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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were to design a self-instructional or programmed learning instrument that would enable the learner to obtain training in what the newsletter can do and how to produce an effective newsletter. Programmed instruction is defined and discussed, and the use of programmed instruction in adult education is referenced. Newsletter preparation is discussed from the standpoint of purpose, information gathering, writing techniques, format, production, and the mailing list. A Suggested Programmed Learning Manual is offered, and the use of the manual in extension worker training is discussed. A bibliography related to Programmed Instruction and Newsletter Preparation is provided. (DB)

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SPECIAL PROBLEMS

REPORT

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Newsletters in Extension Education  
with a Suggested Programmed Learning Manual  
for Self-Teaching of Newsletter Production

Submitted by

James L. Johnson

In partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Extension,  
Washington State University

Pullman, Washington

January, 1969

The instructor under whom the Special Problem was registered finds the Report satisfactory.

Approved

E. I. King

Date

1/11/69

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF AUTHOR

The author was born on the dusty, wind-swept plains near Davenport, Nebraska, on March 10, 1928. He moved with his family to the Pacific Northwest at age 12. They settled in the midst of the Olympic peninsula's rain-forest country near Port Townsend, Washington. Four years later the family moved to Oregon, near the city of Portland.

He graduated from high school at Hillsboro, Oregon. Shortly after, he entered the armed forces where he served with the Seabees from 1946 to 1948 and earned an enlisted rating of third class petty officer. Upon discharge, he enrolled at Oregon State University. At OSU he met a fellow veteran also interested in radio broadcasting. The following year they transferred to Washington State University where a major in radio was possible.

His schooling at WSU was interrupted by marriage and a recall into active service for the Korean conflict. After another two years' service, he returned to WSU to complete his BA degree in radio-speech in 1953.

The next several years saw employment in radio stations in Walla Walla, Washington; McMinneville, Oregon; and Wenatchee, Washington. During this time a daughter was born. At Wenatchee, the author became editor and publisher for a new fruit industry magazine. This venture, although fulfilling in many ways, was not successful. The author then worked as a printing salesman for the company that had printed the magazine.

In 1961 the author took the position of assistant experiment station editor at University of Idaho. Two years later he joined Washington State University's agricultural information staff as Extension radio-TV specialist. In 1966 he returned to University of Idaho as Agricultural Editor and Chairman of the Agricultural Information Department.

While at WSU he began his program of study towards a Master of Extension degree. Also, a second daughter was born.

He has been a 4-H'er, a Boy Scout, a Sea Scout, member of DeMolay, and a member of the Zeta Xi fraternity. He is now a member of the Moscow Lions club and the Elks. He produces a newsletter for both organizations. At the time of this report he also serves as Western Regional Director for the American Association of Agricultural College Editors. He enjoys little theatre work and has appeared in several plays in both Wenatchee and Moscow, and he is an ardent golfer.

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The author particularly appreciates the truth behind one of Professor Kreizinger's comments, delivered about one-third the way through the author's three-and-a-half year Masters degree study program. That comment was, "You're neither fish nor fowl" and was made in reference to the author's piecemeal study program of a three-hour course one semester, two three-hour courses another....all the while maintaining a full-time staff position at either Washington State University or University of Idaho.

The author realized then and more so now the full meaning of this comment. Such a program of study does not allow the student to be a student in the full sense, nor is he a full-time staff member. He misses the enrichment of full-time association with his fellow graduate students. And he, by necessity, is not available one hundred percent in his job.

The author also takes this opportunity to thank the Directors of Extension at Washington State University: Cal Svint, and later John Miller who became director upon Cal Svint's retirement. Their liberal policy of allowing staff members to further their education helped make the author's Masters program possible.

The author also thanks the Dean and Director of University of Idaho's College of Agriculture, James E. Kraus, for allowing the author to continue his program after joining the Idaho faculty. His tolerance to the author's frequent absences from his job is much appreciated.

And last, but far from least, the author thanks his wife and daughters for their understanding and encouragement. The need to be closeted with books and notes, the need to spend night hours at the office to make up missed work; both presented potential unhappiness opportunities from an incomplete family life. However, their understanding never let it happen, and therefore the author is grateful.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background Information

The Extension worker needs to communicate. The entire lifeblood of his existence depends upon it. Without the communication of ideas, concepts, new research findings, and a whole gamut of educational material, the Extension worker is nothing. His efforts have no meaning and they bear no fruit.

Communication, of course, takes many forms. Communication ranges from smoke signals to facial expressions. For the sake of simplicity, in the following discussion, communication is restricted to oral or written messages.

Orally, two people may talk together "eyeball to eyeball." Also on a person-to-person basis, one person may talk to more than one other. This may be a lecture before a group of students, a speaker before an audience, or a group discussion where one participant after another debates the subject at hand. Of the three examples cited, the latter can and should be most productive. The group discussion provides for two-way communication among the group's membership.

Other examples of oral communication include one person talking to many non-present individuals via radio and television. Also a two-way communication between two people separated in space may take place via telephone.

The same two people may communicate by letter, but with the delaying element of time added.

Aside from the "eyeball to eyeball" two person conversation, the telephone conversation, or the personal letter, probably the most direct means

of communicating is via the newsletter. In this respect, newsletter is defined as a more or less formally organized written piece, most generally mass produced by some mechanical means of duplicating, that is sent to more than one person on a more or less regular basis. The content may be on one subject or a variety of subjects.

The newsletter is described as a direct means of communicating because it is sent to a select clientele. Of course, communication takes place only when the recipient of the message receives it, that is, reads it in the case of a newsletter, and to some degree comprehends it. So in this respect the term "direct" cannot be considered as synonymous with "efficient" or "effective." Efficiency or effectiveness in any method of communication depends upon many factors, only one of which is the factor of getting the right message to the right person at the right time.

Recognizing the value of presenting a message to a known group of people at pre-selected times, Extension workers in Idaho use the newsletter method of communicating with their clientele to a widely varying degree, depending upon the county and the individual. Of those using newsletters, some workers are doing a good job. Others, unfortunately, are not.

### The Problem

The problem is three-sided.

One side is the misuse and abuse of the newsletter by Extension workers. Too many newsletters are prepared poorly, sent out on a mailing list that is not kept up-to-date, all with too little attention to the best timing of the information being communicated or to the style in which it is written and physically laid out on the page(s).

A second side of the problem involves the growing need for a rifle shot



method of communicating as afforded by newsletters rather than a shotgun "I-hope-it-hits-someone-who's-interested" method such a radio. This need is graphically illustrated by the rapidly diminishing farm audience. In Idaho, for instance, 20 years ago there were 2287 commercial poultrymen. Today, in 1968, this figure has dropped drastically to 148.

The third side of the problem is closely akin to and stems from the first side of the problem mentioned above. Because of the abuse and misuse of newsletters, considerable training is needed to make existing newsletters more effective and efficient...to do the job they are capable of doing.

In another respect, training in objectives for newsletters use and methods of preparation are needed for another group of Extension workers. This group is made up of those workers who are reluctant to put out newsletters because they recognize their own shortcomings. Also included in this group are new staff members.

Closely associated with this side of the problem is the added factor of time...time to conduct training sessions in objectives of newsletter use and preparation techniques.

The factor of time is an important one. Teaching Extension workers to write better newsletters requires two types of time: time to prepare the educational material and time to present the material in a teaching situation.

Teaching Extension workers can take various forms. The most time-consuming teaching situation from a man-day basis but probably the most productive one is on an individual basis. This is a "tutoring" situation where the Extension worker receives individual attention tailor-made to his needs.

Group teaching situations are most common, but at best are compromises. Always present is the need to proceed at a pace geared to the slowest learner or to the learner with the least amount of background information. The faster

learner or the learner who brings a greater understanding to the teaching situation faces boredom and a mental "tuning-out."

And, whether the teaching is individual or group, two days or more are desirable for best results. The teaching itself takes a portion of the time. A larger portion is needed by the learners to practice, to write newsletter items in a chosen format style. Evaluation and possibly additional practicing and evaluation demands another portion of time.

Idaho's agricultural information staff is limited, with only three professional workers. Consequently, time for training of any sort is precious indeed.

#### Objectives of this study

Training Cooperative Extension workers takes many forms, from short individual sessions to multi-day shortcourses and workshops for a group of workers. Each approach has one primary objective: that of providing additional skills so that the Extension worker becomes a more effective educator.

All too often the time for these training sessions comes dear for both the learner and the teacher. Therefore any means by which the learner can gain proficiency in a skill through self-instruction has value. Programmed learning is a recent advance in teaching that allows the individual to self-tutor himself, testing his progress and correcting mistakes as they occur. He is motivated to continue through the course of study by a built-in system of rewards.

Therefore, with these points in mind, the objectives of this study are to design a self-instructional or programmed learning instrument that will:

- (1) enable the learner to obtain training in what the newsletter can do, and
- (2) enable the learner to obtain training in how to produce an effective newsletter.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Programmed Instruction

##### Definition and Background Information

Programmed instruction is relatively new on the educational scene. Considerable research has been conducted as to its effectiveness or non-effectiveness. Different styles have been devised for presenting programmed instruction material. Various instruments are available from a simple booklet to elaborate machines. (11,22)

However, not everyone is in agreement about programmed instruction. As Deterline states:

"The programmed movement, if we should call it that, has been largely characterized by inflexibilities and dichotomous controversies: linear versus branching (programs), overt versus covert responses, construction versus discriminatory (selective) responses. These and others have been symptoms of a general inflexibility, an unwillingness to consider alternatives, a fine disregard for the world of education as it exists, and the lack of a practical and realistic analysis of the requirements for effective instruction." (9)

However, programmed instruction is gaining more converts than dissenters. More of the research shows positive advantages than doesn't. More often than not the critics criticize for the purpose of strengthening the effectiveness of programmed instruction than to tear down this approach to education. Its form and approaches may change, but the principles of programmed instruction are here to stay.

So what is programmed instruction?

Rewards are strong motivators in learning. (11,21,22,27) For the learner to know he has responded correctly is perhaps the most important reward the instructor can give.

Learning theorists prefer the term "reinforcement" ... defined as something that strengthens the behavior that has taken place. (11)

Educators know that the more frequently the rewards the better the learner assimilates the material. In this respect, ideally, the learner would be rewarded immediately for answering each question correctly. (22)

This is a basic characteristic of programmed instruction: immediate knowledge by the student of his performance.

Two other features basic to programmed instruction are: constant, active participation by the learner, and the provision for letting the rate and sometimes the sequence of instruction be determined by the learner's own responses.

Pipe offers this definition of programmed instruction:

"The objective...is to produce materials that permit efficient individual study by a student independent of an organized study group and without continuous intercession of live instruction." (22)

Programmed instruction can be as simple as a specially prepared book. Or it can be as complex (and expensive) as a computer programmed to "individualize" its instructions to each learner's needs. Many types of teaching machines have been devised since programmed instruction burst upon the educational scene.

Pipe explains that Professor Sidney L. Pressey developed a teaching machine about 1915 and used it for approximately the next 15 years for teaching and testing. (22) However, Pressey's invention didn't attract much attention for three decades. An independent stream of experimentation by the military using methods of getting active learner responses in training films took place in the late forties and early fifties.

However, as Lumsdaine points out:

"...the spark that touched off the outburst of interest which has mushroomed into a major educational movement was not struck until 1954, when Professor B.F. Skinner of Harvard University published his paper, 'The Science of Learning and the Art of Teaching.'" (19)

### Skinnerian or Linear Programming

In working with animals, Skinner devised the theory of conditioning the learner in small steps amply rewarded along the way toward a desired change in behavior. In regards to training animals, the comparison has been made to Pavlov's dog where conditioning takes place to the point that a bell is rung and the dog salivates. (22)

Basic to the Skinnerian or linear type programming is the presentation of material in small steps or frames. This type program is best described as a single-path sequence in which all learners read and respond to the same material. In the linear program, a sentence of information is followed by an incomplete but parallel sentence or problem based upon the information in the first sentence. The learner then responds by completing the sentence or figuring the answer to the problem. The usual method is to then reveal the correct answer(s) just prior to presenting a new bit of information.

Pipe (22) deals with one fault encountered in linear programming: that of insufficient practice. As he points out, one way to build proficiency through practice in the linear program is by "vanishing" or "fading" the amount of prompting or cueing. The learner is forced to practice by being required to give the correct answer(s) with less and less information provided in subsequent sentences.

Those who write about the principles of linear programs are generally agreed to the following rules of programming: require active responding, proper cueing, appropriate context (in each frame), small steps, careful sequencing, frequent

repetition, knowledge of the subject matter, don't lecture---teach, evoke relevant responses, don't provide more cues than necessary, don't assume too much knowledge, don't present two new facts in one frame. (11,15,16,21,24,28)

### Crowderian or Intrinsic Programming

Another type of programming was devised by Norman Crowder and is called both intrinsic or branching programming. This type program is composed of several paths or branches. The paths a particular learner takes are determined by his pattern of responses. Learners who make errors are exposed to more material than those who respond correctly. In this manner, the learner with more background knowledge about a particular subject is allowed to move through the program more quickly than one who is being exposed to the information for the first time. (7, 11,16,22)

Jacobs points out:

"The techniques usually associated with the branching style are derived from the principles that different students need different instructional material and that students can learn from their own errors. From this point of view, it may be more efficient to proceed quickly and to deal with larger chunks of material at a time than to modify gradually the student's behavior." (16)

Jacobs (16) uses the term "mainstream of frames" providing relatively larger steps. The learner moves along this mainstream until he makes an error. At this point he is sent to a remedial step or even series of steps where he is given additional information and examples to clear up his misunderstanding. He then moves back into the mainstream until he stumbles again.

Various writers have commented on the differences between the two "styles" of programming.

Pipe comments:

"If Skinner's concern is with the science of learning, Crowder's can be said to be with the art of teaching." (22)

Jacobs saw the principle difference between the two styles this way:

"As you go through the branching program, the material to which you are directed depends on the answer you choose. But in the linear program, the material you see doesn't depend on the response you make." (16)

And, speaking to the differences between his own and Skinner's approach,

Crowder comments:

"Basically it comes down to the problem posed by human variability. The more carefully we fit the microstructure of instructional materials to a single individual, the less good the fit must be for a second individual." (7)

Campbell (3) points up the value of the intrinsic approach when he talks about giving the learner more control of the program in light of meaningfulness, self-evaluation, and motivation. Even though the learner may choose the correct answer, he has the option of "practicing" the knowledge by taking a side branch to additional illustrative material. This additional material then becomes enrichment material for that learner and not corrective material as in the case of the learner who chooses the wrong answer.

Pressey's convictions, as quoted by DeCecco, are:

"Learners dealing with meaningful matter may profit by seeing not only what a thing is but what it is not, may profit by mistakes, may learn to recall from learning to discriminate." (8)

In commenting on some experiments conducted by Coulson and Silberman, Fry (11) points up another factor illustrating the value of the intrinsic program. The 1960 experiment compared students permitted to branch forward or to skip certain items in the program to students working through a linear program. Because the branching group learned the same amount as the linear group but in significantly less time, one difference may have been, as Fry states it:

"...decrease in boredom, which, although not measurable, certainly contributes to the value of the branching program." (10)

### Controversies about Styles and Philosophy

That a controversy exists between linear (Skinner) and intrinsic or branching (Crowder) approaches to programmed instruction is stating the case mildly.

Many writers have commented on it. (7,8,13,21,22)

As Pipe states:

"The controversy as to whether linear or branching programming is superior rumbles continuously and erupts spasmodically." (22)

In expounding his own theory, Crowder (5) is critical of the linear style and compares it to the way a dog is trained. And DeCecco quotes Pressey as saying:

"The arch villain, leading so many people astray is declared to be learning theory! No less a charge is made than that the whole trend of American research and theory as regards learning has been based on a false premise -- that the important features of human learning are to be found in animals. Instead, the all-important fact is that human has transcended animal training." (8)

Deterline also refers to animal training in his criticism:

"Our animal analogies from the laboratory are based on motor skills and may have very little to do with human conceptual learning." (10)

And Pressey and Kinzer make the same point:

"Many psychologists think that methods of promoting learning in lower animals are not necessarily those most adequate for use with human beings." (24)

In addition to the comparison between animal and human learning, another essential difference that feeds the controversy is the philosophy concerning the goodness or badness of errors. The writer of a linear program strives to eliminate all possible chances of error in designing his program. They detract from the learning process, according to Skinner. (27)

Crowder, on the other hand, takes a diametric view:

"...errors are looked upon as opportunities for further explanation and rectification of subjective conceptions rather than evil genies that interrupt the learning process." (6)



Despite the controversy that rages between the opposed schools of thought, both systems have been shown to teach. (22) In addition to their successful programs, each system has been found to fall short of expectations in some situations. Certainly considerably more research will need to be conducted before the controversy is settled.

Goldstein makes this straight forward statement concerning the controversy:

"Of course, now you'd like to know which style of program is most effective. Truthfully, I don't know, and I doubt that anyone does." (13)

Another controversy is also found in the literature. Here the detractors are those who criticize programmed instruction for not realizing its potential. They are concerned with the emphasis in programmed instruction on rote learning. The small bits of information presented, especially in the linear program, all too often fall short of obtaining the desired end.

DeCecco quotes Pressey as being particularly clear in his feelings about this:

"Language, number, such skills as silent reading, more possible facilitations of learning, and kinds of learning, impossible even for the apes. Auto instruction should enhance such potentials. Instead, current animal derived procedures present fragments serially in programs and replace process of cognitive clarification with largely rote reinforcements of bit learning." (8)

Pressey and Kizer (24) report on an experiment where the students were not able to generalize the knowledge they learned through programmed instructions to new examples. Examples within the programs were handled with ease, but upon testing, the students could not transfer this knowledge to the solving of similar problems.

Of this, the researchers comment:

"One might infer that the learning exercises were too specific and that generalizations or principles were themselves taught as specific bits of knowledge. Hence, one could not expect transfer to new problems in the absence of a concerted effort to teach for transfer." (24)

In this respect, they report, the transfer problem needs continued investigation.

They also offer another possible interpretation of this failure for students to use knowledge they've learned through programming to solve similar problems. Programming may be a fairly adequate basis for describing how specific bits of knowledge are learned, but, as they point out, it is a totally inadequate theory for describing how students learn to attack new problems or to generalize to broader applications.

Campbell (3) cites the fact that meaningfulness greatly affects rate of learning as one reason why programmed instruction sometimes fails. What is happening in the learner's mind and how he perceives the material being presented as meaningful in light of his own needs will determine how well he learns.

Much of the criticism in this vein can be laid at the feet of overeagerness in the early days of programmed instruction. Many programs were written that shouldn't have been written. They were poorly prepared, overly simple in nature, and lightly tested if they were tested at all before being put on the market. (9)

DeCecco (8) comments on Pressey's sharp criticism in which Pressey states that early adherence to the Skinnerian concept of reinforcement resulted in programs that did not utilize the scope of cognitive activity of which humans are capable. As Pressey contends, man's symbolic and linguistic capacity give him a considerably wider range of behavior.

In the cognitive domain of the Bloom "Taxonomy of Educational Objectives" the acquiring of knowledge is the first step in the hierarchy of obtaining an educational objective. Following this step in the series comes comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in that order. (1)

Still another kind of criticism is offered by Leedham and Unwin:

"A demon which is always lying in wait for the walter of

programmes is boredom -- on the part of the student not the programmer. Anyone who browses through a wide range of published programmes will be struck by the high degree of built in boredom." (18)

### Value of Programmed Instruction

Despite these criticisms and the controversy that continues to boil about methods and systems, the value of programmed instruction cannot be denied.

Fry points out:

"A number of studies have been made of the relative validity of programmed instruction and conventional instruction; and the programmed instruction material has easily held its own. Students using programmed instruction material learn just as well as those taught by other methods and appear to do so in considerable less time." (11)

Skinner (27) emphasized the value of each learner being free to proceed at his own rate. Conventional teaching methods present material to all students in a lock-step manner. The good student tends to become bored. However, the slow learner suffers more disastrous consequences. When a slow learner is forced to move beyond his own natural speed, pressures mount.

As Skinner explains:

"The student who has not fully mastered a first lesson is less able to master a second. His ultimate failure may greatly exaggerate his shortcoming; a small difference in speed has grown to an immense difference in comprehension." (27)

Cartier (4) takes exception with the critics that programmed instruction tends to teach on the lowest level of the cognitive domain and cannot teach thinking, especially creative thinking. He points out that the stricter behaviorists who champion the cause of programmed instruction react the same way, refusing to even discuss the subject of thinking. They will only discuss observable behavior.

Programmed instruction can teach thinking, according to experiments con-

ducted by Cartier. (4) His work in designing linear programs to teach reasoning proved successful. These results point up another value and one that, no doubt, will be pursued by more educators as the art of designing such programs becomes better defined.

What is being recognized more and more in programmed instruction circles is that this bright new child of the educational philosopher's family is not an educational panacea. Schramm reports on two programmed instruction workshops conducted in Jordan and Nigeria. As his report points out:

"What must be avoided at all costs is the feeling that programmed instruction is a short cut to improved teaching. As the participants of the workshop quickly discovered, the only reason programmed instruction is able to produce more efficient learning is because of the enormous amount of time and energy the instructor must put in before a lesson is ready to be made a part of a classroom instruction." (25)

#### Well-Defined Objectives Necessary

One area generally accepted in the programmed instruction circle is the value of defining the objectives of the learning to take place before starting the instruction itself. (12,20,21,23,26)

The program writer is forced to make decisions about the end product of his instruction. What is to be learned? How will this learning be measured, that is, how will the learner or instructor know whether the learner has satisfactorily fulfilled the learning objective(s)? The well-defined objective, stated at the beginning of the program and tested for at the end, is the answer.

The decree that this be so is emphasized time and time again in the literature. Quite possibly Short felt the emphasis is somewhat overdone when he wrote:

"Everyone appears to agree that behavioral objectives have joined the selected company of 'motherhood' and 'country.'" (26)

Although the remark may be somewhat facetious, Short (26) also points out

the value of the well-defined objective. Educational objectives as stated by teachers of classroom students all too often were described in vague terms. Students were expected to understand, appreciate, and know things, and what this understanding, appreciation, and knowledge looked like was seldom considered and never elaborated.

Popham agrees when he says:

"...classroom teachers usually preface a description of their instructional plans with high sounding but wholly ambiguous assertions such as 'The student would improve his ability to meaningfully deal with the underlying causes of the Civil war.'" (23)

Mager (20) presents a list of words that are open to many interpretations and a list of words open to fewer interpretations. Among the poorer words and phrases to use in formulating objectives are: to know, to understand, to appreciate, to fully understand, to really understand, to fully appreciate, to grasp the significance of, to enjoy, to believe, to have faith in, to explore.

Among the better words to use are: to write, to recite, to identify, to differentiate, to solve, to construct, to list, to compare, to contrast.

Hite gives three guidelines, adapted from Mager, in writing objectives:

"The statement of objectives that communicates best will be one that describes the terminal behavior of the learner well enough to preclude misinterpretation.

"You will sometimes have to further define terminal behavior by stating the conditions you will impose upon the learner when he is demonstrating his mastery of the objective, i.e. given a list of....

"Specify the criteria (excellence of performance) or acceptable performance by describing how well the learner must perform to be considered acceptable." (14)

Since programmed instruction is self-instruction, an additional advantage of clearly defined objectives is that the learner is given the means to evaluate his own progress at any point along the way. As Mager (20) points out, by so doing, the learner is able to organize his efforts into relevant activities.

### Use of Programmed Instruction in Adult Education

The literature on programmed instruction reveals a considerably less amount of information concerning application of programmed instruction to adult learning than to students in formal classroom settings. However, the literature does provide substantial evidence that adults do learn through use of programmed instruction.

Bushnell (2) reports on a project of adult education with 96 journeymen electricians. Overall, the journeymen learned the fundamentals of direct current theory in about half the time allotted to such a course. He also points out that about two-thirds of the students said it was easier to learn from the programmed instruction material than from an instructor.

Lumsdain points out:

"Industrial organization as well as schools have been quick to see the potentials of programmed instruction for improving the efficiency of their training. One careful investigation reports a saving of about 25 percent in the time required for instruction when programmed instruction materials were introduced, as well as a higher level of learning and retention." (19)

Adults like the idea of working at their own rate. Bushnell (2) determined this in working with postgraduate education of dentists and doctors. The programmed instruction appealed to this calibre student, according to Bushnell, because it allowed him to work at his own rate and he developed the feeling of almost being guaranteed successful learning.

However as Bushnell states:

"The real promise of programmed instruction may be its ability to overcome adult reluctance to expose themselves to the conventional classroom and to possible failure in the eyes of their associates." (2)

No doubt this factor, though not measurable, comes into play to a considerable degree in the acceptance of programmed instruction courses for the primary use of adults.

## Newsletter Preparation

### Importance of Newsletters

The agricultural scene is changing. Fewer farmers are producing more and more of our food and fiber, and they're becoming more specialized in the crops they produce and the animals they raise. County agents are turning more and more to newsletters to communicate with these specialized groups. (38,39)

As was pointed out in a Washington State University report:

"As the farm slice of the population pie gets slimmer, mass media will be reluctant to give much space or time to material for farmers. So direct mail will become a major channel for Extension messages. It has several unique advantages: audience selection, 100 percent coverage, and complete control of message." (39)

One point brought out in the Rutgers Newsletter Seminar substantiated this:

"Newsletters in your agricultural extension field are growing because the newspapers are not using your material." (38)

Dail (33) reports on a California survey that showed newsletters rate as a favorite source of information for farm families. During 1961-62, 11 newsletter mail surveys were conducted. California farmers said newsletters were two-and-a-half times more valuable to them than newspaper articles prepared by farm advisors (agents) and three times more valuable than radio programs presented by farm advisors.

To a lesser degree they said newsletters were more valuable than meetings, visits to the farm, office calls, telephone calls, and tours.

The California studies also revealed that newsletters were usually kept about the house after receipt, and about one-fourth of the recipients filed them.

And, as Dail states:

"In one study, a majority of those reporting indicated they read all the items in the newsletters." (33)

Washington State offers some guidelines for when to use newsletters and when to use mass media. Newsletters are best when you want to reach a small audience, when you need to be sure every person in a group gets the message, and when you need to use more detail than the mass media will carry, such as formulas for rations. Newsletters are best to use, too, when the subject matter content might be objectionable to a non-farmer reader, listener, or viewer. This is particularly true with animal diseases, manure disposal, and similar topics. (39)

Mass media is best to use when you want to reach a large audience such as lawn owners, and if you want to create a climate of public awareness and importance for an event or program. (39)

#### Definition and Purpose

Newsletters are described in various ways.

Brinkman (30) defines newsletters as any duplicated letter which is sent out repeatedly under the same general format to a particular group. It is usually several pages long with titles, headings, and illustrations.

Sylvia Meehan, a home economist participating in the Rutgers Newsletter Seminar, had these thoughts about what a newsletter meant to her:

"A newsletter for me is a public relations device. The newsletter has a personality. I notice in all the home economists' newsletters that I read that they sound like the people who wrote them." (38)

Dail (33) agrees that the newsletter should follow a freer, less formal pattern than other types of writing. He points out that many California advisors use a writing style resembling a letter plus the brevity and getting-to-the-point of a news story. Furthermore, he points out, newsletters serve as a direct communication line between the advisor and his or her clients.

Hall points out:

"A good newsletter, issued regularly, has a cumulative value.



Month after month, it should build readership and add to the reader's store of knowledge." (36)

Writing about the use of newsletters in 4-H work, Brinkman points out:

"The letter may provide an additional contact that helps to maintain the interest of 4-H club members, local leaders, and other Extension cooperators. It may provide additional information to supplement other Extension methods, or it may be a carrier of helpful information to many who seldom attend meetings or participate in other Extension activities." (30)

Hall (36) agrees, pointing out that newsletters can serve as an effective supplement and reinforcement to other teaching methods. Newsletters require a relatively small amount of an agent's time in relation to the size of the potential audience.

She further states:

"It must be worthwhile, timely information not quickly or readily available elsewhere. When possible, it should be adapted to the local situation." (36)

A professional newsletter producer, speaking at the Rutgers Newsletter Seminar, defined the newsletter and its value in this way:

"A newsletter is a form of direct mail used to impart a wide variety of unique information, news, or entertainment on a regular schedule to a select audience for the purpose of promoting an idea, a point of view, or a concept of the newsletter's sponsor or publisher." (38)

When asked what he meant by "unique," he said:

"...you have a point of view to express to a certain audience to get a job done. You're spinning your wheels if you're just reworking the same old information your readers are getting somewhere else." (38)

### Gathering Newsletter Information

An important factor in producing a newsletter, as pointed out above, is that of including the right type of information geared to the interests of the target audience.

Concerning his approach to gathering information of interest for his own newsletter, Corrow (31) looks for items about: new activities, on-going activities, people, administration, and human interest.

Dail offers these suggestions:

"State specialists' newsletters are useful sources of research results and timely information. Newsletters of fellow county staff members in neighboring counties frequently add useful grist to the mill. Your own experiences and observations can furnish much of the content. Tests and experiences of clientele also provide useful information. Other sources include university publications." (33)

To these, Spaven (41) adds promoting products and upcoming events, answering frequently asked questions, saving correspondence and conversation, and condensing or extracting from important legislation, speeches, and current events.

Meehan reported at the Rutgers Newsletter Seminar that her system is a continuing process. When an item of interest to homemakers comes across her desk, she marks it with the name of her newsletter. Her secretary types up the item as she finds time. The typing is done in the sentence length of the newsletter. When the time comes to put the newsletter together, Meehan simply pastes up the articles to fit the layout. (38)

Another participant in the same seminar reported using a series of monthly folders marked with the name of his newsletter. Newsworthy items are placed in appropriate folders for future issues. A day is scheduled each month to rewrite the items and produce the finished newsletter. (38)

Accumulating the items that will fill the newsletter leads to the next step. This is planning the total newsletter.

Arbour (29) says you should first think it through. The items you plan to use should be weighed carefully against whether there is need for the information. Each item should be evaluated as to whether the information will help your clients.

Spaven advises you to:

"Consider the extent of his knowledge -- not only what he knows, but how well he knows it, what he wants to know, and what he needs to know. Is he aware of the information you are offering, seeking more information, evaluating, trying the idea, or already using it?" (41)

Arbour (29) offers nine questions that will serve as a guide in planning the newsletter: 1. Who is the reader? 2. What is the purpose? 3. What will be the main idea? 4. What information will you include? 5. What kind of salutation will you use? 6. How long will the letter be? 7. What will be the tone of your letter? 8. What kind of closing will you use? 9. Will an illustration improve your letter, is it appropriate, and will it fit into the space you have?

You are writer, editor, and circulation manager, according to Dail. (33) As a writer, you select the items you use and write them for your newsletter with your intended reader in mind. As an editor, you take a critical look at what you've written, shortening, rewriting, and rearranging if needed. As a good editor, you should ask another person who has the honesty to be truthful to read your material critically for meaning and clarity. And as circulation manager, you build your mailing list with names of people in your area who can benefit from the information in your newsletter. You also check your mailing list each year and bring it up to date to comply with penalty mailing regulations.

#### Determining Content of a Newsletter

Cowing (32) points out that people read writing that tells them in concrete words that it will pay them to read it. They will read what relates to their interests and needs.

Pachard, in talking about motivational research relating to approaches used in advertising, states:

"In searching for extra psychological values that they could add to products to give them a more potent appeal, the depth merchandisers came upon many gratifying clues by studying your subconscious needs, yearnings, and cravings." (40)

He goes on to point out that advertisers sell emotional security, reassurance of worth, ego gratification, creative outlets, sense of power, and immortality. (40)

Still another list is offered by Gilbertson who says:

"To intensify the desire to act on suggestions given for remedying a situation, appeal to fundamental wants or motives such as the desire for increased gain, wealth, safety, saving of time, durability, dependability, recognition, and the high regard of other people. The picturing of advantages or satisfaction is one of the most important elements of persuasion." (34)

Hall (36) has summarized why people read and how information in a newsletter can help satisfy needs. She states that people read to gain health, popularity, praise, pride of accomplishment, self-confidence, time, improved appearance, comfort, social and business advancement, money security, leisure, increased enjoyment, and prestige. People read to save time, discomfort, risk, money, worry, embarrassment, work, and doubts. People want to express personality, satisfy curiosity, win affection, resist domination, emulate the admirable, acquire and collect things, and improve themselves. And finally, people want to be creative, efficient, recognized, up-to-date, first in things, sociable, hospitable, proud of possessions, good parents, and influential over others.

Arbour points out:

"There must be a note of encouragement in your letter. There must be hope of betterment. Don't discourage your reader. Boost him and you'll get better results. Appeal to his interest in himself, his family, his problems." (29)

Cowing simply says:

"Pack your writing with appeal: tell readers 'It's good to eat' before you say 'It's good for you.'" (32)

However, even though a newsletter item appeals to one or more of these "reasons" why people read or their desire to satisfy a particular need, the county agent cannot be sure of acceptance. Griessman (35) states that research shows that people are selective in what they see and hear. They tend to avoid communication that differs from their own views and beliefs. In fact, he points out that:

"The persons to whom a message is directed may, in fact, be the ones that are least likely to be reached by it." (35)

These selective processes are three-fold: selective exposure, selective perception and selective retention. Avoidance of contradictory information is an example of selective exposure. Distortion of a contradictory message or remembering only parts of it illustrates selective perception. And a person who learns a particular piece of compatible information faster and remembers it longer is exercising selective retention. (35)

Griessman points out:

"In some instances social change can be brought about by concentrating upon those who are already favorable to a message; that is, by reinforcing their attitudes to such an extent that they will act in a specified manner. If selective exposure should prove to be a formidable barrier, perhaps the message could be reworded in such a way that resistance will be lowered and exposure rates raised." (35)

### Writing the Newsletter

According to Spaven:

"It would be difficult, if not impossible, to carry on an educational program of any kind without writing. By inference, the success of any educational program depends largely upon the effectiveness of the writing that is part of the program." (41)

Both short sentences and short paragraphs are assets in newsletter writing.

This style of brevity has strong agreement among the sources investi-

gated. (29,31,36,38,41,43)

Stephen (43) points out that a little extra effort in condensing copy pays dividends. A lot of meaningless words smothers your message, and forces the reader to hunt for it.

The professional newsletter producer speaking at the Rutgers Newsletter Seminar made his point succinctly. He said:

"Make the piece look like 't's thought fast, produced fast, out fast....as a newsletter." (38)

Avoid complex, compound sentences is the advice of Arbour. (29) Likewise avoid bookish phrases and connectives such as "likewise," "in addition to," and "it is recommended." An example of this is as follows:

"Poor --- It is recommended to begin spraying the latter part of June.  
Better --- Begin spraying the latter part of June." (29)

Still another example comes from Spaven, who urges the newsletter writer to say it simply so that the reader will remember it easily. In citing his example, he asks if you recognize these famous words:

"In this case I have undertaken the journey here for the purpose of interring of the deceased. From this point of view I do not, however, propose putting anything on record in so far as praise is concerned.

"No? Then surely you remember the edited version:

"I came to bury Caesar, not to praise him." (41)

Cowing (32) adds use of short words to the advice about using short sentences and short paragraphs. All three combine to help surround your words with white space, a desirable situation in regards to ease of reading and ease of grasping ideas.

Others agree with the use of short words in writing the information for a newsletter. (29,31,33,41,43)

Use build not construct -- and get rid of, not eradicate, is the advice of

Arbour. (29) In other words, use a specific word instead of a vague or general word. Other examples would be most not maximum, least not minimum, and help not assistance.

Likewise avoid the technical word when a popular word will do.

Dail (33) points out, however, that technical or new and uncommon terms can be used. But they should be defined quickly or used so that their meaning is clear.

And Cowing says:

"...tell your story plainly to your readers in shirt sleeve English -- the down-to-earth brand we use every day when we talk to each other." (32)

On the other hand, as Cowing (32) points out, saying what you mean can be dangerous. The hedging and vague writing practiced by some technical writers is done to avoid the penalty of using plain words.

"Economists are often forced to leave loopholes by saying 'it seems' or 'it would appear,' 'it may be,' or some such evasive remark. When you hedge with such weasel words, your chances are slim of getting your ideas across to the average readers." (32)

Another near-universal principle is that of using personal words and writing in an informal style. (29,31,41)

Arbour (29) advises using as many personal references as practicable.

Names, personal pronouns, and certain other words are personal references. He presents a list of examples in each category:

"Names --- proper names of persons.

"Personal pronouns --- I, you, he, she, we, they, me, him, us, them, my, mine, your, yours, his, hers, ours, their, theirs, myself, yourself, himself, herself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves. (Note: they and them are personal pronouns only when they refer to people.)

"Words indicating human beings or relationships --- aunt, baby, boy, brother, child, cousin, dad, daddy, daughter, father, fellow, folk, friend, gentleman, girl, husband, lady, mother, miss, sister, son, uncle, wife, and any combinations with grand- and step-in-law." (29)

Care must be taken to not over-do, however. As Cowing points out:

"You must use judgment in personalizing. You can't just sprinkle your information with a lot of 'we's' and 'you's' the way you season soup with salt and pepper." (32)

Various other principles of style must be considered in writing the newsletter. How to get started is one. Dail (33) says to place the most important, interesting, and timely items first in the letter and move into the topic quickly. If an article can't be condensed but is still of strong interest, consider using it as an enclosure, a separate sheet included with the newsletter.

Arbour agrees:

"Go right into your subject with your opening sentence. Don't waste time and space with introductions. Employ the same technique you use in writing a news story. Blur out the main idea. Make your letter newsy enough to attract favorable attention. Make it easy for the reader to grasp the main idea at once. No reader likes to dig out information. Appeal to the reader's interests and thus lure him on." (29)

An example of this jumping-right-into-it approach is as follows:

"Don't say --- 'Dear Poultryman: It has been a long time since I have written to you....'"

"Do say ----- 'Dear Poultryman: You can cut down your feed bills this winter by planting winter legumes....'" (29)

Avoid using commercial names, is the advice of Dail. (33) If using a commercial name can't be avoided, try to use two or more names of commercial products. Avoid giving prices of products. Also insert a simple disclaimer. This disclaimer can be worded as follows:

"Trade names are used occasionally to simplify the information presented. No endorsement of named products is intended nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned." (33)

Hall (36) mentions another point of style in writing newsletters. She is adamant in her advice to avoid overstatement, either in words or in punctuation. If she had her way, she would do away with the exclamation marks from every writer used for newsletter writing.



She accuses foods and fashion writers especially of falling into the habit of making a big event out of the mundane.

"The food writer proclaims: 'Squash season has arrived!' The fashion writer assures us: 'The new plaids are exciting to wear!' According to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, the exclamation mark is used to denote forceful utterance or strong feeling. To exclaim is to cry out, to speak in strong or sudden emotion. The arrival of the squash season can hardly be considered the occasion for an emotional display. Enough said!!!\*\*" (36)

Writing style for newsletters, as with most other styles of writing, profits from attention to other details. Cowing (32) speaks for others (41,42) when she urges the writer to use live action verbs, few verbals, few prepositional phrases, little if any passive voice, and no redundancy.

One area of disagreement is found concerning structuring sentences.

Cowing (32) says to:

"...use the simple sentence pattern of narration: subject, verb, object."

However, Smith and Stappleford advise:

"Vary the normal subject, verb, object order of your sentences in the following ways: 1. Begin sentences with introductory expressions. 2. Insert phrases between subject and verb. 3. Begin some sentences with coordinate conjunctions such as but, for, or, nor. 4. Occasionally use questions, or exclamations." (42)

They also advise the use of varying length of sentences. Especially avoid the use of many short sentences. (42)

Attention to all the details of grammar, variation in sentence length, use of action verbs, etc., put ease of readability into your writing. (37)

The readability of your writing is important, for, as Cowing puts it:

"Readability is like a blood tonic....it increases circulation." (32)

Klare states that the term readability has come to be used in three ways:

"1. To indicate legibility of either handwriting or typography.

2. To indicate ease of reading due to either the interest-value or the pleasantness of writing.
3. To indicate ease of understanding or comprehension due to the style of writing." (37)

Several formulas for measuring readability have been devised, some geared to the legibility factor, others to reading ease and human interest. Some are complicated in their mathematical computations, while others are relatively simple to use. (37)

Concerning reading ease, Cowing has this to say:

"Studies show: Children in the 8th grade can easily read sentences that average about 17 words. Popular magazines use a 17-19 word average sentence length as standard of what an average reader can read easily and quickly. Next time you write something, check your average sentence length in a 100 word message. If your sentences average more than 17-19 words, see if you can break up some sentences at some joint...." (32)

The reader's interest in the subject matter and his level of background knowledge about the subject affect the ease or difficulty of acceptable readability. However, as Klare (37) points out, having the readability factor toward the easier side is preferable.

"Obviously an adult does not prefer the style of a first-grade reading text, but even a highly educated adult will generally find a ninth-grade level of style difficulty acceptable if the writing is expertly done. One qualification should be made here. If the reader has a large amount of background and experience with a topic, he may have some objection to a simple style, particularly if it seems to involve the avoidance of long and technical, but accurate words. If, however, a topic falls outside the reader's speciality, studies show that even the more highly educated will prefer a simpler style." (37)

#### Format

The use of illustrations in newsletters is supported to a varying degree.

Hall(36) suggests using illustrations to support the narrative, not to dress it up. As she points out:

"The newsletter is a serious document. Too many illustrations or illustrations unrelated to the copy can make a newsletter look like a comic book." (36)

The professional newsletter producer speaking at the Rutgers Newsletter Seminar points out that the newsletter is supposed to present ideas, news, and concepts. The more it looks like a promotional piece, the less likely it will be regarded as a newsletter. (38)

Concerning use of illustrations in the masthead, that is the identifying portion of the newsletter usually located at the top of the first page, this same professional said:

"I don't think your masthead needs to be all jazzed up with illustrations. It can have illustrations, but not overpowering ones." (38)

In this respect, Spaven points out:

"The heading design can make or break the looks of your newsletter." (41)

On a more mechanical side, Stephens (43) advises not to run the illustration into the typed area. To do so would be confusing for the reader.

Length of line also comes in for general agreement among the sources cited. A single column, with the sentence stretching across the page, is undesirable. (30,33,38,41,45)

Tinker points out:

"Reader preferences quite definitely favor moderate line width. Relatively long and short line widths are disliked. For 10-point type set solid, results from three studies show that material in line widths between 17 and 27 picas are equally legible." (

Ten-point type is comparable in size to elite typewriter size. Seven to 27 picas compare to a range of about 2-3/4 to 4-1/2 inches.

Brinkman gives several choices:

"Improve appearance and ease of reading by shortening line length to five inches or less for elite typewriters and six inches or less for pica typewriters. To shorten line length,

use either two columns or an arrangement with the headings on the left. This arrangement will shorten the column of written material on the right." (30)

A single column may be used, provided there are generous margins on both sides. In this type of layout, keep paragraphs short for easier reading. (33)

The typewriter type style is important. Both italics and cursive or script-like type should be avoided. (30,45) As Tinker points out:

"Two factors indicate italics should seldom be used: It is read slightly more slowly than ordinary lower case characters, and readers do not like it. Therefore, the use of italics should be restricted to those rare occasions when added emphasis is needed.

Experiments comparing typewriting, manuscript (like engineering lettering but not joined together) and cursive script showed: All materials were read significantly faster in typewriting than in manuscript or cursive script." (45)

Indenting the first line of a paragraph is a good practice. Again Tinker points out:

"The practice of indenting the first line of a paragraph improves legibility by over seven percent." (45)

Single spacing your copy is all right, but an extra half-space would improve legibility. Double spacing on the typewriter is too much. (45)

### Use of Copyrighted Material

Permission must be obtained from the copyright owner before any of his material may be used. (33,36) Nearly all books and many magazines are copyrighted.

Hall points out:

"The unauthorized reproduction of copyright material constitutes infringement of copyright and the person violating the copyright is subject to legal action. Acknowledgement of the copyright source is not sufficient." (36)

Dall (33) suggests sending two copies of your proposed material in writ-

ing to the copyright owner for permission. Ask that one copy be returned to you with the copyright owner's decision.

He also suggests:

"In your request, explain that the material will be for educational use and that your publication will not be sold. This may influence copyright holders to grant permission for use of material without charge." (33)

Before moving on to production factors, here's a check list offered in the Washington State newsletter training material:

1. Have I built a fence around my audience?
2. Am I sure direct mail serves my purpose?
3. Does the first sentence attract attention? Is it aimed at the reader's interest instead of my interest?
4. Does the early part of the piece promise the reader he's going to get something of benefit -- what's his stake?
5. Is the piece organized to present the information in some meaningful sequence -- or does it jump around?
6. Is the writing personalized to the reader? Does it have the 'you and I' approach? Is it conversational? Does it read like it came from me?
7. Is the writing easy to read? Or does it have six-bit words -- extra long sentences -- too many modifiers -- too much passive voice? Is it clear?
8. Does the letter look readable -- uncrowded, uncluttered -- enough white space?
9. Have I checked it for mistakes in grammar, spelling, typographical errors?
10. Have I made clear to the reader what I want him to do? The last paragraph is a good place for the 'call to action.'" (39)

#### Production of the Newsletter

The writers investigated agree on several factors involved in mechanically reproducing the newsletter. White paper and black ink offer the highest contrast for optimum conditions for legibility. (31,36,38,43,45)

A point brought out in the Rutgers Newsletter Seminar was that all people are oriented to the black on white approach because of newspapers. People are oriented to newspapers, so the more we hold to this approach in production, the better the newsletter acceptance will be. (38)

However, Stephen (43) points out that newsletters must be attractive. Newsletters poor in appearance may never be read. For this reason, he suggests:

"Colored paper or colored ink can add much to the attractiveness of the letter, but remember to select light colors for the paper and dark ones for the inks to make your message as legible as possible." (43)

Hall agrees, but with a cautionary note:

"If used with discretion, a certain amount of color may be acceptable, but all too often the color of the paper and the color of the ink interfere with the message." (36)

Be sure the reproduction work is the best possible. To achieve this, use an electric typewriter to cut mimeograph stencils. Be sure the keys are clean and the machine adjusted properly. Avoid messiness in making stencil corrections. Be sure the mimeograph machine is in good operating condition. Work with the mimeograph machine operator to be sure the best possible reproduction job is done. Use a paper with enough weight and body so that copy won't show through when the paper is printed on both sides. (30,30,41,43)

As Arthur points out:

"Your letter must have a pleasing appearance to have reader-interest pull. A letter that is ink-smearred, poorly typed, poorly mimeographed, badly spaced, and generally messy does not do justice to the information you wish to impart." (29)

Putting out your newsletter on a regular basis is also important. According to information that came from the Rutgers Newsletter Seminar:

"You're trying to build habits into people. If you go off sequence, they won't have any respect for your newsletter, and they won't look forward to it. If you have a schedule on a monthly basis and if the content is good, your readers will look for your letter." (38)

### The Mailing List

How you distribute your newsletter, as well as its frequency, is also important. Keep your mailing list up to date by asking those who receive the newsletter whether they wish to continue receiving it. This should be done each year. (33,36,38,44)

For special subject matter mailing list, the penalty mailing privilege regulation states:

"To make certain that persons on mailing lists wish their requests for material to remain effective, they should be notified at least once a year that unless a request is received for their names to be kept on the mailing list, their names will be dropped and publications will not be sent to them in the future." (44)

A straight inquiry such as this requires that the return card should be stamped. (44) However, as Dail points out:

"If you are asking readers a number of additional questions primarily of value to you, the penalty privilege can be used for the reply card." (33)

Not only does this "purging" of your newsletter mailing list fulfill your obligations to the penalty mailing privilege regulations, it also keeps your list viable. You should expect to lose some names from the list.

"A 75 percent renewal in a commercial newsletter is outstanding. Magazines with high pressure promotions are lucky to get a 45 percent renewal. A good trade paper, well-read, well-edited, may get 75-80 percent. You're sure to lose 10 to 15 percent a year because people die, lose interest, get into other fields, move away." (38)

CHAPTER III

A SUGGESTED PROGRAMMED LEARNING MANUAL



## About This Manual

This is a scrambled manual...really. However, you may be familiar with programmed instruction. If so, you will recognize this as a branched programmed instruction manual.

If this is the case, turn to page 3. Otherwise read on.

The pages of this manual are numbered in the usual way. But you must not try to read them as you would a regular book. Why not? Because the instructional information is scattered or scrambled throughout the book. And for a special reason.

You determine how fast or slowly you progress through the manual. You're asked questions. The answers you give determine the paths or branches you take through the manual.

If you choose the correct answer, you are presented with new information. Choose the wrong answer, and you are directed to a page that further explains the point of information under consideration.

You may use these side branches or remedial branches for practice or enrichment, too. Even though you know the right answer, you may want to turn to a wrong answer page to get an explanation with a different slant to it.

So, follow the directions at the bottom of each page.

Turn to page 3.

## Page 2

Oooops ! You didn't follow directions. There isn't a page in this manual that directs you to this page.

As mentioned in the introduction, you should not try to read this manual as you would an ordinary one, even though the pages are numbered consecutively. You must follow the directions at the bottom of each page.

By doing so, you will tailor the instructional material to your own needs. If you choose the correct answer, you aren't bored by an additional explanation...unless you want it.

Now return to the previous page and follow directions.

Page 3  
(From Page 1)

Before moving into the instructional information about newsletters, let's look at what you should expect to learn from this manual. Prior knowledge about what you are expected to know and be capable of doing will provide valuable guidelines for study.

You must pay attention to many factors in preparing an effective newsletter. Specifically then, the objective of this manual is to provide you with the knowledge to perform the following task:

To write a newsletter containing one or more items of information for a specific audience using at least ten principles of good newsletter writing and preparation as explained in this manual.

Turn to page 5.

Page 4  
(From Page 5)

You said the introduction -- "According to what Dr. Brown at the University said in the newspaper the other day...." -- best illustrates the kind of news item that should go into a newsletter.

Apparently I didn't make the point clear. The newsletter should contain news items the reader wouldn't ordinarily see somewhere else. In this case, the newspaper is widely read. Naturally you can't be sure your newsletter recipient read or even saw the item...but it was readily accessible.

Return to page 5 and  
choose the other answer

Page 5  
(From Page 3)

A newsletter is what the name says it is: a letter about news.

Enlarging upon this, the newsletter is a form of direct mail, sent on a regular schedule to a selected group of people. It should contain pithy, short, and interesting pieces of information, written in a personalized "you-and-I" style, and designed to create interest and awareness.

The newsletter should be a clearinghouse of information not readily available somewhere else. It should build anticipation. The reader should come to expect new and fresh information from the newsletter: information he hasn't seen before.

In this respect, which of the following is the best introduction for a potential item to include in a newsletter?

"I've just finished reading a research report written by Dr. Brown at the University, and you'll be interested to know...."

Turn to page 7.

"According to what Dr. Brown at the University said in the newspaper the other day...."

Turn to page 4.

Page 6  
(From Page 8 & 9)

You said you would use your newsletter to explain a new ration to cattle feeders.

Good for you!

The new ration would fit three of the four criteria for judging whether or not to use a newsletter: The audience is small (in relation to your county's total population) and has a special interest in rations, you want every cattle feeder to get the information, and you'll need to go into more detail than a newspaper, radio station or TV station would want to use.

Now turn to page 11.

Page 7  
(From Page 5)

You said the introduction -- "I've just finished reading a research report written by Dr. Brown at the University, and you'll be interested to know...." -- best illustrates the kind of news item that should go into a newsletter.

You're right. A research report would not ordinarily be readily accessible to your reader. Consequently he should appreciate the information because he might not get it otherwise.

The same thing applies if you have additional details about research that is reported in a newspaper story. If the additional details are of a more specific nature that would benefit your reader, by all means use them in your newsletter.

In this case a better introduction might be -- "Here are more details on Dr. Brown's research findings reported in the newspaper recently. As you know from the story....(briefly outline the main points brought out in the newspaper story..then present the additional details)...."

Turn to page 8

Newsletters vs Mass Media

The newsletter is a strong tool for communicating ideas. It serves as a direct communication line between you and your clientele.

You make additional contacts with a newsletter. It supplements your other Extension education methods. And it carries information to many who seldom attend meetings or other Extension activities.

With proper planning, the newsletter requires a relatively small amount of time in relation to the size of audience.

A newsletter should be used differently than are the mass media. Use a newsletter---

1. When you want to reach a small, special-interest audience.
2. When the subject matter may be unpleasant to a non-farmer reader, listener, or viewer; such as mastitis or manure-disposal.
3. When you want to be sure every person in the group gets the message.
4. When you want to use more detail than the mass media will carry.

Use mass media ---

1. When the audience you want to reach is a large one.
2. When you want to create public awareness and a climate of importance for an event or program.

Suppose cattle feeding is important in your area and you want to put out information about a new ration. Which would you use?

Your newsletter----- Turn to page 6

Radio, Television, and Newspaper.... . Turn to page 10

Both your newsletter and mass media ----- Turn to page 9



Page 9  
(From Page 8)

You said you would use both your newsletter and mass media to explain the new ration to cattle feeders.

You may be right, especially if you have picked the combination approach because of your knowledge of local conditions. You may know, for instance, that mass media in your area welcome the chance to serve farmers and ranchers. This is often true, especially with newspapers that feature a farm section.

You may also know your local TV station welcomes the chance to feature agriculture in a regular program with local people and visiting dignitaries. A section about the new ration could be included in such a program.

You might not want to give the "recipe" for the new ration on a radio program because it would require the reader to copy it down. And words spoken over the air are fleeting indeed with no chance to bring them back for reference. However, you certainly could talk about the advantages of the new ration, what it could mean in increased income, and refer the listener to a bulletin, mimeographed sheet, your newsletter, or whatever that's available through your office.

If this reasoning dictated your choice of a combination approach, fine....and consider yourself lucky to have such a rich choice. Unfortunately such is not always the case and mass media (especially metropolitan area media) are becoming more and more reluctant to give much space or time to material for farmers.

For this reason, turn to page 6 and read the discussion there.

Page 10  
(From Page 8)

You said you would use only radio, television, and newspaper to explain the new ration to cattle feeders.

Of course you may have a good reason for picking mass media over your newsletter. However, in light of the discussion about when to use newsletters and when to use mass media, your choice is only third best of the three.

For a discussion of why your choice isn't best or even second best, turn to page 5.

Page 11  
(From Page 6)

### Why People Read

People read newsletters and other educational material to satisfy their fundamental wants and motives. These include the desire for increased gain, wealth, safety, durability, dependability, saving of time, recognition, and high regard of others.

You should evaluate your newsletter information in this light. Appeal to one or more of these fundamental wants and motives, and you'll gain faithful readership for your newsletter.

Start each newsletter item with a bang. Give your reader a strong reason to read further. Catch his attention and do it in the first sentence. He may not read further if the first sentence doesn't give him reason to.

Don't say: "According to the latest information on diets.."  
Where's the appeal in this? Sounds pretty dull.

Do say: "You and your family will feel right if you eat right. The latest information on diets shows...."

How about the following? Which introduction is better?

"A new beef ration has been announced. According to research information, cattle will gain up to a quarter pound more per day on the new ration." ----- Turn to page 16.

"You'll save feeding dollars and market your cattle earlier with a new beef ration just announced. The ration puts on up to a quarter pound more gain per day, so you'll feed for fewer days"  
Turn to page 14.

Page 12  
(From Page 14)

### What It Can Contain

You should look at your newsletter as a pipeline for information of all kinds. A newsletter can:

1. Give "recipe" information -- how much of what to apply when.
2. Interpret research underway or completed by University researchers, as well as those in USDA, other states, and industry.
3. Talk about tour highlights.
4. Discuss results of demonstration trials in the county.
5. Answer frequently asked questions.
6. Pass on "success" stories of farmers, homemakers, or 4-H'ers in your county and elsewhere.
7. Announce meetings and events, both in the county and elsewhere. (If you attend, be sure to make a followup report.)
8. Be a clearinghouse for legislative news and important speeches. Caution: Boil it down!
9. Point out economic factors affecting a commodity.
10. Announce new publications.
11. Look at other counties to see what's going on there.

Have these items constantly in mind and your problem of gathering information for a newsletter becomes easier. When you run across an item, file it away for use on the day you prepare your newsletter.

Turn to the next page.

Page 13  
(From Page 12)

### Know Your Audience

You must know your audience before you can select appropriate topics and write about them effectively.

Under normal circumstances you develop the mailing list for your own newsletter. As you develop it, you form a composite image of the group. However, suppose you inherit the mailing list when you move into a new job? You're told it is a good, strong list. Before writing a newsletter to be sent to this group, you would need to know several things:

What are the reader's problems?

What is his educational background?

What are his social and economic levels?

What are his interests, attitudes, beliefs?

Does he have the equipment, environment, and capacity to use your information?

Is he aware of the information you are offering, seeking more information, evaluating, trying the idea, or already using it?

What about other factors, such as age, sex, politics, religion...are they important to know about, too?

Yes --- Turn to page 17

No ---- Turn to page 15

Page 14  
(From Page 11)

You said the following introduction is better: "You'll save feeding dollars and market your cattle earlier with a new beef ration just announced. The ration puts on up to a quarter pound more gain per day, so you'll feed for fewer days."

Good for you. The appeal to save money is right there in the first sentence. The reader may also find that this information appeals to his desire for recognition (be one of the first to try new ration). And if it works, he reasons, he'll have the high regard of others as a modern, up-to-date cattleman.

Turn to Page 12.

Page 15  
(From Page 13)

You said your audience's age, sex, politics, and religion aren't important to know about in selecting and preparing newspaper information.

Well, yes and no. These factors are important to know, but probably not as important to know as some of the other factors mentioned.

Certainly you would write differently to 4-H'ers than you would to their leaders.

No doubt under certain circumstances and in certain areas of a state, the factors about politics and religion may be very important to know.

Turn to Page 17 for  
more discussion on this.

Page 16  
(From Page 11)

You said the following introduction is better: "A new beef ration has been announced. According to research information, the cattle will gain up to a quarter pound more per day on the new ration."

No, it's not really the best of the two. Remember we're talking about appealing to the reader's fundamental wants and motives. To do this, speak right out. Don't leave the reader with the job of interpreting whether he'll profit or benefit by reading the item. He may not get past the first sentence to find out.

Here's another list of why people read.

- To gain ---- time, pride of accomplishment, money, security, prestige, health, popularity, social and business advancement, comfort, leisure, self-confidence, improved appearance, praise, increased enjoyment.
- To save ---- time, money, worry, discomfort, work, risk, embarrassment, doubts.
- To be ----- recognized, efficient, sociable, proud of possessions, first in things, creative, influential over others, good parents, up-to-date, hospitable.
- To want to - improve themselves, be like those they admire, acquire things, win affection, express personality, satisfy curiosity, resist domination.

Return to page 11 and  
choose the other answer.



Page 17  
(From Page 13)

You said "yes" -- factors about age, sex, politics, and religion are important to know.

You're probably right, maybe more so under certain circumstances and in certain areas of a state than in others.

Religion would be most important to know where a particular church predominates in an area and beliefs of that church regulate food items in the diet, which days of the week are appropriate for work, and which for worshipping, and recreational activities for its young people.

Predominate politics also temper the approach taken in discussing certain agricultural programs.

The age and sex of the reader also influence the language and style of your writing.

So, these factors are important. You must decide their degree of importance compared to the other factors mentioned in light of your own circumstances and locale.

Regardless of the importance or non-importance of each reader-characteristic, be sure to have appropriate things to say. Be sure of your facts. List facts that help your reader satisfy a need or solve a problem.

Turn to the next page.

Page 18  
(From Page 17)

Writing the Newsletter

Earlier I mentioned getting right to the point. Do it with emphasis and appeal. In a sense, grab the reader by the collar and say, "Read this. It's important information for you to know."

Use Short Sentences

Write in the way you talk. This means short sentences, familiar words, action verbs, and few if any prepositional phrases. Put one idea per sentence and no more. And write in a personalized style. Be brief. Don't make your reader hunt for your message among a lot of meaningless words.

Writing short sentences doesn't mean "primerizing." It doesn't mean a staccato, choppy style. Nor does it mean being brief to the point that you fail to make yourself clear. Be sure to include enough "why" to do an educational job.

A sentence is short if it expresses one idea clearly. Thus, a sentence can be as short as one word --- "Stop!" An average sentence length of 17-19 words is about right. Remember, though, that's the average. Writing every sentence the same length would kill your reader's interest...if he had any to begin with.

A good point to remember: The complex sentence, not the long one, confuses the reader. Complex sentences are made complex by commenting clauses and prepositional phrases. Check your writing and break up the complex, involved sentences.

Which of the following do you choose as best?

"Write the way you talk. Don't be trapped into showing off big words and flowery phrases." Turn to page 22.

"The writer should put words down on paper the same way he speaks them, which means he shouldn't be trapped into using big words and flowery phrases to show off his writing ability." Turn to page 24.

Page 19  
(From Page 24)

Again you've chosen the long, complex sentence in preference to the shorter, three-sentence version.

Perhaps you're misinterpreting the point I'm trying to make.

The simplest sentence is one with a noun, verb, and object. (I ran home.) However, you can't write all sentences this way. You would be primerizing, and your writing would be choppy and boring.

To avoid this, you vary the sentence length. Unfortunately, too many times you can be carried away. You begin stringing phrases and clauses together until the reader flounders in striving for the meaning. Such a sentence is complex. Avoid it like the plague.

If you find you've written such a sentence, don't despair. We all do it. Simply check it over, determine which is the main idea, and make that into a sentence by itself. Reduce or eliminate prepositional phrases by reworking the sentence. Put commenting clauses into separate sentences.

Study the examples given  
on pages 18 and 24 again.  
Then turn to page 23.

Page 20  
(From Page 23)

You said the sentence --- "A large variety of projects is offered to 4-H'ers throughout the country" --- is written in passive voice.

Right!

To make it active, you would rewrite it to say, "Throughout the country, 4-H'ers can choose from a large variety of projects."

As you can see from this example, you can't always simply turn the sentence around. You oftentimes need to rewrite.

Here's another example: "The street on Virginia Avenue was also approved as a paving project."

This is passive voice. To write it as active voice, you need to come up with somebody or something to do the acting. So, how about the city council? This group usually approves such projects. Rewriting the sentence makes it: "The City Council also approved the project to pave Virginia Avenue."

Let's move on.  
Turn to page 26.

Page 21  
(From page 24)

Now you've got the idea. Let's move on to the next point.

Turn to page 23.

Page 22  
(From Page 18)

You're right.

And this example brings up the next point to consider...so,

Turn to the next page.

Page 23  
(From Page 22)

### Write in Personal Style

Use personal references when you can. These can be people's names, personal pronouns (I, you, me, they, etc.) and words indicating human beings or relationships (father, baby, mister, parent, daughter, cousin, etc).

Talking directly to your reader helps him identify with your information. And that's important. People like plain talk with you appeal.

### Write in Active Voice

You get a bonus when you personalize your writing. You'll find it much easier to write in active voice than in passive. This simply means you say, "The dog bit me" instead of, "I was bitten by the dog."

Here's another sentence. Is it written in active or passive voice? "The fire was lit by the woman."

You're right, it's passive voice. To make it active, turn it around: "The woman lit the fire."

Remember, the verb is active when it shows the subject of the sentence acting. The verb is passive when the subject is acted upon. Look for passive voice when you see am, is, are, was, were, and been. If you use them as auxiliary verbs (is provided, was approved), you've written passive voice. NOTE: Sometimes you use forms of be as principal or linking verbs. Example: They are home.

Check the following sentence. Is it written in active or passive voice?

"A large variety of projects is offered to 4-H'ers throughout the country."

--- Active voice, turn to page 25.

--- Passive voice, turn to page 20.

Page 24  
(From Page 18)

Do you really think so? Stop and consider....the sentence you chose has 33 words and two distinct ideas. Look at it again.

"The writer should put words down on paper the same way he speaks them, which means he shouldn't be trapped into using big words and flowery phrases to show off his writing ability."

The "which" clause begins a new idea and should be put into a separate sentence.

Try again, which of these sentences or groups of sentences do you choose as best?

"Since he was a reporter, he was expected to help out on publicity for his club, which was involved in raising money for a new civic project." --- Turn to page 19.

"His club needed publicity to help raise money for its new civic project. He was a reporter. Naturally he was expected to help." --- Turn to page 21.



Page 25  
(From Page 23)

You said the sentence -- "A large variety of projects is offered to 4-H'ers throughout the country." -- is written in active voice.

Not so, it's written in passive voice. You can make this sentence active voice in two ways: change it by rewriting, or by creating something or someone to do the acting.

A rewritten version would read: "Throughout the country, 4-H'ers can choose from a large variety of projects."

If we assume land grant institutions offer the projects, we can write the sentence in active voice this way: "Land grant institutions offer a large variety of projects to 4-H'ers throughout the country."

Here are some more examples:

Passive (weak) -- "The beef ration was developed over a two-year period."

Active (stronger) "The researcher (or Dr. so-and-so) developed the beef ration over a two-year period."

Passive (weak) -- "A pocket was sewn on the dress in such a way as to match the pattern perfectly."

Active (stronger) "She (or name of person) sewed the pocket on the dress and matched the pattern perfectly."

Return to page 23 and  
choose the other answer.

Page 26  
(From Page 20)

### Prepositional Phrases

The fewer prepositional phrases you use, the better. Too many prepositional phrases stifle your writing.

Here is an example.

"The sales meeting was conducted by the sales manager of the company in the conference room."

Each underlined word is a preposition and begins a prepositional phrase. So we have 16 words and 3 prepositional phrases. Now let's improve the sentence and eliminate two the prepositional phrases.

"The company's sales manager conducted the sales meeting in the conference room."

Now we have only 12 words and 1 prepositional phrase. Did you notice anything else? We changed a passive voice sentence into an active voice one.

How many prepositional phrases clutter up the following sentence?

"New varieties of apples and ideas about packaging of apples will be featured at the annual meeting of the Horticultural Society of the state."

Four --- Turn to page 27.  
Five --- Turn to page 31.  
Six --- Turn to page 28.

Page 27  
(From Page 26)

You said you only found four prepositional phrases in the sentence.

Check again. I think you'll find more.

Return to page 26 and  
choose another answer.

Page 28  
(From Page 26)

You said the sentence contains six prepositional phrases.  
You're right.

Let's double-check their positions.

"New varieties of apples and ideas about packaging of  
apples will be featured at the annual meeting of the  
Horticultural Society of the state."

Which of the rewrites below do you prefer?

"The State Horticultural Society's annual meeting will  
feature new apple varieties and apple packaging ideas."

(15 words, no prepositional phrases...  
turn to page 29.)

"The State Horticultural Society will feature new apple  
varieties and apple packaging ideas at the annual meeting."

(17 words, 1 prepositional phrase...  
turn to page 31.)

Page 29  
(From Page 28)

You said you prefer this version: "The State Horticultural Society's annual meeting will feature new apple varieties and apple packaging ideas."

Since this was a preference question, you're welcome to your choice. Some people might argue that the meeting doesn't feature something so much as the society does. Others would argue it's a moot point.

Certainly the sentence above doesn't contain any prepositional phrases.

However, I choose the other version. To see why, turn to page 31.

Page 30  
(From Page 26)

You said you found five prepositional phrases in the sentence. That's close but not close enough.

Let's look at the sentence again.

"New varieties of apples and ideas about packaging of apples will be featured at the annual meeting of the Horticultural Society of the state."

Four of the phrases begin with of. So you've either missed the at phrase or the about phrase. At is definitely a preposition (check the dictionary). However, about can be both a preposition and an adverb (again check the dictionary). In this case you'll see that about is used as a preposition.

So, the sentence contains six prepositional phrases.

For a discussion on rewriting the sentence, turn to page 28.

Page 31  
(From Page 29)

You said you prefer the version: "The State Horticultural society will feature new apple varieties and apple packaging ideas at the annual meeting."

I would agree with you...for two reasons. One is the fact that some people would question whether the society or the meeting features something. In this respect I choose the society featuring something at its meeting.

The second reason is it eliminates that long, awkward string of words stacked up before the verb found in the other version("The State Horticultural Society's annual meeting will feature....").

Remember, you don't need to eliminate prepositional phrases altogether: Just the over abundance too often found in writing. The version you've chosen retains one prepositional phrase. This is down from the six in the original version. In this case, one prepositional phrase is acceptable.

Turn to the next page.

Page 32  
(From Page 31)

### Simple Words

Say what you have to say simply. Use the simplest word that carries your meaning. The first step is to have something to say. Know your facts and state them simply, straight-forwardly. Only hazy ideas need many words and big words.

Write for people and write for understanding, not to show off. This means you should use the familiar word instead of the technical word when possible. If you can't avoid using a technical word, be sure your reader understands it before moving on.

Talk about beekeeping...not apiculture

Compare the autoclave to a pressure cooker before going on.

As one editor points out: "We are not suggesting that you use 'guts' instead of 'intestine,' but do you have to say 'viscera'?"

Remember, an idea put down in easy-to-understand, short words is grasped at a glance. A whole jumble of words strung together loses their grip on the mind.

Turn to the next page.



Page 33  
(From Page 32)

Let's look at some examples of vague or general words compared to short, precise words.

Vague, general

assist  
indicate  
concealed  
contribute  
hold a conference  
terminate  
construct  
attempt  
in order that  
was the recipient of  
eradicate  
inquire  
migrate  
interrogate

Short, precise

help  
show  
hidden  
give  
meet  
end  
build  
try  
to  
received  
get rid of  
ask  
move  
question

Which of these sentences is the easiest to read?

"I assisted him in constructing a metal lined storage bin designed to terminate his mouse problem."

Turn to page 35.

"I helped him build a metal lined storage bin designed to end his mouse problem."

Turn to page 36.

Page 34  
(From Page 37)

You said the sentence contains mixed tenses. Sorry it does not.

Here's the sentence again: "He drove to town and wasted most of the day looking for the right sized bolt."

"He drove" and "he wasted" are both past tense.

Possibly you were confused by the verbal "looking." Remember, a verbal is a word that combines characteristics of a verb with those of a noun or adjective. A verbal does not affect the tense of a sentence.

Therefore, the sentence is written in the same tense throughout.

Return to page 37 and  
choose the other answer.

Page 35  
(From Page 33)

Oh come now, you can't be serious. Remember, we're talking about using short, precise words instead of vague, general words.

Perhaps some more examples will help:

Vague-general

maximun.  
minirim  
excavate  
purchase  
obtain  
possess

Short-precise

most  
least  
dig  
buy  
get  
own

So, instead of saying, "I purchased the ball and now possess it," you say, "I bought the ball and now own it."

Return to page 33 and  
choose the other answer.

Page 36  
(From Page 33)

You're absolutely right. This sentence is easier to read and says the same thing.

Turn to the next page.

Page 37  
(From Page 36)

So far you've learned to write in short, personalized sentences containing one idea, using active voice, and familiar, precise words.

This in itself is quite an accomplishment. But let's go still farther. Be sure you avoid these pitfalls; mixed tenses, dangling modifiers, redundancy, nonagreement, careless repetition, and mixed construction or faulty parallelism.

Let's take them up one at a time.

Mixed tenses

"He walked the dog and works with the horses." Here we've mixed our verb tenses. The correct version is: "He walked the dog and worked with the horses," or "He walks the dog and works with the horses."

You try one. Which sentence has mixed tenses:

"She is sewing on her 4-H project and basted the hem in wrong."

Turn to Page 38.

"He drove to town and wasted most of the day looking for the right size bolt."

Turn to page 34.

Page 38  
(From Page 37)

You said the sentence contains mixed tenses. You're right, it does!

How would you change the sentence to make it right? Choose between-----

"She is sewing on her 4-H project and is basting the hem in wrong."

Turn to page 42.

"When she sewed on her 4-H project, she basted the hem in wrong."

Turn to page 41.

Page 39  
(From Pages 41 and 42)

### Dangling Modifiers

An example best illustrates what the dangling modifier is.

"Walking through the field, the potato bushes nearly filled the rows."

Sounds silly, doesn't it. A subject is needed for the opening verbal phrase to modify. Let's call on John, and the sentence becomes ----

"Walking through the field, John noticed the potato bushes nearly filled the rows."

Dangling modifiers usually make funny sounding sentences. So avoid them. Check your writing carefully. Your chances of having a modifier dangle is greatest when you write in passive voice or use impersonal sentence construction. Revise the sentence to eliminate the dangling modifier.

How about the following sentence? Does it contain a dangling modifier?

"To benefit fully from a long concert, the seats must be comfortable."

Yes ---- Turn to page 43.

No ---- Turn to page 40.

Page 40  
(From Page 39)

You said the sentence does not contain a dangling modifier. Unfortunately, it does.

Look at it again --- "To benefit fully from a long concert, the seats must be comfortable."

Ask the question, "Who will benefit fully?" The sentence, as it's written, says the seats will. But this doesn't make sense, so something is missing.

Rewrite the sentence with "you" in there, and the sentence makes sense.

"To benefit fully from a long concert, you must have a comfortable seat."

Possibly another example will help clear things up.

Dangling modifier -- "Sitting on the floor, the fly bumped repeatedly against the window."

Rewritten with the missing element, the sentence becomes --

"Sitting on the floor, I saw the fly bump repeatedly against the window."

Return to page 39 and  
choose the other answer.



Page 41  
(From Page 33)

You're right. The sentence -- "When she sewed on her 4-H project, she basted the hem in wrong." -- now is written all in the past tense. The other version also is right, except it's now all in the present tense.

Check your writing carefully to avoid mixing your tenses.

Turn to page 39.

Page 42  
(From Page 38)

You're right. The sentence -- "She is sewing on her 4-H project and is basting the hem in wrong." -- now is written all in the present tense. The other version also is right, except it's now all in the past tense.

Check your writing carefully to avoid mixing your tenses.

Turn to page 39.

Page 43  
(From Page 39)

You said the sentence does contain a dangling modifier. And you're right!

Properly written, the sentence should read, "To benefit fully from a long concert, you must have a comfortable seat."

Turn to the next page.

Page 44  
(From Page 43)

### Redundancy

Redundancy is simply using more words than are necessary to express your meaning.

The most obvious example would be: "The beautiful girl is beautiful."

Why not say: "The girl is beautiful"?

Sometimes needless redundancy creeps in without your knowing it. For instance --- "Mary was wearing the same identical hat as Sally." The words "same" or "identical" are redundant. Each says the same thing. Rewrite the sentence using first one word, then the other, and you'll see it doesn't make any difference.

Check the following sentence carefully. Does it contain redundancy? How much?

"The two agencies cooperated together for a period of two weeks and determined the very latest factual information to recommend to the grower."

No redundancy ----- Turn to page 48.

Two places of  
redundancy ----- Turn to page 46.

Four places of  
redundancy ----- Turn to page 47.

Page 45  
(From Page 47)

### Nonagreement

This usually means using a plural noun with a singular verb, or vice versa. However, you will find other instances of nonagreement at times, too. ("These kind of toys" when it should be either "these kinds of toys" or "this kind of toy.")

No doubt you spot the nonagreement in this sentence: "Foreign people stumbles over much of the American grammar."

Sometimes, though, you can miss a mistake in agreement between subject and verb. For instance: "A bowl of apples, peaches, and bananas make a nice centerpiece." The "bowl" is the subject of the sentence, not the fruit, so the sentence needs a singular verb, not a plural one. Therefore, the sentence should read: "A bowl of apples, peaches, and bananas makes a nice centerpiece."

Is there nonagreement in the following sentence?

"Which one of the following sentences have correct non-verb agreement?"

Yes --- Turn to page 50.

No ---- Turn to page 49.

Page 46  
(From Page 44)

You said the sentence contains two places of redundancy.  
You're only halfway right.

Here's the sentence again:

"The two agencies cooperated together for a period of two weeks and determined the very latest factual information to recommend to growers."

Remember, weed out superfluous words and words that mean the same thing. Examples:

Many in number ----- Number

Same identical - ---- Same

Now return to page 44. Study the information again and choose another answer.

Page 47  
(From Page 44)

You said the sentence contains four places of redundancy.  
Right!

Here's the sentence again with the redundant words in parentheses. Check to see if you agree.

"The two agencies cooperated (together) for (a period of) two weeks and determined the (very) latest (factual) information to recommend to growers."

So, eliminating the excess verbiage gives us a much better sentence:

"The two agencies cooperated for two weeks and determined the latest (facts or information) to recommend to growers."

Turn to page 45.

Page 48  
(From Page 44)

You said the sentence doesn't contain redundant words. Look again, I think you'll find that it does.

Maybe a few more examples would help.

Don't say

Say

absolutely complete  
very latest  
necessary requirements  
basic fundamentals  
cooperate together  
consensus of opinion is  
ask the question  
for a period of two weeks  
factual information

complete  
latest  
requirements  
fundamentals  
cooperate  
consensus is  
ask  
for two weeks  
facts

verb

there  
is ti  
"one'  
quir

As you can see, redundancy involves words put together that either mean the same thing or aren't needed. Imagine a hole in the ground. You would say, "That's a hole in the ground" not "That's a whole hole" or "That's a complete hole." A hole is a hole, large or small, so the words are redundant.

Return to page 44 and  
choose the other answer.



Page 49  
(From Page 45)

You said the sentence doesn't contain nonagreement.

Oh, but it does.

Here is the sentence again:

"Which one of the following sentences have correct noun-verb agreement?"

If you thought the word "sentences" was the subject and thereby took a plural verb, look again. The word "sentences" is the end of a prepositional phrase modifying "one." So, "one" is the true subject. And since it is singular, it requires the singular verb "has."

Return to page 45 and  
choose the other answer.

Page 50  
(From Page 45)

You said the sentence does contain nonagreement.

And you're right.

No doubt you mentally rewrote the sentence, changing the plural verb "have" to the singular "has."

Turn to the next page.

Page 51  
(From Page 50)

### Careless Repetition

You'll fall into this writing pitfall most often when you write in a hurry and repeat words for emphasis. For instance---

"You want to emphasize a point, so you repeat it using different words for emphasis."

To correct this sentence, drop off the last two words.

Here's another example ---

"Market gardeners annually produce tons of fresh garden produce."

To correct this sentence, rewrite the sentence to say, "Market gardeners produce tons of fresh fruit and vegetables each year."

Edit your copy carefully to avoid this pitfall. Usually careless repetition stands out like a sore thumb. Put your copy aside for a day or so, then read it over. Better yet, have someone else read your copy after you've edited it.

Turn to page 53

Page 52  
(From Page 53)

You said the sentence contains mixed construction or faulty parallelism.

Let's look at the sentence again.

"She hurried through the snow, the heavy flakes falling upon her, clinging to her dark hair."

This sentence is okay. So you are wrong.

If you mis-read the question, return to page 53 and choose the other answer. If you really thought this sentence contains mixed construction or faulty parallelism, study the information on page 53 again before choosing the other answer.

Page 53  
(From Page 51)

Mixed Construction or Faulty Parallelism

This pitfall occurs when you write in a hurry and fail to edit your copy carefully.

An example illustrates this pitfall best.

"The 4-H'ers brushed their beef animals, cleaned the stalls, and were going home."

You would make this sentence parallel in grammatical construction by changing the last four words to "...and went home."

Check the following sentences. Which one contains mixed construction or faulty parallelism?

"She hurried through the snow, the heavy flakes falling upon her, and they clung to her dark hair."

Turn to page 54.

"She hurried through the snow, the heavy flakes falling upon her, clinging to her dark hair."

Turn to page 52.

Page 54  
(From Page 53)

You said the sentence contains mixed construction or faulty parallelism.

You're right!

Here's the sentence again: "She hurried through the snow, the heavy flakes falling upon her, and they clung to her dark hair."

To eliminate the objectionable portion, change the last seven words to read "...clinging to her dark hair."

Now turn to page 55  
for a review.

Page 55  
(From Page 54)

Let's review a bit. When writing items for your newsletter you should:

1. Write in short sentences. A sentence is short if it expresses one idea clearly. An average of 17-19 words per sentence is about right.
2. Personalize your writing. Use an informal "you-and-I" style whenever possible.
3. Write in an active voice using live verbs. Passive voice makes copy drag. Be sure it moves to maintain reader interest.
4. Use few if any prepositional phrases; they plug up your copy and drag it down to boring reading levels.
5. Use the simplest, most precise word possible. You must communicate your thoughts quickly. Short, easy words---common words everyone knows---do this job best.
6. Edit your copy carefully. Don't fall into the pitfalls presented by these grammatical gremlins:
  - A. Mixed tenses
  - B. Dangling modifier
  - C. Needless redundancy
  - D. Nonagreement
  - E. Careless repetition
  - F. Mixed construction or faulty parallelism

Turn to next page for a short quiz on the grammatical pitfalls.

Page 56  
(From Page 55)

The following is a short quiz concerning the grammatical pitfall you can fall into with careless writing.

1. Mixed tenses -- "He planted potatoes in one field and has plowed another."

Does this sentence contain mixed tenses? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

2. Dangling modifier --- "Bounding across the field, the dog came to a wide ditch."

Does this sentence contain a dangling modifier? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

3. Redundancy -- "These requirements are necessary."

Does this sentence contain redundancy? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

4. Nonagreement --- "The board of directors is meeting today."

Does this sentence contain nonagreement? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

5. Careless repetition --- "The cattle buyer bought six head of cattle at the cattle sale."

Does this sentence contain careless repetition? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

6. Mixed construction or faulty parallelism ----  
"Pigs grunted, chickens clucked, and the dog was jumping on the farmer."

Does this sentence contain mixed construction or faulty parallelism? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Turn to page 60  
for answers.



Page 57  
(From Page 60)

### Short Paragraphs

Present your information in short paragraphs to make it look like it's thought fast, produced fast, out fast --- as a newsletter. Fortunately you'll find a natural relationship between writing shorter sentences and short paragraphs.

You should vary the length of your paragraphs, the same as you vary the sentence lengths. Three to five sentences make a good paragraph for newsletters, but this is a general guideline only. Package each informational point in a separate paragraph. Sometimes you'll need more than five sentences.

Sometimes you'll only need one sentence.

Turn to the next page.

Page 58  
(From Page 57)

### Disclaimer Clause

Avoid using trade names. If you must use them, include two or more when possible. (The technical name for a chemical usually is not familiar, so the commercial or trade name is needed for communication.)

Use a disclaimer clause whenever you mention trade names. If only one news item in your newsletter contains a trade name, use the disclaimer as a footnote to that news item. If you mention trade names throughout your letter, insert the disclaimer at the end of your newsletter.

Suggested wording you may use for your disclaimer clause:

"Trade names are used occasionally for better understanding of information presented. No endorsement of named products is intended nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned."

Turn to the next page.

Page 59  
(From Page 58)

### Copyrighted Information

You must obtain written permission to use copyrighted material. Strict laws protect copyright owners. Most books and many magazines are copyrighted, as well as radio scripts, photographs, drawings, and maps.

Federal employees have been held personally liable for infringing on copyrighted material, even though such infringements were made in the course of their duties.

According to a policy statement issued by the Federal Extension Service in 1962, the following checklist should be observed in requesting free license to use copyrighted material:

1. The request will be for no greater right than actually needed.
2. The request will fully identify the material for which permission to publish is granted.
3. The request for license will explain the proposed use and explain the credit to be given so that the licensor need only give his consent.
4. The request must be submitted to the copyright owner in duplicate so that such owner may retain one copy and return the other copy with his consent written on it.
5. A self-addressed return envelope should be enclosed with the request.

Turn to page 61.

Page 60  
(From Page 56)

Answers to quiz on grammatical pitfalls.

1. Yes. The sentence should read: "He planted potatoes in one field and plowed another." If you missed this, review page 37.
2. No. The dog is the subject and the verbal phrase, "Bounding across the field..." modifies dog --- so the phrase isn't dangling. If you missed this, review page 39.
3. Yes. Requirements are requirements, which makes them necessary. The sentence should be reworded to say, "These are requirements." If you missed this, review page 44.
4. No. The subject is "board," and takes the singular verb "is." If you missed this, review page 45.
5. Yes. A better version, eliminating the repetition, would be: "The buyer bought six head of cattle at the sale." If you missed this, review page 51.
6. Yes. Instead of "...the dog was jumping on the farmer." change it to "...the dog jumped on the farmer." This sentence illustrates both faulty parallelism and mixed tenses. If you missed this, review page 53.

Turn to page 57.

Page 61  
(From Page 59)

### Newsletter Format

The right newsletter format adds to the effectiveness of your newsletter; the wrong format detracts. Involved in format also is the design of the letterhead or masthead of the newsletter. This usually involves the design of the top of the first page. Simplicity in design is an asset. Later in this manual you will find a discussion about what must be included in the mast head design to comply with Federal Penalty Mailing regulations.

#### Title

One of the first questions you must answer is: "What will I name it?" This is important. A good title grabs the attention of the first-time reader. And it flags the attention of a long-time reader.

Make the title short but descriptive. A catchy title is an asset; a "cute" title is not. Remember, you've got to live with the title you choose for a long time.

Consider using an appropriate picture or illustration as part of your title makeup. Don't go overboard, though. Keep it simple and straightforward.

Which of these three titles for a newsletter for wool-growers is best?

- "Wool Warblings" ----- Turn to page 61.
- "Wool Gatherings" ----- Turn to page 62.
- "Wool Talk" ----- Turn to page 63.

Page 62  
(From Page 61)

You chose "Wool Gatherings" as the best of the three titles for a woolgrowers newsletter.

No doubt you made your choice based on the catchy quality of the title. But let's consider another factor: Does it say what you want it to say? Webster's dictionary defines "wool gathering" as: "...foolish or purposeless thinking or imagining."

Change your mind? Ok, return to page 61 and choose another answer.

Page 63  
(From Page 61)

You chose "Wool Talk" as the best of the three titles for a woolgrower newsletter.

I agree. "Wool Talk" may not be the most imaginative title possible for such a newsletter, but it's definitely the best of the three selections.

Turn to page 65.

Page 64  
(From Page 61)

You chose "Wool Warblings" as the best of the three titles for a woolgrower newsletter.

Hopefully you're kidding. This is an example of a "cute" title, or more accurately, a ludicrous title.

Turn to page 61 and  
choose another answer.



Page 65  
(From Page 63)

### Penalty Mail Requirements

Extension employees using the federal penalty mailing privilege must abide by certain regulations. These regulations dictate to some extent how the front page layout may be handled.

The wording "Agricultural Extension Service" must be dominant and placed at the top, followed by other desired wording. This may be "....., University of Idaho, Blark County." The newsletter title, picture or illustration if you have one, plus other desired wording should go below this line.

The required cooperative statement indicating the cooperation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture with the University of Idaho in conducting Extension work may be placed at the bottom of the page.

Use your full name and title and sign the stencil with your full name if you mail the newsletter without a separate penalty mail enclosure. Most generally you would do this on the last line, the same as with a personal letter.

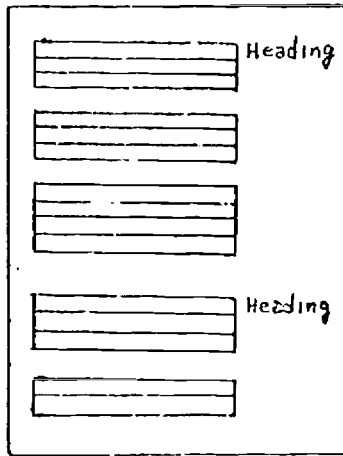
The newsletter should be written as a letter from you, the Extension worker. Names and titles on non-Extension personnel appearing after news items indicating a combined letter, should not be used. Instead, summarize the information, mentioning the source's name and title in the process. Be sure the information is not copyrighted, however. Or, if it is, be sure you have permission to use it.

Contents of the newsletter should relate to Extension programs or projects.

Turn to page 67.

Page 66  
(From Page 67)

You said you liked this layout best.



Certainly it uses the single column with the preferred line length. And certainly the less traditional style of headings on the right side would attract attention. However, the headings on the right may confuse the reader even more.

You might want to use this style once for a change of pace, but you probably wouldn't want to use it all the time.

Return to page 67 and  
choose another layout.

Page 67  
(From Page 65)

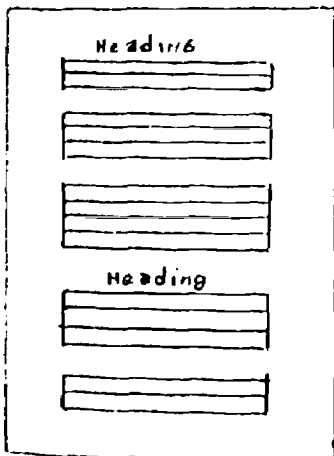
Column Width

Most newsletters are prepared on 8-1/2 x 11 inch paper. Unfortunately, research on ease of reading is somewhat at odds with this size sheet. A single line typed with normal margins is too long for easy reading.

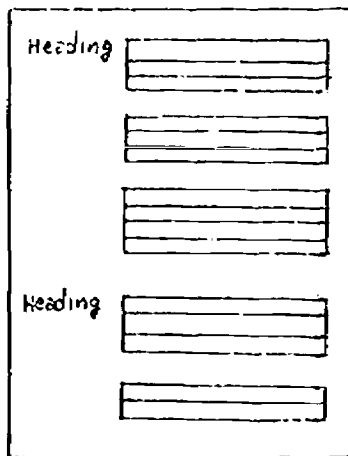
You can use two columns, but with typed copy, the lines tend to be too short for comfortable reading. However, two columns are used but too often the page looks crowded, especially if the outside margins are made narrow to accommodate the two columns.

A compromise is needed. The best answer is a single column with lines about five inches long for elite typewriter size and about six inches long for the pica size typewriter.

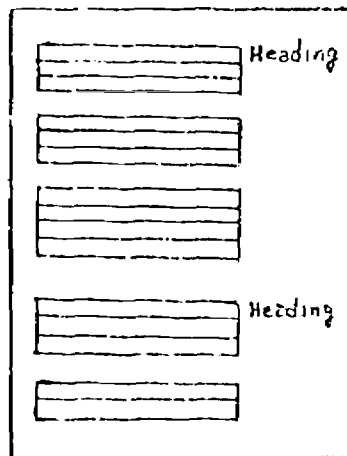
With this approach in mind, which of the three layouts below do you like best?



Turn to page 68



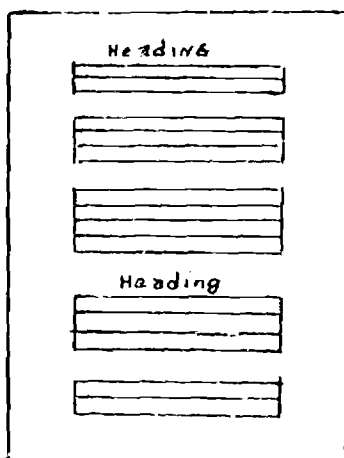
Turn to page 69



Turn to page 66

Page 68  
(From Page 67)

You said you liked this layout' best.



There's nothing wrong with this layout and many newsletters use it. You lose some space by putting the headings above the copy...but this is a minor factor.

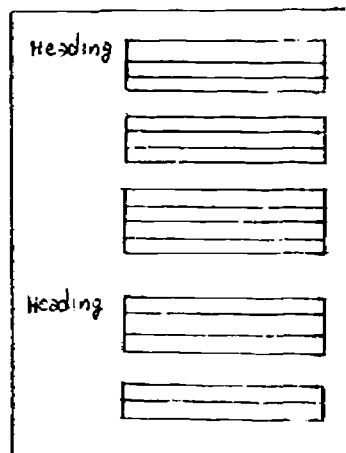
You must guard against "fudging," that is unconsciously lengthening the lines to get more information in. Remember, the ideal line length is about five inches on an elite typewriter and about six inches on a pica typewriter. You have a little leeway, but don't go too far.

Keep in mind that long lines are hard to read. It's easy for the reader to get lost. And if he finds the reading too hard ----he'll stop reading.

The layout usually chosen is the one with headings on the left. Turn to the next page for a discussion of this layout.

Page 69  
(From Page 67)

You said you liked this layout best.



I agree. In light of the need for a shorter line than a full page width, this seems like the best compromise. By placing the heading at the left, you can't "fudge" on the line length too much.

You also gain a little space by not having the heading above the copy. White space is always welcome, and this layout uses white space more informally than does the layout with copy centered.

Most people are used to reading from left to right, making this layout preferable over the one with headings at the right.

Turn to the next page.

### Additional Preparation Tips

Headings ----- Use Upper and Lower Case -- not ALL CAPS for easy reading, especially with a longer heading. Use an action verb in the heading--for instance, "Let's Go to the Fair!" or "Feed High Concentrates for Profit."

Illustrations ----- Use illustrations to support your information, not to "doll up" your newsletter. Too many illustrations take away from the serious nature of your newsletter. Too many illustrations unrelated to the information may give the newsletter a comic book look. Your information is the important thing -- not the illustrations.

Type Style ----- Do not use a script or modified script typewriter style. It's harder to read.

A "serif" type, similar to the style used in this manual is best. A "serif" type has "feet" on the letters (note the "i's" and "h's").

A "sans-serif" type like this does not have these "feet" (Again, notice the "i's" and "h's").

### Upper-lower Case

Type -----

Type all copy in upper and lower case. Do not type in all-caps. It's difficult to read. You may use an all-cap word for EMPHASIS, but do so sparingly.

### Information in

Boxes -----

You may want to put a box around a particular bit of information to make it stand out and emphasize its importance. This and other means of emphasizing, such as \*\*\*\*\* and ----- used between items in columns, are fine if you don't overdo them.

Turn to page 74.

Page 71  
(From Page 70)

### Duplicating the Newsletter

Be sure you get the best duplication job possible. A sloppy, messy job destroys the effectiveness of your best writing efforts. The information you present may be timely and important, but a typographical error or smudgy copy or dim, hard-to-read copy distracts the reader or turns him off entirely.

Be concerned with these factors:

Paper and Ink Color ----- White paper and black ink are best. They give the highest contrast. Light pastel colored paper and dark colored ink may be used, but be sure the contrast between the two is great enough to make your message easy to read. Do not use "fibre-tint" mimeograph paper in the darker shades.

If you are printing on both sides of the paper, use a paper heavy enough to avoid the ink showing through from the other side. A 20 lb. paper is okay, but a 24 lb. paper is better.

Stencil ----- Be sure you're using the right stencil for the job. Some stencils have softer coatings than others. The type face style of your typewriter may work better on one than another. Your supplier can help you here.

Typing ----- Stencils must be prepared correctly. A poorly prepared stencil will produce poor quality reproductions. Use an electric typewriter if possible. Each key strikes with the same force. If a manual typewriter must be used, impress upon your typist the importance of developing a solid, even typing style.

Page 72  
(From Page 71)

Letters with hollow portions, such as the "o," "p," and "b" are the worst offenders of an improperly adjusted machine. They strike too hard in relation to the other keys and cut through the stencil completely. The result is a hole in the stencil that produces a solid blob of ink on the paper instead of an outlined letter.

Be sure the typist proofreads the stencil carefully before removing it from the typewriter. Be sure she understands how to correct stencils properly.

The Duplicating Machine-----  
and Operator

Most generally a mimeograph machine is used to duplicate news-letters. However, the spirit duplicator (ditto) or offset duplicator process may be used. Usually the spirit duplicator produces a less desirable quality job than the mimeograph, and the offset duplicator produces a better quality job.

The earlier comments about stencils apply primarily to a mimeograph operator.

Keep your duplicating machine in good operating condition. Have it cleaned and adjusted periodically. Be sure the machine operator understands all adjustments that can be made on the machine. Arrange for a training session if she doesn't.

Turn to page 75.



Page 73  
(From Page 75)

Answers to quiz on duplicating the newsletter.

1. False. Some type face balls of the IBM Selectric typewriters (up through 1967 models) don't make good mimeograph stencils if the stencil surface is too hard.
2. True.
3. True.
4. False. Although black ink on white paper gives the greatest contrast, light pastel colored papers and dark colored inks in pleasing combinations may be used for variety and accent.
5. False. A poorly prepared stencil produces poor quality copies.....period.
6. True. However, even with the lighter-colored fibre-tints, the contrast is not the best. Why not use another paper altogether?
7. True.
8. False. If you use a light weight paper, printing will show through from the other side and legibility will go down.

Turn to page 77.

Page 74  
(From Page 70)

Here is a short quiz on the information presented about additional preparation tips.

1. A type style that simulates handwritten script is okay for use in a news letter. True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
2. A heading should be brief. True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
3. Putting a box around an item is okay once in awhile. True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
4. An illustration showing a happy little girl is okay to use with a story about irrigating potatoes. True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
5. A type style similar to the type used in this manual is a good style for newsletters. True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
6. Copy typed in all capitals is difficult to read. True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
7. Indenting paragraphs helps the reader. True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
8. A newsletter without illustration would be dull and hard to read. True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_

For answers turn to  
page 76.

Page 75  
(From Page 72)

Here's a quiz on the information presented about duplicating the newsletter.

1. It doesn't make any difference which stencil you use.  
True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
2. Black ink on white paper is the best combination for duplicating newsletters.  
True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
3. An electric typewriter is the best to use for preparing stencils.  
True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
4. Colored papers and colored inks should not be used for newsletters.  
True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
5. A good machine operator can duplicate good copies from a poorly prepared stencil.  
True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
6. A "fibre-tint" mimeograph paper in a light color is okay to use for a newsletter.  
True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
7. A clean, well-adjusted typewriter is needed to prepare good stencils.  
True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
8. The weight of the paper you use is not important when duplicating copy on both sides of the sheet.  
True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_

For answers, turn to  
page 73.

Page 76  
(From Page 74)

Answers to quiz on additional preparation tips.

1. False. Script or simulated script type is difficult to read.
2. True.
3. True.
4. False. An illustration of a happy little girl used with a story about irrigating potatoes would not relate to the story and would confuse the reader as to why you used it.
5. True.
6. True.
7. True.
8. False. Poorly presented information that doesn't say anything makes a newsletter dull and hard to read.....not the absence of illustrations.

Turn to page 71.

Page 77  
(From Page 73)

### The Mailing List

Your newsletter mailing list is most important. It should contain names of people who want and need your information. You should be on the lookout for new names to add to the list. Be sure to ask them if they would like to receive your newsletter before sending it to them.

In this regard, the Federal Penalty Mailing Privilege regulations state:

"Any written or recorded oral request to be put on a mailing list to receive a specified or series of publications, or information on a specified subject or subjects is regarded as a previous request for publications, provided mailing lists are brought up to date at least once a year."

You must "purge" your newsletter mailing list at least once a year; that is, you should ask each person on your list if he wants to continue receiving your newsletter. You must do this to comply with regulations. They state:

"To make certain that persons on mailing lists wish their requests for material to remain effective, they should be notified at least once a year that unless a request is received for their names to be kept on the mailing list, their names will be dropped and publications will not be sent to them in the future."

This procedure also keeps your mailing list viable, that is it helps eliminate people who no longer live in the area, are deceased, or have changed businesses.

Be sure you have a zip code for each name on your mailing list.

A straight inquiry to names on the list as to whether the individual wants to remain on the list requires that he put his own stamp on the return card.

However, you can use the penalty mailing privilege on the return card under certain circumstances.

Page 78  
(From Page 80)

You're right. A reply card set up in this manner does qualify for use of the penalty mailing privilege. You have asked additional questions that are helpful to you in planning your Extension activities more effectively.

Turn to page 81.

Page 79  
(From Page 80)

You said the reply card containing the statement --- "Do you want to continue receiving the newsletter 'Wool Talk'?" qualifies for use of the penalty mailing privilege.

You are wrong. This is a straight inquiry. The recipient must use his own stamp in returning the card to you. Review page 80....then choose the other answer.

Page 80  
(From Page 77)

You may use the penalty mailing privilege on the return card if you are asking a number of additional questions primarily of value to you.

The following statement is from the publication, "The Use of the Federal Penalty Mailing Privilege by Extension Employees."

"Extension employees authorized to use the penalty mailing privilege may furnish self-addressed penalty envelopes, cards, etc., to persons or concerns for their convenience in submitting information desired by an agent for official use, provided, the person or concern supplying the information is not doing so in their own interest. Instances when reply envelopes or cards may be used are:

- "1. Enrollment cards for 4-H or home demonstration projects.
- "2. Requesting information from persons stating whether or not they will take part in Extension projects.
- "3. Requesting information from persons who have participated in Extension projects."

Which one of the following two reply cards qualifies for use of the penalty mailing privilege?

1. Do you want to continue receiving the newsletter "Wool Talk"?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Turn to page 79.

2. Do you wish to continue receiving the newsletter "Wool Talk"?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Did you attend the Wool Grading demonstration in May?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you did, what other topics besides the ones covered would you like to hear about at future meetings? \_\_\_\_\_



Page 81  
(From Page 78)

### Self-Mailers

You may wish to mail your newsletter in an envelope. Or you may design the newsletter to be a self-mailer.

If you choose the self-mailer, be sure you fold the newsletter twice and attach in the center with a single staple or by other means before mailing. This handling is stipulated in the Penalty Mailing Privilege regulations.

The address panel of the self-mailer should be set up in the following manner.

---

Agricultural Extension Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
University of Idaho  
Moscow, Idaho 83843

Official Business

Postage and Fees Paid  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Mr. John Doe  
P.O. Box 10001  
Anywhere, Idaho 88888

---

Messages, including your name and title, should not appear on this panel.

Turn to the next page.

Page 82  
(From Page 81)

Briefly, here's a check list you can use in preparing your newsletters.

1. Audience -- do you know who they are, what they're like, and what they want to know and already know?
2. Is a newsletter the best device to use. Can you supplement some or all of its information with use of mass media?
3. Does your writing grab the reader in the first sentence and give him a good reason to read more for his gain.....not yours?
4. Have you organized your information so that it flows logically from topic to topic?
5. Have you "personalized" your writing? Is there a "you and I" approach? Have you talked....not stated?
6. Is the writing easy to read --- no extra long, complex sentences, little if any passive voice, simple words, straightforward ideas?
7. Does the newsletter look readable --- uncrowded, uncluttered --- enough white space?
8. Have you edited your own writing for grammar and spelling. Is the copy to be duplicated free of typographical errors and messy corrections?
9. Are you on a regular schedule for putting out your newsletter so your reader expects your newsletter and builds anticipation?
10. Is your mailing list up-to-date?

Turn to the next page.

Page 83  
(From Page 82)

You have completed the self-instructional manual on newsletter preparation. Hopefully, it was both educationally beneficial and interesting.

As you will recall, the objective of this manual was to provide you with knowledge to perform the following task:

To write a newsletter containing one or more items of information for a specific audience using at least ten principles of good newsletter writing and preparation as explained in this manual.

Evaluate the newsletters you prepare from now on. See if they fulfill, and hopefully surpass, the conditions put forth in this objective. This is the ultimate check to see whether you benefited from the time spent with this manual.

Here and there in the manual you found blue pages. These were provided for your convenience. They denote summary pages where you will find major points collected and quizzes that also can serve as summary pages for you.

Finally, to further help make this manual a good reference for you, an index follows. The points covered in this manual are indexed by pages for your convenience.

Turn to the next page.

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## CHAPTER IV

### USE OF MANUAL IN EXTENSION WORKER TRAINING

Page

1 Background Information

3 The suggested self-instructional programmed learning manual for newsletter  
5 preparation has not yet been used in a concentrated campaign of helping Exten-  
8 sion workers improve their proficiencies with newsletter preparation. However,  
11 certain testing and reviewing have been done.  
12  
13

18 The manual was first reviewed by William Stellmon, University of Idaho Exp-  
18 eriment Station Editor. His suggestions were incorporated into the manuscript  
23 before further testing and reviewing were done.  
23  
26

32 One copy of the manual was given to the Extension agents at the Latah Coun-  
37 ty Cooperative Extension office. HomeA Futter and Leonard Burns went through the  
39 manual with no prior instructions. They were only asked to make comment about  
44 whether the manual was clear and understandable, whether the examples used in  
45 the manual were too easy, too hard, or about right, and whether they felt they  
51 had benefited from the experience.  
53  
57  
58  
59

61 Their comments were most encouraging. Futter explained that it was one of  
61 the first times he had enjoyed learning something. The "scrambled book" appr-  
65 oach to programmed learning used intrigued him and he found the fascination en-  
66 joyable as well as instructional. He also reported that he was pleased with  
70 the relative shortness of the manual and how much he learned in the time it took  
71 him to go through the manual. This was slightly less than one hour.

77 Both agents have been sending out newsletters for some time. Both express-  
81

ed the feeling they would be doing a better job in preparing future newsletters as a result of studying the manual.

Another copy of the manual was submitted to James Graves, University of Idaho District Extension Agent Supervisor. Graves also made certain suggestions to improve the manual and expressed the feeling that the manual would be a definite aid in helping county Extension agents and state staff specialists do a better job in preparing newsletters. He also commented that the manual should help encourage staff members to put out a newsletter who might not be doing so at the present.

Others who received copies of the manual and who made construction suggestions as well as encouraging comments were: Charles A. Bond, Agricultural Editor, Washington State University; Sherrill Carlson, Publications Editor, Washington State University; and Dr. Herbert Hite, Chairman, Department of Education, Western Washington State College.

Still another copy was sent to Richard R. Rankin, Director, Division of Management Operations, USDA Federal Extension Service. Director Rankin was asked to check only those pages dealing with penalty mail regulations and layout design where certain information must be included to meet the requirements of the penalty mailing regulations.

#### Projected Thoughts on Manual Usage

Plans call for mass production of the manual. These will be used with county Extension agents and state staff specialists. No concrete plans have yet been made as to a specific approach in using the manual.

However, the manual can be used in several ways:

1. A copy could be sent to each agricultural agent, home economics agent, and state staff subject matter specialist. Instructions would simply point out what

the manual was and how the reader might expect to benefit by reading it.

2. Another use could be in coordination with a planned workshop on newsletter preparation. Copies of the manual could be sent to each expected participant a week or so before the workshop with instructions for the individual to read through and study the manual before coming to the workshop. In this way, each participant would be brought up to the same level of understanding concerning newsletter preparation. The workshop could then proceed from that level of understanding and be more productive in instructional efforts.

3. A copy of the manual could be included in a packet to be given to each new Extension worker. This packet would include information about what the worker could expect in the way of help from the agricultural information staff members. Other self-instructional manuals, if available, would also be included in the packet that would give help in developing proficiencies in radio work, photography, news story writing, and audio-visual aids.

#### Suggested Research on Effectiveness of the Manual

The manual has not been used in the field. It has been pretested as described on page 121-122. The possible uses of the manual offer good possibilities for a research project. Several comparisons could be accomplished with the proper planning and adequate time, funds, and administrative cooperation. These could be:

1. A check group, consisting of Extension workers who had received no training in newsletter preparation.
2. Experimental groups as follows:
  - a. a group that would consist of workers who received the manual but no instructions except an oral or written explanation about what the manual was and how the worker could benefit from going through the manual.
  - b. another group would consist of workers who were subjected to a

workshop about newsletter preparation without use of the manual at any time.

- c. another group that would consist of workers who received the manual prior to a workshop with instructions to go through the manual before coming to the workshop.

The results of a research investigation such as this could be evaluated several ways. Three ways that come immediately to mind are:

1. An evaluation of Extension workers' improvement in newsletter preparation as conducted by an expert or experts. This could be a subjective evaluation only, or a scorecard could be devised to help the expert(s) in the evaluation.
2. An evaluation could be done by the clients receiving the newsletter. The approach here would be to question the clients about the newsletters produced before the Extension worker had received training in preparing newsletters...and again after the worker had received training. Again, a scorecard would be used to standardize the evaluation among the clients and between the questioning periods.
3. An evaluation could be conducted to determine to what degree newsletters from the Extension worker contributed to changes in practices by the client. If an evaluation of how the worker had improved in his ability to produce a better newsletter were conducted simultaneously, the experimental design would become quite complex. However, with careful preparation and knowledge about the client's cultural practices and/or management practices both at the time he received the worker's untrained efforts and later after the worker had received newsletter preparation training, the comparisons could be made.

An alternate approach for this evaluation would be to conduct an evaluation as described in either No. 1 or No. 2 first. Then an evaluation as to how much the worker's well-prepared newsletter influenced the changes in practices by the client could be accomplished with a much less elaborate experimental design.



## CHAPTER V

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