiences to a majority of the school pupils?

The League includes in its organization some activity for pupils in every elementary grade. Only two of the eleven contests are designed for pupils of sub-junior age, but these two contests have unlimited opportunity for participation within the schools. Ten different contests with twenty-two separate events are provided for the upper

²¹Ibid., p. 11.

elementary pupils, and participation is barred only to pupils who do not pass three-fourths of the school work they are taking.²² This restriction bars only a minority of the pupils, so the League, through its organization has evidenced an aim to provide a wide range of experiences which will offer opportunity for participation to a majority of the students, but much more provision has been made for the junior age group than for the sub-junior age group.

Summarizing the evaluation of the aims of the League, it can be clearly seen that the objectives set out by the League are in harmony with the objectives of education. The League has set out, through its plan for interschool contests, to meet many of the fundamental needs of the child, to give him opportunities for effective participation in social life, to improve and perpetuate the ideals and practices of our democratic society, to provide interesting and dynamic experiences for the children that are subject to teacher guidance, to make changes in the League program from time to time to meet the changing needs of the pupils, and to give opportunity to a majority of the pupils for participation in a variety of activities.

If the League activities do not meet the aims that have been set up, then the difficulty may be found in the use the schools have made of the League plans in their effort to reach these objectives.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE LEAGUE IN CONFERENCE B ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF JOHNSON COUNTY FOR 1947 - 1948

In Chapter III an evaluation of the League aims was made and it was found that the League aims are in harmony with the educational objectives that have been set up for the public schools of Texas. This chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the method used to reach the objectives and to an evaluation of the activities as they were carried on in the Conference B elementary schools of Johnson County during 1947-1948.

In conducting this study a conference was held with each superintendent of the Johnson County Conference B schools. In these conferences information was secured as to how each school made preparation for the League contests, how much time was given to contest preparation, how many elementary school pupils took part in each of the League contests as compared to the total grade-school enrollment, and what these superintendents believed to be desirable or undesirable in the League program and why. The information secured is presented in the discussion and in the tables

and illustration, and from this information an evaluation of the activities of the League in Johnson County Conference B elementary school is made.

There are nine Johnson County schools in the Conference B division of the League. These are located in Region III, District 32, and no school from any other county is in this district. The schools listed for participation in 1948 were Alvarado, Cleburne Junior High School, Joshua, Keene, Rio Vista, and Venus. All these schools participated in some of the League contests except Grandview. The superintendent from that school stated that he came to the school in March and found that no preparation had been made for the League, no entries had been sent to the Director General of the District, and it was then too late for his school to take any part, but that he plans for his school to take part in the League activities in the future.

For reference purposes in this study the participating schools have been numbered from 1 through 8, according to their grade school enrollment, School 1 having the largest enrollment and School 8 having the smallest. Grandview will be called School 9, since it did not enter any of the contests and could not be used in any comparative study. Instead of referring to the schools by names, reference will be made by numbers

throughout this writing, as School 1, School 2, et cetera.

It should be noted that School 1 had an enrollment of 600 pupils in its elementary school, which should put this school in a Class A division of the League, but no division of this kind was provided in Johnson County or in any location where participation would be convenient, so this school participated with the Conference B schools by invitation, after efforts to get in a Class A division had failed.

Analysis of Participation

Table 1 shows the method of allowing time for contest preparation, the amount of time spent on this preparation, the number of contests entered, and the total amount and per cent of participation within the different schools. The time figure given in weeks is a general estimate given by the superintendent of the average amount of time used and is not intended to give the specific amount of time used by each teacher for her own contest assignment. The nature of the contest and the needs of the pupils would cause the amount of time used to vary, even within a given school.

In the questionnaire three methods of allowing time for contest preparation were listed and space was provided for another to be added if none of these three

method were used. In the table the methods are called Methods A, B, and C.

In Method A, superintendents allotted contests to teachers during the year and everyone began preparation at a certain time, using a period or so a day for contest training.

In Method B, each teacher took care of the contest preparation for her own class or grade and began preparation when she felt it was necessary.

In Method C, preparation was begun early in the year by allotting contests to various teachers and having them incorporate contest preparation into their regular school work.

An examination of Table 1 shows that a great deal of variation was found in the method of preparing for the contests, in the amount of time spent on the contest preparation, in the number of pupils taking part, and in the number of contests entered.

Three schools reported that they used Method A, three used Method B, one used Method C, and one used a combination of Methods C and A. The total numbers of contestants in the initial school try-outs varied from twenty-eight pupils in School 6 to 767 pupils in School 2, and the amount of time used in preparing for the contests varied from three weeks to twenty weeks. The number of events entered varied from six in School 6 to twenty-eight in School 2.

TABLE 1

METHOD OF ALLOWING TIME FOR CONTEST PREPARATION,
THE AMOUNT OF TIME ALLOWED, AND THE TOTAL
AMOUNTS AND PERCENTAGES OF PARTICIPATION
IN THE LEAGUE CONTEST FOR JOHNSON
COUNTY CONFERENCE B ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS FOR 1947-1948

Method of Allowing Time for Contest Preparation	School Number	Total Enrollment in Grade School	Number of Weeks Used in Contest Preparation			Number of Con- tests Entered			Number of Pupils in Try-outs			Percentage of Participation	Number of Pupils Sent to District Meet		
			Literary Contests	Athletic Contests	Total	Literary Contests	Athletic Contests	Total	Literary Contests	Athletic Contests	Total		Literary Contests	Athletic Contests	Total
A	2	347	6	14	14	28	547	220	767	221.	59	72	131		
	4	228	8	14	12	26	96	92	188	82.5	47	69	116		
	6	175	4	1	5	6	2	26	28	16.	2	22	24		
B	5	215	4	13	10	23	129	99	228	106.	45	62	107		
	7	139	6	5	10	15	80	112	192	138.	7	58	65		
	8	47	6	12	12	24	64	69	133	282.9	23	37	60		
C	1	600	20	8	13	21	60	408	468	78.	11	65	76		
	3	295	3*	13	10	23	135	146	281	95.3	40	57	97		

* Three weeks were used in athletics; other contests were correlated with regular class instruction and no estimate was given.

Although the extremes in participation figures show a great deal of variation, the total report shows a majority agreement in the interest taken in the League activities. Six of the eight schools who participated took part in more than 20 of the 28 events offered to the grade school, these figures being 21, 23, 23, 24, 26, 28. The two schools not in this bracket entered 15 and 6 events respectively.

Further evidence of positive interest in the League activities will be seen on an examination of the total pupil participation in the various schools. Two schools exceeded 200 per cent of the total grade school enrollment in their participation; two were between 100 and 200 per cent, three were between 75 and 100 per cent, and only one dropped below 50 per cent.

The percentages of participation which exceed 100 are made possible by double or triple representation within the school. For example, one child might enter the declamation, choral singing, and one or more of the athletic events, thus representing his school three or more times. Certain restrictions are made on double representation in some of the contests, and schools are urged by the League to use different contestants whenever possible in some of the athletic events, but some opportunity is left for double representation because of the varied interest of the children, and in smaller schools, double representation is sometimes necessary in order

that the school may enter all the contests. It was not possible to determine the exact amount of double representation within the schools, since records were not kept to that extent in the schools studied.

The support given the League through participation indicates that pupils in the majority of the schools have found the League activities interesting. The variety of these experiences and the extent to which each of the individual activities has been accepted by the various schools will be seen in Tables 2 through 12.

The percentages of participation in these tables are made on the basis of the total grade school enrollment. Since most of the contests are offered only to pupils of junior age or upper elementary pupils, the figures cannot be considered as the percentages of pupils participating who might have entered. To get an estimate of this figure, each percentage figure for every contest except declamation and junior boys' track and field events should be doubled. This is assuming that pupils are evenly divided in the grades as to age groups, pupils in the first four grades being under 10 years of age and pupils between 10 and 15 years of age being in the upper four grades.

The story-telling contest in Johnson county was offered to the first four grades, so this procedure would be correct for this contest, too.

The track and field contest for the grade school is

offered only to boys in the junior age group, so the percentage figure for this contest should be multiplied by 4 to get the participating percentage of pupils who were eligible to take part. This is assuming that half of the junior age group of students is boys.

The declamation contest is offered to every age group in the elementary school so the percentage who participated of the total grade school enrollment would be correct for this contest, with the exception that students 14 years of age are excluded from the junior division in this contest.¹

Table 2 shows the amount and percentage of participation in the League declamation contest.

Six of the eight participating schools entered every division in the declamation contest. School 7 entered 2 divisions and School 6 did not enter any of the divisions.

The amount of participation ranged from 5 pupils in School 7 to 43 pupils in School 5, with the percentages ranging from 3.5 per cent of the total grade school enrollment in School 1 to 55.3 per cent in School 8, the average percentage for all the participating schools being 9.3.

More girls entered than boys in both the junior and sub-junior divisions; and more children of sub-junior age than of junior age competed.

¹ Constitution and Rules of the University Interscholastic League, The University of Texas, Bulletin No. 4727, (July 15, 1947), p. 15.

TABLE 2

THE AMOUNT AND PER CENT OF PARTICIPATION IN
THE LEAGUE DECLAMATION CONTEST IN JOHNSON
COUNTY CONFERENCE B ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
FOR 1947-1948

School Number	Total Grade School Enrollment	Number of Con- testants in Initial Tryout					Percentage of Participation	Number of Con- testants Sent to District M Meet					School Rank in Percentage of participation
		Sub-junior Boys	Sub-junior Girls	Junior Boys	Junior Girls	Total		Sub-junior Boys	Sub-junior Girls	Junior Boys	Junior Girls	Total	
1 . . .	600	1	2	7	11	21	3.5	1	1	1	1	4	7th
2 . . .	347	6	3	10	12	36	10.4	1	1	1	1	4	4th
3 . . .	295	2	12	10	6	38	12.7	1	1	1	1	4	3rd
4 . . .	222	5	7	3	6	21	9.2	1	1	1	1	4	6th
5 . . .	215	16	21	3	3	43	20.0	1	1	1	1	4	2nd
6 . . .	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
7 . . .	139	0	0	3	2	5	3.6	0	0	1	1	2	6th
8 . . .	47	3	10	3	7	26	55.3	1	1	1	1	4	1st
9 . . .	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
Total	2041	42	60	39	49	190	9.3	6	6	7	7	26	

Table 3 shows the amount and percentage of participation in the League story-telling contest.

Five of the eight participating schools entered every division in this contest. School 7 entered 2 divisions and Schools 1 and 6 did not enter any of the divisions.

The amount of participation ranged from 3 pupils in

TABLE 3

THE AMOUNT AND PERCENT OF PARTICIPATION IN THE
LEAGUE STORY-TELLING CONTEST IN JOHNSON
COUNTY CONFERENCE B ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS FOR 1947-1948

School Number	Total Grade School Enrollment	Number of Con- testants in Initial Tryout					Percentage of Participation	Number of Con- testants Sent to District Meet					School Rank in Percentage of Participation
		Boys, Grades 1-2	Girls, Grades 1-2	Boys, Grades 3-4	Girls, Grades 3-4	Total		Boys, Grades 1-2	Girls, Grades 1-2	Boys, Grades 3-4	Girls, Grades 3-4	Total	
1	347	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
2	295	5	4	4	5	17	4.9	1	1	0	0	0	6th
3	228	5	7	4	6	24	8.1	1	1	1	1	4	4th
4	228	5	7	4	6	19	8.3	1	1	1	1	4	4th
5	215	5	9	4	8	26	12.0	1	1	1	1	4	3rd
6	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2nd
7	139	4	4	0	0	8	5.7	0	0	0	0	0	...
8	47	3	3	3	3	12	25.5	1	0	0	0	0	5th
9	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1st
Total	1276	28	35	18	25	106	8.3	5	5	5	5	20	...

School 7 to 24 pupils in School 3, with the percentages ranging from 4.9 per cent of the total grade school enrollment in School 2 to 25.5 per cent in School 8, the average percentage for all the schools who participated being 8.3.

More girls entered than boys, and more pupils entered from Grades 1 and 2 than from Grades 3 and 4.

Interest in the declamation and story-telling contests seems to be sufficient to merit continuation of them if they meet the needs of the children. These contests are entered on an individual basis, with no group activity involved, and are designed to improve the oral expression of the pupils as well as to contribute to the general aims of democratic education. Individual contests of this type do not usually have as many contestants as do the group contests, but individual activity is part of the life process, so to have a varied program to meet varying interest and needs it is necessary to include both types of activity.

Table 4 shows the amount and the percentage of participation in the League ready writers' contest in Johnson County Conference B elementary schools for 1947-1948.

Seven of the eight participating schools entered the ready writers' contest.

The amount of participation ranged from 1 pupil in School 8 to 15 pupils in School 2, with the percentage ranging from 1 per cent in Schools 1 and 3 to 3.5 per cent in School 4, the average percentage for all the participating schools being 1.6.

No comparison can be made as to the number of boys and

TABLE 4

THE AMOUNT AND PERCENT OF PARTICIPATION IN THE
LEAGUE READY WRITERS CONTEST IN JOHNSON
COUNTY CONFERENCE ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS FOR 1947-1948

School Number	Total Grade School Enrollment	Number of Contestants In Initial Try-out	Percentage of Participation	Number of Contestants Sent to District Meet	School Rank in Percentage of Participation
1 . . .	600	15	1.4	1	5th
2 . . .	347	3	4.3	1	1st
3 . . .	295	3	1.0	1	5th
4 . . .	228	3	3.5	1	2nd
5 . . .	215	3	1.4	1	4th
6 . . .	...	0	0	0	...
7 . . .	139	3	2.1	1	3rd
8 . . .	47	1	2.1	1	3rd
9 . . .	...	0	0	0	...
Total	1871	30	1.6	7	

girls entering, because this contest had only one division and was open to both boys and girls.

Even though the majority of the schools were represented in this contest, only a small percent of the pupils in the

county were interested in this activity, and it is questionable that any activity which merits this little interest from the children is meeting, to any great degree, the objectives of the school. It is realized that many factors influence pupil interest, one outstanding one being teacher interest, and no effort is made in this study to determine teacher interest except in such general way as can be determined by the superintendents' observations.

At any rate, the small margin of interest in this activity points to a need for further investigation into its merits or demerits. If the contest is of sufficient value to merit continued support in Johnson County Schools, then certainly more pupil support of it is desirable. If the contest is uninteresting and without sufficient educational value to the students, then it should either be discontinued or some change should be made in order to obtain activities that are more suitable for training in written expression.

With so much writing as our present society demands it would seem that more than 3 per cent of our junior age group of children should find it interesting. Perhaps the fault in this contest may be that the writing comes out of an artificial situation where a topic is assigned that may require the student to draw on his imagination rather than to write something that has come out of his own experience and means something in his life. The topics selected by the

State Office are "within the range of the average pupil's study, observation, and experiences,"² but no topic may be selected by the students.

Table 5 shows the amount and percentage of participation in the League spelling and plain writing contest.

TABLE 5

THE AMOUNT AND PER CENT OF PARTICIPATION IN THE
LEAGUE SPELLING AND PLAIN WRITING CONTEST
IN JOHNSON COUNTY CONFERENCE B
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
FOR 1947-1948

School Number	Total Grade School Enrollment	Number of Contestants in Initial try-out			Percentage of Participation	Number of Contestants Sent to District Meet			School Rank in Percentage of Participation
		Grades 5-6	Grades 7-8	Total		Grades 5-6	Grades 7-8	Total	
1	600	9	14	23	3.8	2	2	4	5th
2	347	77	84	161	46.4	2	2	4	1st
3	295	16	12	28	9.5	2	2	4	4th
4	228	4	4	8	3.5	2	2	4	6th
5	215	2	5	7	3.2	2	2	4	7th
6	175	0	2	2	1.1	0	2	2	8th
7	159	34	18	52	37.4	2	2	4	2nd
8	47	0	0	6	12.7	2	0	2	3rd
9	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
Total	2046	148	139	287	14.	14	14	28	

²Ibid., p. 49.

Six of the eight participating schools entered both divisions of this contest and the remaining two schools entered one division.

The amount of participation ranged from 2 pupils in School 6 to 161 pupils in School 2, with the percentage ranging from 1.1 per cent in School 6 to 46.4 per cent in school 2, the average percentage for all the participating schools being 14.

A few more pupils entered from Grades 5 and 6 than from Grades 7 and 8.

This contest was open only to Grades 5, 6, 7, and 8, and received a greater degree of support in the participating schools than did the number sense and ready writers' contests. The nature of this contest puts it more within the grasp of the majority of the pupils than are the number sense and ready writers' contests. The skills involved are primarily rote memorization and handwriting while the ready writers' contests involves such things as originality of thought and freshness of treatment in order to get and hold the readers attention, clearness in plan of a composition so that it has unity and coherence, and correctness of style which includes proper punctuation and grammar in the sentences and proper usage and spelling of words.³ The number sense contest involves speed in arithmetical computation without the use of paper and pencil. Only the final answers to the problems are set down.⁴

³
Ibid., p. 50.

⁴
Ibid., p. 54.

The nature of the spelling and plain writing contest makes correlation with the regular spelling instruction easy since the words are taken from the state adopted text and from a supplementary list put out by the League. Three of these schools did correlate this training and put it into their regular spelling classes. Though not all the pupils who received training were in the school try-outs, all of the pupils in these grades in these three schools benefitted from the contest training, and a greater number tried out in these schools than in the schools which did not use this method in their League preparation.

Spelling contestants go to the League meets in teams of two, and the participation figure is lower in this contest than in some of the others where larger groups make up a team. However, it is believed that enough pupils benefitted from this activity to merit its continuance if the contest is used properly.

One complaint that has been made against the League has been an assumption that the activities provide for the "gifted few" to the exclusion of the normal and subnormal pupils. In a contest of this nature, this accusation could easily be true if too much stress is placed on winning the contest and too much attention is given to preparing already superior students to win. But if the purpose of the contest is understood, and the contest is used as a teaching aid, the competitive spirit may add to the pleasantness of the learning situation for the majority of pupils concerned.

Many objections have been voiced against the granting of honors and awards for achievement. These objections are not without some validity. The place of honors and awards in character building was discussed in Chapter III where it was pointed out that honors and awards are useful only when they are used to enlarge the interests of the pupils, to raise the standard of excellence, and to lead the pupils to interests which have inherent satisfactions independent of external incentives.

The spelling and plain writing contest seems to be interesting to a sufficient number of pupils in the majority of the schools in Johnson County to merit its continuation, but improvement could be made in the effectiveness of the contest training in some of the schools by beginning earlier in the year and including contest training in the regular spelling instruction so that more pupils could be reached.

Table 6 shows the amount and the percentage of participation in the League number sense contest.

Six of the eight participating schools entered this contest.

The amount of participation ranged from 2 pupils in School 3 to 12 pupils in School 7, with the percentages ranging from .7 per cent in School 3 to 8.6 per cent in School 7, the average percentage for all the schools participating being 1.9.

TABLE 6

THE AMOUNT AND PER CENT OF PARTICIPATION IN THE
LEAGUE NUMBER SENSE CONTEST IN JOHNSON
COUNTY CONFERENCE B ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS FOR 1947-1948

School Number	Total Grade School Enrollment	Number of Contestants In Initial Try-out	Percentage of Participation	Number of Contestants Sent to District Meet	School Rank in Percentage of Participation
1	600	6	1.3	0	5th
2	347	5	1.4	0	4th
3	295	2	.7	0	6th
4	228	4	1.7	0	3rd
5	215	3	2.8	0	2nd
6 . . . . .	...	0	0	0	...
7	139	12	8.6	0	1st
8 . . . . .	...	0	0	0	...
9 . . . . .	...	0	0	0	...
Total	1824	36	1.9	10	

This percentage is very low, and doubling it to get an estimate of the percentage of the junior age group who participated does not raise it to any great extent. The nature of this contest, however, bars part of the junior age group from taking part because all the problems in the

contest are solved without the aid of paper and pencil in a given time limit with only the final answers placed on the answer sheet.⁵ Hence, this contest usually fits only the pupils in the upper elementary grades who have acquired and can acquire during the given school year this much skill in arithmetical computation.

It might be said that this contest, if not designed for superior pupils, renders its services to them in actual practice. This thesis has no objection to providing for superior pupils. Certainly these students must be provided with challenging experiences. It is only when providing for these students whose mental capacities are above average causes the normal and subnormal pupils to be neglected that injustice comes. Only a survey of the total League program can determine whether or not this is done.

Table 7 shows the amount and percentage of participation in the League choral singing contest.

Five of the eight participating schools entered this contest.

The amount of participation ranged from 17 pupils in School 8 to 150 pupils in School 2, with the percentages ranging from 13.1 per cent in School 4 to 43.3 percent in School 2, the average percentage for all the participating schools being 24.9.

The nature of this contest allows a greater number of

⁵Ibid., p.54.

TABLE 7

THE AMOUNT AND PER CENT OF PARTICIPATION IN THE
LEAGUE CHORAL SINGING CONTEST IN JOHNSON
COUNTY CONFERENCE B ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS FOR 1947-1948

School Number	Total Grade School Enrollment	Number of Contestants in Initial Try-out	Percentage of Participation	Number of Contestants Sent to District Meet	School Rank in Percentage of Participation
1 . . . . .	...	0	0	0	...
2	347	150	43.2	40	1st
3	295	40	13.6	25	4th
4	228	30	13.1	30	5th
5	215	45	20.9	30	2nd
6	111	0	0	0	...
7	139	0	0	0	...
8*	47	17	36.2	10	3rd
9	1..	0	0	0	...
Total	1132	282	24.9	135	

*This school entered Division B of the choral singing contest.

pupils to compete in the district meets than is afforded by any other contest in the League. Choirs participating in the League ranged in size in Division A from 25 pupils to 40 pupils. In Division B only one choir was entered and it contained 10 pupils.

The superintendent of School 1 stated that his school did not participate because the music teacher for his school only had classes once a week and did not have time to teach all the music he would like to teach in such a limited time.

The superintendent of School 6 reported lack of interest and not having a special music teacher as the reason his school did not enter.

The superintendent of School 7 stated that his school did not participate because of not having a special music teacher.

Of the schools who participated, School 2 had a special music teacher, School 5 had a music teacher who taught music and a grade, and the remaining three schools used teachers of other grades or subjects who had had some training in music to do their contest preparation.

Though this contest was supported by only five of the schools in the county, the average percentage of participation was higher in the schools who did take part than in any other contest offered to grade school pupils, with the exception of the music appreciation contest.

Table 8 shows the amount and the percentage of participation in the music appreciation contest.

Only three of the eight participating schools entered the music appreciation contest.

The amount of participation ranged from 2 pupils in School 8 to 163 pupils in School 2, the average percentage

TABLE 8

THE AMOUNT AND PERCENT OF PARTICIPATION IN THE
LEAGUE MUSIC APPRECIATION CONTEST IN JOHNSON
COUNTY CONFERENCE B ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS FOR 1947-1948

School Number	Total Grade School Enrollment	Number of Contestants in Initial Try-out	Percentage of Participation	Number of Contestants Sent to District Meet	School Rank in Percentage of Participation
1 . . . . .	...	0	0	0	...
2	347	163	47.	4	1st
3 . . . . .	...	0	0	0	...
4	228	0	2.6	2	3rd
5 . . . . .	...	0	0	0	...
6 . . . . .	...	0	0	0	...
7 . . . . .	...	0	0	0	...
8	47	2	4.2	2	2nd
9 . . . . .	...	0	0	0	...
Total	622	171	27.5	8	

for the three schools being 27.5.

School 2 was the only one that approached mass participation in this contest and this school reported that it began training for this contest soon after Christmas in order that all the pupils in the junior age group might participate in the initial activities.

Most of the schools did not list a reason for not participating in this activity, but one superintendent reported that the musical records required for this contest were not provided for in his school budget and his school had no materials to use in teaching music appreciation. The materials necessary for the contest cost a little more than \$15.00.⁶

In view of the fact that only one of the participating schools in the county had a full time music teacher, it seems that this contest could provide musical training that would not be received otherwise because it has been planned especially for schools without special music teachers.⁷ The average amount of participation in the three schools that did take part indicates that music appreciation was well received in those schools. It may be that if this activity were offered in more of the Johnson County Schools it would aid considerably in raising the musical tastes of the children. Many of the children are exposed to the inferior type of music that has flooded the market in recent years, and too few of our schools are giving enough opportunity for the children to hear and appreciate good music. Hence the musical taste of our children is being conditioned by radio requests that have become popular because the majority of the listeners have never heard, and hence have never learned to appreciate, a better type of music.

⁶ Ibid., p. 85.

⁷ Ibid., p. 82.

Table 9 shows the amount and percentage of participation in the League tennis contest.

TABLE 9

THE AMOUNT AND PER CENT OF PARTICIPATION IN THE
LEAGUE TENNIS CONTEST IN JOHNSON COUNTY
CONFERENCE B ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
FOR 1947-1948

School Number	Total Grade School Enrollment	Number of Contestants in Initial Try-out					Percentage of Participation	Number of Contestants Sent to District Meet					School Rank in Percentage of Participation
		Junior Boys, Singles	Junior Girls, Singles	Junior Boys, Doubles	Junior Girls, Doubles	Total		Junior Boys, Singles	Junior Girls, Singles	Junior Boys, Doubles	Junior Girls, Doubles	Total	
1 . . .	600	4	0	12	0	32	5.3	1	1	2	2	6	4th
2 . . .	347	12	0	4	4	26	7.5	1	1	2	2	6	3rd
3 . . .	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
4 . . .	228	4	0	12	0	32	14.	1	1	2	2	6	2nd
5 . . .	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
6 . . .	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
7 . . .	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
8 . . .	47	0	0	6	0	31	65.9	1	1	2	2	6	1st
9 . . .	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
Total	1222	28	31	34	28	121	9.9	4	4	8	8	24	

Only four of the eight participating schools entered the tennis contest.

The amount of participation ranged from 26 pupils in School 2 to 32 pupils in Schools 1 and 4, with the percentage ranging from 5.3 per cent in School 1 to 65.9 per cent in School 8, the average percentage for the participating schools being 9.9.

About the same number of boys and girls entered both the singles and doubles.

Schools 3, 5, and 6 reported lack of facilities as their reason for not participating.

Table 10 shows the amount and percentage of participation in the League volleyball contest.

TABLE 10

THE AMOUNT AND PER CENT OF PARTICIPATION IN THE
LEAGUE VOLLEYBALL CONTEST IN JOHNSON COUNTY
CONFERENCE B ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
FOR 1947-1948

School Number	Total Grade School Enrollment	Number of Contestants in Initial Try-out			Percentage of Participation	Number of Contestants Sent to District Meet			School Rank in Percentage of Participation
		Boys	Girls	Total		Boys	Girls	Total	
1 . . .	600	0	18	18	3.	0	10	10	7th
2 . . .	347	40	40	80	23.	10	10	20	2nd
3 . . .	295	35	30	65	22.	10	10	20	3rd
4 . . .	228	12	12	24	10.5	10	10	20	6th
5 . . .	215	18	14	32	14.9	8	8	16	5th
6 . . .	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
7 . . .	139	12	12	24	17.3	8	8	16	4th
8 . . .	47	7	6	13	27.6	6	6	12	1st
9 . . .	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
Total	2046	124	132	256	12.5	52	62	114	

Six of the eight participating schools entered both divisions of this contest. School 1 entered only the girls' division and School 6 did not enter either division.

The amount of participation ranged from 13 pupils in School 8 to 80 pupils in School 2, with the percentage ranging from 3 per cent in School 1 to 27.6 per cent in School 8, the average percentage for all the participating schools being 12.5.

A few more girls entered than boys. School 1 reported that the boys in that school had never played volleyball and were not interested in this contest.

Table 11 shows the amount and percentage of participation in the League track and field events for junior boys.

Seven of the eight participating schools entered all the track and field events. School 6 entered four of the six events.

The amount of participation ranged from 12 pupils in School 6 to 19 pupils in Schools 1 and 8, with the percentages ranging from 7.1 per cent in School 4 to 53.2 per cent in School 8, the average percentage for all the schools being 18.7

This contest is offered only to boys of junior age so if every eligible boy competed the total number would be approximately one-fourth of the total grade school enrollment. So multiplying the participating percentage of the total grade school enrollment by four, an average of 18.7

TABLE 11

THE AMOUNT AND PER CENT OF PARTICIPATION IN THE
LEAGUE JUNIOR TRACK AND FIELD CONTEST IN
JOHNSON COUNTY CONFERENCE B ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS FOR 1947-1948

School Number	Total Grade School Enrollment	Number of Contestants in Initial Try-out							Total	Percentage of Participation	Number of Contestants Sent to District Meet							Total	School Rank in Percentage of Participation
		50-Yard Dash	100-Yard Dash	400-Yard Relay	Pull Up	Running High Jump	Running Broad Jump	50-Yard Dash			100-Yard Dash	440-Yard Relay	Pull Up	Running High Jump	Running Broad Jump				
1	600	158	158	158	158	158	158	158	26.3	3	3	4	3	3	3	19	3rd		
2	347	5	4	12	6	8	4	39	11.2	3	3	4	1	3	3	14	6th		
3	295	8	7	12	1	12	8	48	16.3	3	3	4	1	3	3	17	4th		
4	228	3	2	4	2	2	3	16	7.1	3	3	4	2	3	3	16	8th		
5	215	10	6	8	2	4	3	33	15.3	3	3	4	1	3	1	15	5th		
6	175	5	5	0	0	3	3	16	9.1	3	3	0	0	3	3	18	7th		
7	139	10	10	8	10	5	5	48	34.5	3	3	4	3	3	3	18	2nd		
8	47	5	5	4	3	4	4	28	53.2	3	3	4	3	3	3	19	1st		
9	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...	...
Total	2046	204	204	206	182	196	188	333	18.7	24	22	28	13	22	21	130			

*This contest preparation was held on intra-mural basis and the same 158 boys competed in all the initial try-outs in School Number 1.

per cent would be 74.8 per cent of the eligible junior boys. So the participation in this contest is rather high, indicating a great deal of interest.

Table 12 shows the amount and percentage of participation in the League playground baseball contest.

TABLE 12

THE AMOUNT AND PERCENT OF PARTICIPATION IN THE
LEAGUE PLAYGROUND BASEBALL CONTEST IN
JOHNSON COUNTY CONFERENCE B ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS FOR 1947-1948

School Number	Total Grade School Enrollment	Number of Contestants in Initial try-out			Percentage of Participation	Number of Contestants Sent To District Meet			School Rank in Percentage of Participation
		Junior Boys	Junior Girls	Total		Junior Boys	Junior Girls	Total	
1 . . .	600	120	80	200	30.	15	15	30	1st
2 . . .	347	45	30	75	21.6	15	15	30	3rd
3 . . .	295	18	15	33	11.2	10	10	20	6th
4 . . .	228	20	20	40	17.5	10	10	20	4th
5 . . .	215	20	14	34	15.8	20	11	31	5th
6 . . .	175	10	0	10	5.7	10	0	10	7th
7 . . .	139	20	20	40	28.8	12	12	24	2nd
8 . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
9 . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	...
Total	1999	253	179	432	21.6	92	73	165	

Six of the eight participating schools entered both divisions of this contest. School 6 entered only the boys' division and School 8 did not enter either division.

The amount of participation ranged from 10 pupils in School 6 to 200 pupils in School 1, with the percentage ranging from 5.7 per cent in School 6 to 30 percent in School 1, the average percentage for all the participating schools being 21.6. School 1 used the intra-mural system

in its training program, thus every boy and girl to whom this contest was offered in the physical education program was in the initial try-out.

This game seems to be more popular with the boys than with the girls, since 253 boys were in the school tryouts in the county, while only 179 girls were in them.

An examination of Tables 2 through 12 reveals that a variety of activities were offered to the grade school pupils in Johnson County through the League program. Fourteen divisions were in the seven literary contests and fourteen divisions were in the four athletic contests. The combined percentages of participation show that a majority of pupils are receiving training in some of the activities, but the individual contest tables show that considerably more interest is taken in some activities than in others.

The contest in which the least number of schools took part was music appreciation in which only three schools entered. The tennis contest came next with only four schools entering in it. Choral singing was entered by five schools which is only a slight majority.

All the other contests in the League received the support of from six to eight of the participating schools.

The majority of the contests, then, have been of sufficient interest or believed to be of sufficient value to merit the support of the majority of schools in the county.

The degree to which the schools supported each of these

contests is quite varied, however, and it is believed that the value of each of these activities is better estimated when the number of pupils who found them interesting, as compared to the number of pupils in the school, is considered.

The average participation in each of the contests was given in the eleven contest tables, but for a comparative study of the interest taken in these activities, Figure 1 has been prepared. Each X represents 1 per cent of the total grade school enrollment.

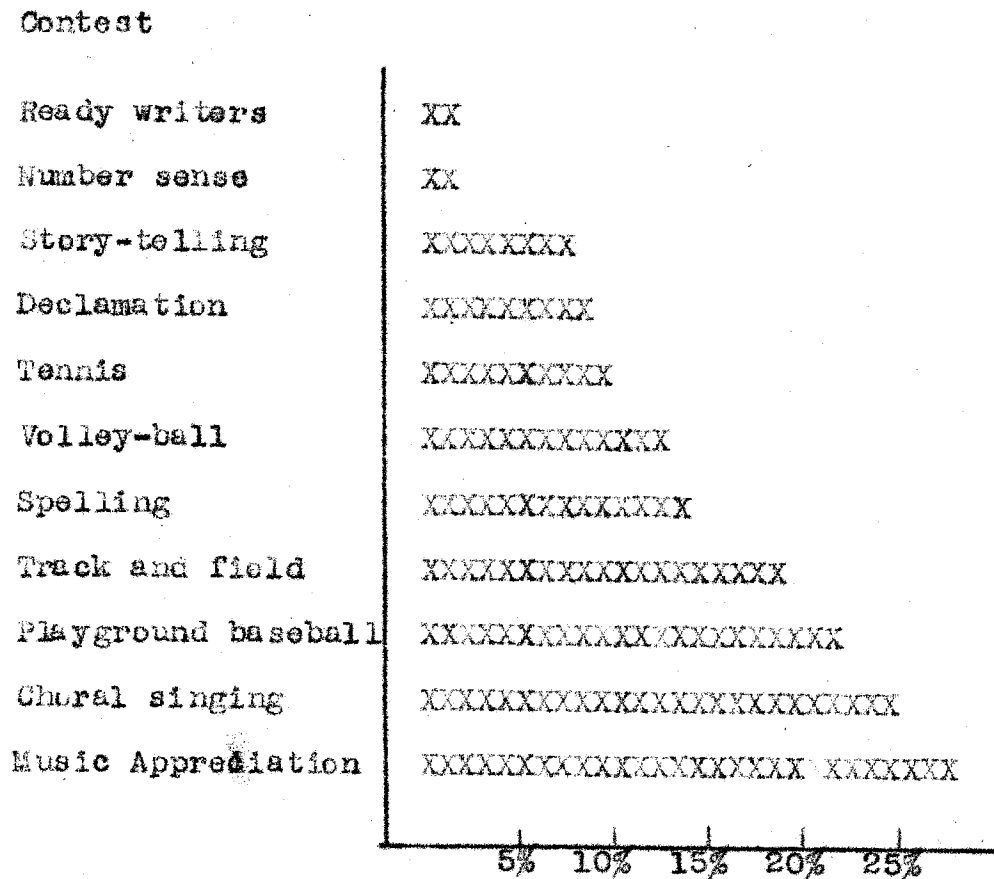


Fig. 1.--A comparison of the average percentage of participation in the League Contests in the Conference B elementary schools of Johnson County in 1947-1948.

This comparison shows that the number sense and ready writers' contests received such a small margin of support from the pupils in all the participating schools, that further investigation into their value to the schools is needed.

The music contests, though supported by such a relatively small number of schools, had the largest average percentages of participation of any of the contests, which would indicate that these activities were of a great deal of interest to those pupils to whom they were offered.

From a consideration of the data presented thus far in this chapter, it can be seen that a wide range of experiences are provided for the children and that the majority of the children in the majority of the schools found them of sufficient interest to take part in some of them. Further indication of pupil interest will be seen in the questionnaire analysis which follows.

Analysis of the Questionnaire

In order to further evaluate the activities of the League in Johnson County, certain other information was secured from Johnson County superintendents concerning their opinions as to the value of these activities as an educational procedure. This information was obtained through questionnaires given in personal interviews where each question could be discussed and the answers qualified. The data in Table 13, which follows give the response of the super-

intendents, expressed in number and percentage of yes and no answers to this questionnaire. The full text of the questionnaire is given in the appendix.

Though only eight Johnson County Schools participated in the League in 1947-1948, nine superintendents were interviewed. The superintendent of the school that did not participate had had considerable experience with the League activities in other schools and stated that he was interested in the activities and planned for his school to participate in the future. So his answers are included in the questionnaire results in order that a complete view of existing opinion among superintendents of Johnson County Conference B elementary schools for 1947-1948 may be had.

TABLE 13

THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF YES AND NO ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

Questions	Yes		No	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
1. Does your school participate regularly in the League Contests?	7	77.8	2	22.2
2. Did your school participate in the League activities last year?	8	88.9	1	11.1
3. Does the preparation for the League contest require too much of your teachers' time so that they may be forced to neglect other school duties?	1	11.1	8	88.9

TABLE 13--Continued

Questions	Yes		No	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
4. Do the contests afford a challenge to your teachers to do more effective teaching?	7	77.8	2	22.2
5. Do the contests provide a challenge to your pupils to do things well for the satisfaction of doing them well?	9	100.	0	0
6. Do the League activities provide too much for the "gifted few" to the exclusion of the normal and subnormal pupils?	4	44.4	5	55.6
7. Do the League activities, and the guidance involved in them tend to improve and perpetuate the ideals and practices of democracy in your school?	9	100.	0	0
8. Do the contests promote inter-school companionship?	7	77.8	1	11.1
9. Do the contests cause closer cooperation and friendliness between schools?	8	88.9	0	0
10. Do the League activities help your pupils to assume social responsibility?	9	100.	0	0
11. Do your pupils enter the contests willingly and enthusiastically?	6	66.7	3	33.3
12. Do the contests improve the expression of your pupils?	8	88.9	1	11.1

TABLE 13--Continued

Questions	Yes		No	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
13. Do you approve of the contest method of creating interest in activities?	8	88.9	1	11.1
14. Has too much stress been placed in some schools on winning the contest and too little on playing the game well?	8	88.9	1	11.1
15. Do the contest cause your teaching staff to be over-worked?	2	22.2	7	77.8
16. Are you in favor of continuance of the League activities?	8	88.9	0	0
17. Are you in favor of continuance of the League activities as conducted?	7	77.8	1	11.1
18. Do you think that your school patrons would favor continuance of the League activities?	7	77.8	0	0

The results show that the majority of the superintendents believe that the League meets some of the modern objectives of education. They also show that the majority of the superintendents believe that in some schools too much stress has been placed on winning the contests and too little on playing the game well and that a slight majority of them believe that the contests provide too much for the training

of the superior pupils to the exclusion of the normal and subnormal pupils.

These two faults are the only ones found by a majority of the superintendents and most of them favored continuance of the League program.

Participation figures in some of the contests, particularly the number sense and ready writers', bear out the superintendents' opinions that the contests provide too much for the training of the few superior pupils to the exclusion of the normal and subnormal ones in some of the contests.

No information was secured which could be considered as proof that too much stress had been placed on winning and too little on skill and fair play. This question was a general one asking if this was true "in some schools." No instances of unfair practices in this connection were cited by any of the superintendents and this question was not pressed. This study covers a limited area and it was believed that most superintendents would be reluctant to make any specific accusation against his neighbor schools. One superintendent stated that he had heard this objection to the League but he had seen no instances in Johnson County of any such practice.

In direct opposition to the majority opinion just discussed concerning the undue stress on winning in some schools, most of the superintendents believed that in their

own schools the contests provided a challenge to pupils to do things well for the satisfaction of doing them well and that they provided a challenge to teachers to do more effective teaching. In their own schools they also believed that democratic practices are promoted and effective social participation is brought about through these League contests.

Some general illustrations were given to bear out some of these answers, such as enthusiasm of pupils for entering contests, stress placed in some schools on good sportsmanship and excellence in performance, statements of teachers to the superintendent in one school concerning the challenge the contests had afforded them, friendships made through League games, social participation involved in group activities, improvement of oral expression in some of the contests, every child having an equal chance in the supervised League contests regardless of social or environmental background, and the like.

Specific instances where these gains were evident were lacking in many of the schools, so definite evidence that all the interviewees were correct in their opinions cannot be found, though it can be clearly seen that most of the superintendents consider the League program an asset to their schools.

Although no conclusions can be reached as to what extent winning is overstressed and skill and fair play is understressed, it is obvious that none of the schools could

meet the objectives they believe they have met and be guilty of this error at the same time. Perhaps it is possible that this error is only made in a slight degree in a few of the schools, but the fact that eight of the nine superintendents believe it is true in some schools indicates a need for careful self-evaluation in all the participating schools to see where this misplaced stress is.

Suggestions Made for Improving the League

Although eight of the superintendents favored continuance of the League and seven of them favored continuance of the League as it is now conducted, several suggestions were made for improving the League so that its services would be more valuable to the schools participating.

One person suggested that stress should be placed on good sportsmanship and good conduct to the extent that contest winners were determined on that basis. This person also wanted new activities added. He suggested new contests in table tennis and model airplanes and wanted homemaking and science brought into the activities.

Another superintendent offered as his only suggestion that more well-trained teachers were needed to direct some of the activities within the schools. He believed that better trained teachers would make the activities more interesting, more profitable and more significant for the

children; that better trained teachers would have more enthusiasm for their work and that enthusiasm begets enthusiasm.

Another expressed this same opinion concerning the enthusiasm of teachers. He believed that teachers should try to stimulate the pupils' interest in these worthwhile activities and that teachers should attend some of the contests each year whether they sponsored any of them or not. This superintendent made a practice of presenting the awards to the pupils in assembly programs, commenting on the help the contestants gave to the school by their participation, the self-improvement they had made and on the good sportsmanship that was evidenced in the League games.

Another superintendent suggested that schools should stress more the educational value from participating rather than winning the contests.

Another suggested that more contests were needed on the grade school level, and expressed a desire that grade school declamation winners be allowed to advance to the regional meets.

Another stated that he was in favor of the scholarship requirements for contestants but thought that the 14 year age limit for juniors might be low. He stated that he had had in his school a boy who was retarded because of illness and whose doctor had recommended for his health that he take

part in athletic activities. The boy was too old for the junior group and because of his grade placement could not compete with the high school teams, and was thus barred from the League teams. He believed the rules were generally fair, however, and said this age ruling had hampered only a small percent of his pupils and that the rules could not fit everyone.

Summarizing the suggestions made, (1) new contests were suggested by two superintendents, (2) a change in the junior age rule by one, (3) more teacher enthusiasm by two, (4) better trained teachers by one, (5) more stress on good sportsmanship and good conduct by one, and (6) stress on the educational value of contests rather than winning by one.

These suggestions came from six schools. Three made no suggestions.

None of the suggestions was a complaint against the way the districts meets themselves were conducted. Four of the suggestions could be effected by participating schools and two of the changes would have to come through the State Executive Committee who has the duty of creating new contests and making rule changes.

None of the suggestions was made by a sufficient number of schools to determine whether or not it was needed by all or most of them, but the fifth and sixth suggestions listed were inferred in the questionnaire answers where

eight of the nine superintendents stated that in some schools too much stress had been placed on winning and too little on playing the game well.

Evaluation of the League Activities

The data presented thus far in this chapter were secured in order that an evaluation could be made of the League activities as they were carried on in Johnson County Conference B elementary schools during 1947-1948 with the criteria set up in Chapter II. This evaluation follows in question and answer form.

1. Do the League activities provide educative experiences that are adapted to the fundamental needs of the child?

The League activities do provide educative experiences that are adapted to some of the fundamental needs of the child. Some of the physical health needs are met through physical activity in the League's athletic program.

The disposition and ability to act on thinking (an item from Kilpatrick's list of needs cited earlier in this writing) are promoted in all the activities. The child must act on thinking in the League games, especially in such games where skillful playing depends on team cooperation. In such contests as declamation and story-telling, the child must think on his feet in order to convey a thought to his audience. In the number sense contest, the power of reasoning is developed. In all the contests the disposition and ability to act on thinking is involved to some extent.

Other fundamental needs of the child are considered in other criteria in this discussion.

2. Do the League activities provide education experiences for effective participation in social life?

According to the unanimous opinion of the superintendents interviewed, the League activities do provide educative experiences for effective participation in social life. Examples of effective participation in social life which was provided through League activities bear out this opinion to some extent. Improvement of expression, inter-school companionships, and friendliness and cooperation between schools that were developed through the League contests are all an aid to effective participation in social life.

3. Do the League activities improve and perpetuate the ideals and practices of our democratic society?

Effective social participation is an integral part of a democratic society, so the foregoing criterion helps to answer this question. Aside from information thus presented, the unanimous opinion of the superintendents on this question was that the ideals and practices of our democratic society are improved and perpetuated through the League activities.

4. Do the League activities provide dynamic experiences for the children?

Participation figures presented in this chapter are evidence of a great deal of pupil interest in Johnson County. Interviews revealed that six of the nine superintendents had observed a great deal of interest and enthusiasm for the contests among their pupils. Further indication of pupil interest is reflected by the fact that seven of the superintendents believed that their school patrons would favor continuance of the League activities. This is taken as evidence of pupil interest, because it is believed that patrons' interest in these activities is a reflection of interest that have been carried into the home by the children. Superintendents' reports concerning this question are of course, an assumption, on their part, based upon their observation of community interest in the League. But other answers, too, are made on the basis of observation and it is believed that alert superintendents are able to discern whether or not a program of activities is being supported by his community, just as he can see evidences within his school of pupil interest and enthusiasm.

Some lack of interest was reported in some of the events, in some of the schools, and participation figures show a definite lack of interest in the number sense and ready writers' contests, but for the majority of the contests in the majority of the schools, a great deal of interest has been shown so the experiences must be dynamic ones to merit this support.

5. Do the League activities provide experiences that are subject to teacher guidance?

There is no contest in the League that is not subject to teacher guidance. In fact, one objection that has been voiced against the League program has been the tremendous amount of teacher guidance involved. Observations made by Johnson County superintendents indicate that, in their opinion, such an objection is not well founded. Most of them did not believe that their teachers were over-worked because of the added responsibility of the guidance involved in contest preparation, and most of them believed that the contests afforded a challenge to their teachers to do more effective teaching.

6. Are the League activities subject to change to meet the growing and changing needs and interests of the school children?

This question is not answered to any great extent in the survey of League activities of Johnson County for last year, since few changes were executed last year. But an examination of the League's plan of organization given in Chapter III reveals that a provision is made for executing needed changes through the State Executive Committee of the League. This committee acts on the recommendations of the State Legislative Advisory Council which is elected by member-schools of the League. So provision is

made for effecting needed changes and member-schools do have opportunity, through this council, to influence the policy of the League but not to change it. Final authority for making changes rests with the State Executive Committee.⁸

Certain local problems, such as optional rulings in certain of the athletic games, are left to the discretion of the District Executive Committee.

The League has undergone vast changes since its organization in 1913. Numerous contests have been added and rules have been changed from time to time in an effort to meet the growing and changing needs and interest of the children.

7. Do the League activities provide for a wide range of experiences to a majority of the school pupils?

The total picture of the League activities offered and accepted show that a wide range of experiences are provided, but examination of individual contest participation shows that in some of the schools in some of the contests, too much provision is made for the superior pupils to the exclusion of the normal and subnormal pupils. Five of the superintendents believed this was true.

Group activities reached more of the pupils in more of the schools than did contests entered on the individual basis, but the individual type of contest added to the

⁸
Ibid., p. 10.

range of the activities.

Although the majority of schools entered the number sense and ready writers' contests, the low percentage of participation in these contests indicate a need for further investigation into their value as an educational procedure.

Though only three schools entered the music appreciation contest and five entered the choral singing contest, the high percentage of pupils in these schools who took part indicate that the contests were well received where they were offered. Schools not participating should investigate into the help that might be derived from these contests, especially since all the non-participating schools except one did not have a special music teacher and the music appreciation contest was designed for schools of this kind.

8. Do the League activities as conducted place too much stress on winning the contest and too little on playing the game well?

This is the only topic in which the overwhelming majority of the superintendents found fault with the League program. Eight of the superintendents approved of the contest method of creating interest in worthwhile activities, but eight of them believed that in some schools too much stress had been placed on winning and too little on playing the game well. The extent to which undue stress had been placed on winning could not be determined, since no proof of this fault was given by anyone, but the fact that so many of them believed

that this had happened in some schools points to a tendency in that direction somewhere in the county, a tendency that needs to be changed. It could not be concluded from the evidence in hand, however, that this is true in the majority of the schools or even in any certain school.

The foregoing discussion and evaluation of the League activities in Johnson County Conference B elementary schools for 1947-1948 show clearly that the majority of those schools support the League and its program, that the majority of the superintendents interviewed believe the League activities have sufficient educational value to merit their continuance, and that the two major objections which the majority of the superintendents have found against the League's program of activities are: (1) the tendency of the League in actual practice to provide for the superior pupils to the exclusion of the normal and subnormal pupils and (2) the tendency in some schools to overstress winning contests and to understress skill and good sportsmanship.

With the information presented thus far in this study, certain conclusions and recommendations can be made concerning the League, its general aims, and its activities as carried on in Johnson County schools for 1947-1948.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study has shown that the aims of the League are in harmony with modern educational objectives, and that the activities of the League in Conference B elementary schools of Johnson County for 1947-1948 have met many of the educational objectives. The two principal shortcomings that were found in the League activities in Johnson County were the tendency in some schools to place too much stress on winning the contests and too little on skill and fair play, and the tendency of some of the activities to provide too much for the superior pupils to the exclusion of the normal and subnormal ones.

Conclusions

From the data presented in Chapter III and Chapter IV the following conclusions have been drawn:

1. The League aims are in harmony with the aims of modern education and with the guiding principles which were used in formulating the current courses of study for the public schools of Texas.
2. The method used to reach the objectives, that of

competitive effort with certain honors and awards given to the winners, is approved by the majority of the superintendents interviewed, but must be used with great care if the activities are to be of any value in character building.

3. In some schools in Johnson County too much stress has been placed on winning the contests and too little on skill and good sportsmanship.

4. The League program, in practice, has provided too much for the superior pupils to the exclusion of the normal and subnormal pupils in some Johnson County schools in some of the contests.

5. Special contests where this has been true in the majority of the schools are the number sense and the ready writers' contests.

6. The music contests, though not supported by a great majority of the schools, have met with a great deal more interest within the schools who supported them than any other activities offered by the League.

7. The League, in plan and in practice, provides for constant change to meet the growing and changing needs and interests of the school children, though the power of member-schools to effect these changes is limited.

8. All activities of the League are subject to teacher guidance, and according to the majority opinion of the

superintendents interviewed, teachers are not unduly burdened by the added responsibility of the contests but are provided with a challenge to do more effective teaching.

9. The League activities on the whole provide interesting and dynamic experiences, but some lack of interest is seen in some schools in some of the contests.

10. According to the opinions and observations of the superintendents interviewed, the League program tends to improve and perpetuate the ideals and practices of democracy.

11. According to their opinions and observations, the League activities provide educative experiences for effective participation in social life.

12. The League activities help the schools to meet some of the fundamental needs of the child.

13. The majority of the schools favor continuance of the League program.

14. Most of the suggestions for improving the League were not complaints against the way in which the District Meet was conducted nor against the League plan as a whole, but were suggestions that could be effected by the individual schools in the county.

Recommendations

An analysis of all the data presented in this study prompts the following recommendations:

1. That the elementary schools of Johnson County

continue their program of League activities.

2. That the schools place more stress on skill and good sportsmanship than on winning the contests.

3. That the schools strive to make their League Program reach the majority of the pupils rather than to allow superior pupils to monopolize any of the activities.

4. That the schools investigate the number sense and ready writers' contests to determine why they have been so poorly received by the pupils in order that improvement or replacement of the contests may be eventually effected.

5. That the schools not participating in the music contests investigate the possibilities for music education not provided by the schools in this contest.

6. That each of the schools evaluate its own program of League activities each year to determine whether or not it is giving the maximum of interesting and worthwhile educative experiences to a majority of the elementary pupils.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING THE UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC
LEAGUE ACTIVITIES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
OF JOHNSON COUNTY

This questionnaire is designed to obtain information concerning the University Interscholastic League activities in the elementary schools of Johnson County that will be helpful in evaluating these activities as an educational procedure.

Circle correct answer

1. Does your school participate regularly in the League contests? Yes No
2. Did your school participate in the League activities last year? Yes No
3. Please check the events in which your school entered, the number of contestants in the initial tryout, the number of contestants sent to the county meet and the number of pupils enrolled in your elementary school.

Literary Events

Event	Number of Contestants in Initial Tryout	Number of Contestants sent to District Meet	Number of Pupils Enrolled in Grade School	Comments, if any
a. Declamation Sub-junior boys (under 10 yrs. of age) Sub-junior girls (under 10 yrs. of age)				

Literary Events--Continued

Events	Number of contestants in Initial try out	Number of Con- testants sent to District Meet	Number of Pupils Enrolled in Grade School	Comments, if any
Junior boys (age 10-14) Junior girls (age 10-14)				
b. Story-telling Boys Grades 1-2 Girls Grades 1-2 Boys Grades 3-4 Girls Grades 3-4				
c. Ready writers' Boy or Girl				
d. Spelling and plain writing Grades 5-6 Grades 7-8				
e. Number Sense Boys or Girls				
f. Choral Singing (Division A (Grade school enrollment more than 60 pupils Feb. 1.) Division B (Grade school enrollment less than 60 pupils Feb. 1.)				
g. Music Appreciation Boys or Girls				

Athletic Events

Events	Number of Contestants in Initial Tryout	Number of Contestants Sent to District Meet	Number of Pupils Enrolled in Grade School	Comments, if any
a. Tennis Junior boys singles Junior girls singles Junior boys doubles Junior girls doubles				
b. Volley-ball Boys Girls				
c. Track and Field 50-yard dash 100-yard dash 400-yard relay Pull-up (chin-ning bar) Running high jump Running broad jump				
d. Playground baseball Junior Boys Junior Girls				

4. Indicate by a check mark the method of allowing time for preparation for League contests.

a) Alloted contest to teachers during year and everyone began preparation at a certain time, using a period or so a day for contest training.

b) Each teacher took care of contest preparation for her own grade and began preparation when she felt it was necessary.

- _____ c) Began preparation at beginning of the year by allotting tasks to various teachers and having them incorporate contest preparation into their regular school work.
- _____ d) Any other method.
5. Approximately how many weeks were given to preparation for these contests? _____
6. Do you feel that the League contests required too much of your teachers' time, so that they may have been forced to neglect their regular school duties? Yes No
7. Do you feel that the contests provide a challenge to your teachers to do more effective teaching? Yes No
8. Do you feel that the contests provide a challenge to pupils to do things well for the satisfaction of doing them well? Yes No
9. Do you feel the League activities provide too much for the "gifted few" to the exclusion of the normal and subnormal pupils? Yes No
10. The constitution of the League states that the object of the League is to foster among the public schools of Texas, inter-school competitions as an aid in preparation for citizenship. Do you feel that the League activities, and the guidance involved in the, tend to improve and perpetuate the practices of democracy in your school? Yes No
11. Do the contests promote inter-school companionship? Yes No
12. Do the contests cause closer cooperation and friendliness between schools? Yes No
13. Do the activities help your pupils to assume social responsibility? Yes No
14. Do your pupils enter the contests willingly and enthusiastically? Yes No

15. Do the League contests improve the expression of your pupils? Yes No
16. Do you approve of the contest method of creating interest in activities? Yes No
17. Do you feel that too much stress has been placed in some schools on winning the contest and too little on playing the game well? Yes No
18. Do you find that the contests cause your teaching staff to be over-worked? Yes No
19. Are you in favor of continuance of League activities? Yes No
20. Are you in favor of continuance of League activities as conducted? Yes No
21. Do you think that your school patrons would favor continuance of the League activities? Yes No
22. What suggestions would you have for improving the League and its activities?

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