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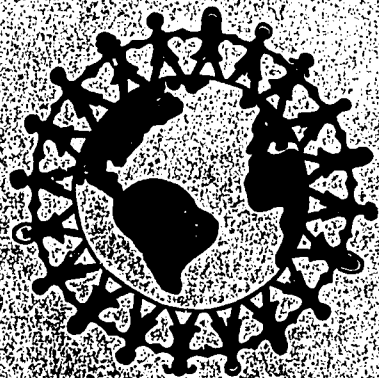
ABSTRACT

A rationale for interdisciplinary elementary social studies materials produced and field tested by the Project Social Studies Curriculum Center is presented in this document. World change is taken into account in courses which focus on understanding culture, valuing human dignity, freedom of choice, and the individual. This emphasis leads to the broad program goal of citizenship education in the social studies and in the school. Inquiry teaching strategies encourage pupils to learn through the discovery process and to set up hypotheses by recalling concepts and generalizations learned by experiences and previous classes. Nine sections included in the booklet are: 1) the need for curricular change; 2) curriculum tasks undertaken by the staff in developing its program; 3) the social sciences or sources for the curriculum; 4) the philosophical considerations of the curriculum developers; 5) the role of the school in a democratic society; 6) teaching strategies; 7) eight criteria for selecting topics of study; 8) a brief framework of the elementary school program; and, 9) three general principles of curriculum organization used in grades 1 through 4. See 1971 Research in Education for some related documents. Other related documents are SO 003 146 through SO 003 153. (Author/SJM)

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# THE FAMILY OF MAN

A SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM



## THE RATIONALE AND OVERVIEW

BY DR. EDITH WEST

Professor of Education and Director, University of Minnesota  
Project Social Studies Curriculum Center.

SD 003 041



**"To see the earth as it truly is, small and blue and beautiful in that eternal silence where it floats, is to see ourselves as riders on the earth together, brothers on that bright loveliness in the eternal cold—brothers who know now they are truly brothers."**

**Archibald MacLeish**

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## INTRODUCTION

This program is part of a new K-12 social studies curriculum developed by the University of Minnesota Project Social Studies Curriculum Center. The Center began its work in 1963 under a grant from the United States Office of Education. An interdisciplinary team of social studies education specialists, social scientists, and classroom teachers spent 5½ years developing and field testing the program, which was completed in 1968. Since that time the materials have undergone additional field testing, evaluation, and revision. This latest revision of the materials for grades one through four has been done by Charles L. Mitsakos, Social Studies Coordinator for the Chelmsford (Massachusetts) Public Schools, in consultation with the Project Social Studies Curriculum Center. In preparing this revision, he has drawn upon the experiences of the teachers in his own system and upon field tests and research in other parts of the country.

The program, *The Family of Man*, is quite unlike the more traditional expanding environment curriculum found in many elementary schools. It was developed to meet the needs of children as citizens in today's interdependent and rapidly-changing world.

## THE NEED FOR CURRICULAR CHANGE

Demands for curricular revision have been brought about by a number of developments. The curriculum must take into account changes in the world and in the United States. New countries and areas of the world have become of great significance both internationally and to citizens in the United States. Moreover, the world scene is marked by tensions and conflicts which threaten to erupt in a world-wide holocaust. At home, too, Americans are divided, and suspicion marks intergroup relations. Now, more than ever before, the social studies curriculum must prepare children to adjust to change and learn to direct that change for the benefit of all human beings. It must help them to understand other cultures, to accept cultural diversity as natural, to view men of different races, nationalities, and religions as part of one human family, despite cultural differences, and to value human dignity and the worth of the individual.

The social studies curriculum must take into account changes in the social sciences. These disciplines have been undergoing drastic revisions in recent years. The older social sciences have been reinterpreted in the light of new information. New methods are being used to seek knowledge. Moreover, several disciplines which have been ignored almost completely in the traditional curriculum have made great progress in the accumulation of knowledge which can help children understand people's behavior individually and in groups. Anthropology, for example, is a rich source for a social studies curriculum designed to prepare children for the modern world.

The social studies curriculum needs revision in the light of new discoveries in the field of education which challenge both older teaching strategies and older ideas about readiness and the age level at which concepts and skills can be introduced successfully. The greatly increased mobility in American society and the widespread ownership of television sets have meant that children come to school with different knowledge and interests than children had years ago when the curriculum framework based upon the expanding environment was developed. Studies have found that children in the primary grades are interested in peoples in other cultures and in distant places. The findings suggest that the expanding environment framework is outmoded and that a new one needs to be substituted to introduce children more quickly to other parts of the world and to peoples of other countries. Research findings suggest that concepts and skills can be taught earlier than previously supposed. Other studies indicate that the traditional placement of some topics may come too late in the curriculum to have much effect on certain attitudes in which social studies teachers are interested. General research on changing attitudes and on attitudes toward race suggest that concepts and topics designed to affect attitudes toward diversity among peoples of other races,

nationalities, and religions might be more effective if introduced very early in the curriculum.

Studies of retention in the social studies have painted a bleak picture. Clearly, the curriculum needs to give much greater attention to the problem of sequential learning. If pupils are to learn and use skills, concepts, and generalizations or to develop important attitudes, they must encounter situations designed to teach for such objectives upon many occasions throughout one school year and their entire school program. Repeated encounters with carefully sequenced skills, concepts, and generalizations promote transfer of learning to new situations which pupils may encounter in the future, since pupils experience many occasions in which they find past learning helpful to them as they try to make sense out of new data. Moreover, a K-12 curriculum should provide opportunities for cumulative experiences designed to reinforce each other in order to develop desired attitudinal goals — goals which research findings indicate are not easily achieved through single, isolated experiences.

Educational psychologists have developed other theories which have led to curricular changes. For example, they developed theories about teaching structures of disciplines in order to promote understanding, retention, and application of knowledge to new situations. They also worked out new inquiry strategies of teaching to supplant older exposition strategies.



## **CURRICULUM TASKS UNDERTAKEN BY STAFF**

Since some curriculum projects have focused so heavily upon the social sciences as sources for curriculum development, it should prove useful to illustrate the Minnesota staff's concern with other sources by outlining briefly the tasks which it undertook in developing its program.

In stage one, which lasted nearly a year, the staff undertook five tasks which had to be done before they could make decisions about goals for the program or about the selection and organization of content and learning experiences. This stage involved a study of society, a study of learning theory and of learners at different grade levels, a diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses of the existing curriculum and a survey of research, educational literature, and curricular proposals made by others that might provide valuable suggestions for what might be done at later stages of curriculum development. It also involved consideration of the social sciences and of certain philosophical questions related to the nature of knowledge, the good society, the good citizen in a democracy, and the role of the school in a democracy.

These tasks need not be approached by a curriculum developer in any set order, but each is important to the decisions which will follow this preliminary stage of curriculum work. Since the purposes of some of these tasks are obvious, only certain ones are elaborated upon here.

Curriculum developers need to consider certain philosophical questions. What should be the role of the school in a democratic society? More particularly, what should be the role of a social studies program? Should it be designed to meet pupils' present needs? Should it be designed to prepare pupils for future needs? Should it attempt to pass on the cultural heritage, and, if so, what part of this heritage? Or should it attempt to do something of each of these, and if so, what should be the mix? More specific questions grow out of these broader ones. For example, should the social studies program focus primarily upon citizenship education or only upon teaching a sound knowledge of the social sciences? Other philosophical questions must also be considered. What is the view of staff members about the good life and the good society? To what extent should a social studies program be designed to try to promote the good life or good society as envisioned? What philosophical position does the staff take about epistemology? What implications does this position have for developing a social studies curriculum? The staff's position on these questions is summarized in a later section of this rationale and overview.

Another task is to analyze one's society and the culture of that society as well as the broader society of nations. An identification of trends and problems helps provide the

criteria by which one determines the significance both of possible goals and of topics which might be used as vehicles to achieve these goals. A society undergoing rapid change, for example, with a trend toward an ever-increasing rapidity of change, requires different kinds of education for its citizens than one which is relatively static. Passing on the cultural heritage of existing knowledge, which may be outmoded quickly, may not be so important as developing skills and attitudes which enable people to cope with future change. A society in which anomie seems widespread may need more stress on values in its school curricula than a society in which anomie is not extensive. Some topics are more significant for inclusion in the curricula of a society in which international affairs impinge upon the lives of individuals than they would be in a society with little contact with other parts of the world. Certain topics may be of great relevance to the lives of pupils in a society torn by dissension among races and marked by racism on the part of some and by negative self-images on the part of many minority group children. If education is to prepare pupils to live in a society, it must deal with that which is significant and likely to be of continuing significance in that society. The staff did not prepare a formal paper on these trends; rather, it developed an informal list which was used in its work.

Another task involves examining learning theory, the learner, and the development of thinking processes and skills in the social studies. Some of the staff's conclusions are obvious from the discussion of teaching strategies which are found later in this rationale and overview.

Still another task involves analyzing the social sciences as sources for the curriculum. The staff's conclusions are explained in the next section of this document.

This preliminary stage of curriculum development was followed by five other stages. In stage two the staff defined its goals for the program in some detail. In stages three and four they selected and organized content and learning experiences. Stage three focused upon developing a tentative curricular framework which involved a consideration of the many possible principles for organizing content. Stage four focused upon developing materials for pupils and teachers. The last two stages actually overlapped in time and involved evaluation and curriculum implementation on a small scale.

## **THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AS SOURCES FOR THE CURRICULUM**

The Curriculum Center has used the social sciences as only one source in curriculum development. However, a few of its conclusions about the social science disciplines should illuminate some of the features of the program.

A discipline is a field of study, an organized body of knowledge and a method of inquiry combined. The field of study refers to the data studied and the types of questions asked by practitioners in the discipline. These questions define the data of the field and so its boundaries. For example, anthropologists ask questions about the many patterns of behavior in different cultures of the world. They ask how these patterns are similar and how they differ from one culture to another. They also ask many other questions about how culture has affected the physical evolution of man and about what factors promote and what factors hinder culture change. An economist, on the other hand, narrows his field of study to patterns of economic behavior. He asks questions about production, consumption, and the exchange of goods and services. For example, he may ask how an economic system resolves the questions of what to produce, how much to produce, how it shall be produced, and how goods and services will be distributed among members of the society.

A discipline also includes an organized body of knowledge. This body of knowledge consists of far more than an accumulation of facts. Unless facts are grouped to show their relationships, they are of little help in explaining events or places. Scientists, including social scientists, attempt to describe, order, and explain the phenomena in their field. Most of them also hope to develop laws which will enable them to predict. Scientists describe and order their data by developing concepts which relate like things. Facts are classified under group names (concepts). Any fact is an instance of a concept. Scientists attempt to explain and predict by discovering relationships among concepts — relationships which hold true in many if not in all cases in which specified conditions are present. These generalizations can be used to explain isolated facts if these facts are instances of the phenomena explained by the generalization.

Conceptualizing, then, is the process of categorizing. Categories do not include things which are exactly the same. No two mountains or revolutions or men are entirely alike. Categories are based upon those characteristics and attributes which are similar and which are essential to the classification. Unique aspects of events or things are temporarily ignored, and likenesses are emphasized.

Generalizations specify some relationship among two or more concepts. These generalizations may be singular propositions, that is, they may refer to only one country



or one past event or one culture. Or the generalizations may be transferable to many places and events. It is the transferable generalization which enables scientists to predict.

Generalizations in the social sciences may be probabilistic; that is, the relationship may hold in only a certain percentage of cases. Other generalizations may state relationships which are always true, given specified conditions. Some generalizations are true given the specified conditions of a particular culture; others might be universal or true in all cultures. Probabilistic generalizations may include a statement of probability. At other times, such statistical evidence is lacking, and the statement may include such words as tendency, generally, or usually. At times these reservations are omitted even though the social scientist does not believe the generalization to be universal; he thinks of all social science generalizations as only tendencies and so omits the words. Generalizations differ in terms of the certainty with which scientists state them. An hypothesis which has been tested over and over by many scientists in many different situations, without being disproved, yields a generalization about which scientists feel much more sure than one which has been tested less widely. One of the marks of the scientist is that he holds knowledge to be tentative; he is willing to revise his generalizations in the light of new evidence.

Some people classify all generalizations as theories, that is, as statements which are hypothetical in that it is possible that at some future time they may be disproved. One can speak of different levels of theories. For example, a low-level theory might relate only two variables or concepts. A middle-range theory might relate a number of concepts and the data in a major part of a discipline. A broad-gage theory would relate the data and concepts in the entire discipline. Social scientists are attempting to develop broad-gage theories. As yet they have been unable to develop generally acceptable ones, although they have developed many low-level and middle-range theories which have achieved wide acceptance.

A structure of a discipline refers to the way in which facts and concepts are related. In those disciplines aimed at prediction, a structure includes the concepts, generalizations and broader theories of the discipline.

Concepts enable one to use past experiences, direct or vicarious, to examine the world with some understanding. If each event or object were seen as having nothing in common with any other event or object, the world would be extremely bewildering. We would have to face each new object or event as though it were entirely new; nothing we had learned about past objects or events would be of help to us. If, however, we can group objects and situations as having something in common with other objects and situations about which we know something, we can apply what we know about these other objects and situations to the new ones. If we recognize something as an example of a certain concept, we know certain generalizations about the phenomena and so know better what to expect from a situation and how to handle it.

Furthermore, concepts give investigators hunches. Because scientists are so used to using a concept in explaining data, they are likely to ask if some new phenomenon

may not fall within the category of this concept. Or they may get a hunch that they can throw some explanatory light upon an old subject of investigation by examining it as a possible example of a category or concept which has never been applied to it before. For example, the concept of role applied to legislative behavior has given political scientists new insight into political behavior; they borrowed the concept from sociologists.

Thus concepts serve to focus our attention upon certain things; they serve to screen what we observe. Indeed, we are unlikely to notice certain things for which we have no concepts. As Vernon Van Dyke points out, "people do not ordinarily look for something without having reason to think that it exists." Once someone sees a new way of categorizing phenomena and describes and names the category, "many others become aware of its existence and are likely to perceive it."<sup>1</sup> Thus the concepts of a field tend to identify the data of the field. No one can ever examine all of the facts of a situation. The facts of a discipline are those which are relevant to the concepts of the discipline and so to the questions posed by men in the field.

Social science concepts, then, can be thought of as tools used by social scientists to gain new knowledge in their fields, as well as tools by which they and the ordinary person can help make sense out of their social environment.

Since those aspects of knowledge which are most crucial in any discipline are the conceptual tools, generalizations, and theories which can be used to help men explain and predict and to obtain new knowledge, the social studies curriculum should be devised to help pupils understand the most significant concepts, generalizations, and theories in each of the disciplines. The most significant concepts are those which are related by generalizations to the largest number of different concepts and which are used in explanatory generalizations. Frequently, the most significant concepts represent the key variables in a field. Once the most significant concepts have been identified, the generalizations which define and relate them to other concepts need to be identified and arranged in order of difficulty. This involves identifying concepts which are subsumed under or related by the key concepts. The curriculum builder can then attempt to develop a curriculum which introduces the easier ideas about concepts at earlier levels and adds more and more difficult ideas about them at later levels. If this is accomplished for each major concept, the curriculum will include the most significant generalizations in the field and will provide pupils with some knowledge of a structure of the field (i.e., the ways in which concepts and generalizations are related to each other). At the highest levels of the secondary school, pupils can begin to understand some of the current debate about conflicting theories in each field. The concepts from one field do not need to be taught all at once in one course. If they are introduced at different places and reinforced throughout the curriculum, pupils will learn a structure for each discipline gradually as they advance in school. If pupils have drawn upon concepts from several fields within one course, they will learn to look for ways in which concepts from many fields will help them analyze new data.

<sup>1</sup> "Political Science, A Philosophical Analysis." (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1960), p. 64.

A discipline also includes a general method of inquiry, such as empiricism in the social sciences and the natural sciences, a set of tools or techniques for carrying out the general method of inquiry, and a method of explanation. In the sense that the concepts of a field focus and direct inquiry, these concepts are tools of inquiry.

Disciplines are constantly changing; knowledge is not fixed. Disciplines change as new information is added to the body of knowledge, as new concepts are developed or borrowed to direct attention to different data, as new theories are developed to guide research or to organize and explain phenomena, and as new techniques are developed or borrowed to make possible better controlled observations and analysis of data or even the collection of data which were formerly thought beyond the power of a discipline to study. Structures of disciplines are developed by the practitioners of the discipline to help them make sense out of the real world; the structures change as the practitioners engage in further study and see new ways of organizing data. A major feature of any social studies program, therefore, should be an emphasis upon this changing nature of knowledge in the social sciences as well as on inquiry techniques for gaining new knowledge in the different fields.

It should be pointed out that some people define the structure of a field as the analytical questions asked by practitioners of the discipline as they pursue their investigations. At first glance this approach to structure appears far different from the one explained earlier. Upon closer examination, much of this difference disappears, unless those holding the concepts/generalizations approach consider it a closed and unchanging system. The analytical questions asked are related to certain key analytical concepts and arise out of generalizations and theories which have been developed around them. For example, one can say that culture is an analytical concept in anthropology. One could set up a series of analytical questions related to culture such as: How do people learn the culture of their society? What factors bring about changes in culture within the society? To what extent do different groups in the society share the same culture and to what extent have they developed subcultures? To what extent is the culture integrated so that a change in one aspect brings about changes in other aspects? Each of these analytical questions is related to one or more generalizations about culture. Indeed, it is the generalizations which social scientists have about a concept which make the concept significant.

The Minnesota Center's staff has chosen to identify important concepts and generalizations from the various social sciences and has tried to provide for sequential development of them in the K-12 curriculum. This does not mean that staff members reject the idea of having pupils learn to ask analytical questions related to the concepts. Pupils can be taught to turn generalizations into questions as they study new data. Having learned that temperature is affected by distance from the equator, by elevation, and by distance from bodies of warm water, pupils can ask whether or not these same factors or others influence temperature in another place which they plan to study. Children may discover that they do, but they may also discover other factors which will cause them to modify their generalization. Although pupils can begin with analytical questions, the Center's



staff prefers to have them state an hypothesis in the form of a generalization to be tested. However, both approaches can and perhaps should be used. Which approach to use seems a question related to inquiry methods and teaching strategy, not to the meaning of structure. Analytical questions define the data of the field and so its boundaries. They are used in the process of inquiry. Structure, as defined here and by the Center, refers to the organization of knowledge and so to concepts, generalizations, and theories.

The curriculum staff, however, made no attempt to set up a structure of concepts and generalizations for any of the fields which would attempt to be all-inclusive or which would be grouped around only three or four major concepts, ideas, or analytical questions. The present state of the social science disciplines does not permit such a closed structure. One of the major developments in the social science fields in the last decades has been the search for new theories which will explain the data for the entire field studied in the discipline. This search has led to the development of a number of competing theories and ways of structuring knowledge within each discipline. Theoretical disagreements among the practitioners in one field are frequently heated.

This lack of agreement upon one structure, this lack of a theory which can relate all topics studied by the practitioners in one discipline and the impossibility of any final, fixed structure, does not mean that teachers should pay no attention to structure as they teach a field. Members of a discipline can identify certain concepts which provide useful tools of analysis in an attempt to make sense out of the data of their field. They can identify generalizations and middle-range theories which help explain the data. Although there is no agreement upon any final or all-inclusive list of essential variables, or key concepts, there is general agreement that certain concepts are important. Indeed, some of them are found in each of the theoretical structures. The current search for over-all theories and the development of competing theories have tended to highlight disagreements and to play down the points upon which the practitioners of a discipline agree. Nevertheless, there are probably more points of agreement than disagreement among most practitioners in the disciplines today.

The Curriculum Center has not attempted to limit the goals for teaching any of the social sciences to only three or four analytical concepts or questions. Rather, the list of concepts and generalizations selected should be thought of as open — as including important concepts and generalizations to which others might be added. If this Center had been developing a new social studies curriculum for only three or four different grade levels, the staff would have been more concerned about limiting the total number of concepts and generalizations to be taught in the courses to be developed. However, the Center was developing a thirteen-year program. To limit the goal to teaching only three or four analytical concepts or questions from each discipline would have placed greater restrictions on the total social studies program than the staff thought wise.

Since most of the individual disciplines lack a theoretical framework to unify all of the phenomena within their fields, no over-all arching theory can be developed at present to unite all of the disciplines. On the other hand, the social sciences lack clear-cut

boundaries marking off one discipline from another. Although they tend to ask different kinds of questions about the phenomena studied, social scientists from the different disciplines have much in common because they all study social data and because of the methods of inquiry which they use. Their joint concern with social data, their common methods of inquiry, and the ways in which their different approaches to the study of phenomena and their different methods of explanation complement each other in any attempt to study broad societal problems, trends, or any culture, provide sound grounds for grouping the social sciences within one broad field of study within the school curriculum.

It is probable that pupils should study materials from the disciplines in a variety of ways. It may well be that they should study some topics through an integrated approach without even attempting to distinguish the different disciplines; such an approach might focus upon common concepts or concepts which complement each other in the study of the topic. At other places in the curriculum, pupils may need to study different disciplines in a more orderly fashion. Disciplines such as history and geography may also be used as vehicles to teach many concepts and test generalizations from the other social sciences. Later, pupils might profit from the experience of using the various disciplines in studying social problems which cut across fields. By combining different approaches, a curriculum should develop readiness for a more logical study of a field, obtain the advantages accruing from knowledge of structure in a field and its methods of inquiry, and teach pupils to transfer skills and ideas learned from a discipline to problems which require an interdisciplinary attack.

Social scientists on the Center's staff were asked to identify not only common concepts and topics and ways in which the disciplines diverged, but also the things they felt most important for the ordinary citizen to understand about their fields. The staff finally decided that the concept of culture was basic to understanding the world today and for understanding factors which make for or impede change. The concept is also important to each of the social sciences, except perhaps to economics, which usually assumes a particular culture, although those working in the field of comparative economics must consider cultural differences. It was decided that the culture concept would provide the main thread of the curriculum, serving to tie all parts of it together. Teachers using the materials for grades one through four will find this emphasis upon the culture concept obvious.

## **PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The goals of this curriculum program can be understood better by those who know the views of the curriculum developers about the good society and the good citizen in a democratic society. These views affected their position on what the role of the school and the social studies should be in a democratic society.

### **The Good Society**

Staff members view the good society as one which promotes human dignity, freedom of choice, and the well-being of individuals. Such a society helps people achieve a sense of self-esteem and a commitment to some kind of value system which makes life seem worthwhile. Since human beings differ, such a society must cherish diversity, not uniformity, while still providing enough common ground to hold the society together. It must strike a balance between the rights of individuals to make free choices in their own interests and their rights to make choices which may adversely affect similar rights of other members of the society. It must promote social sensitivity to the needs of others.

A society which values diversity and free choice will inevitably have differences arising over conflicting goals and interests. The good society will be committed to processes of resolving such conflicts short of the force and violence which disrupts societies and human lives. Since the good society is one which promotes human welfare, it is also one in which people who are living in a rapidly changing world must be willing to make changes in institutions as old institutions no longer meet the needs of members of that society. However, the good society is one in which people make choices on a rational basis as well as in terms of their values, thus increasing their prospects for achieving goals. The good society, then, must be thought of as dynamic rather than static. It is always in the process of becoming — of evolving in the light of changes in the world and changing human goals to meet the changing needs of its members. It can be no utopia in which all goals are completely achieved once and for all. However, the good society is one in which people are committed to the goal of human dignity and welfare and work toward that end.

### **The Good Citizen**

These views of the good society indicate an obvious commitment to a democratic society and are related to the way in which staff members define good citizenship in a



democratic society. The staff does not define good citizenship only in terms of voting or participation in politics and voluntary movements of various kinds. Staff members recognize that empirical data from the social sciences do not necessarily support the idea that widespread participation in political activities helps promote a stable democracy. Nevertheless, they do take the position that a large number of people need to participate actively in a democratic society if that society is to remain democratic.

This participation, however, must be based upon careful investigation and rational thought. Those who participate need to be able to think critically and to differentiate between value judgments and inferences as they examine value conflicts. They should be committed to rational thought as a means of understanding social data and solving societal problems, although rational thought is not the only way of looking at the world and human beings and certainly does not preclude making decisions in terms of values or deny the importance of emotions and affective behavior. Since so many of society's problems lie in the areas studied by social scientists, the good citizen attempts to develop some understanding of the social sciences and tries to keep abreast of current affairs and problems. He is committed to the free examination of social attitudes and data and he values independent thought; he respects evidence even when it contradicts his prejudices and preconceptions. Though he is a product of his culture, he is not a prisoner of that culture. He knows other cultures and he makes independent choices. He uses the social sciences to help him make rational decisions in his personal relations, in his economic activities, and in his political participation.

The good citizen in a democracy values human dignity and human welfare and is committed to the basic ground rules by which a democracy settles disputes which arise among citizens and groups. This commitment to human dignity permeates his relations with other peoples and groups, not just his choices on issues related to broad societal problems. Since the good citizen is committed to human dignity and welfare, he works for changes in society where he thinks these changes are needed to achieve these broad goals. He does not support the status quo because he dislikes change. Neither, however, does he equate change with progress. He rationally examines all proposals and events in the light of basic democratic goals.

## **The Role of the School in a Democratic Society**

### **Democratic Society**

The Center's curriculum development staff has taken the position that the broad goal of a social studies curriculum should be citizenship education. From the beginning, they assumed that there is no dichotomy between good social science and this aim. No one can be an effective citizen in the contemporary world unless he has a good grasp of some of the basic ideas of the social sciences and, more important, the inquiry tools and perspectives which will help him understand new developments.

Given this broad goal of citizenship education, certain other assumptions follow:

1 – A major criterion for selecting topics for study should be the importance of the topic in helping pupils understand the modern, rapidly-changing world in which they live. Many topics could be used to teach the basic concepts of the different fields. Geographical concepts and perspectives, for example, could be studied through concentration upon some small, relatively insignificant and unknown part of the world or they can be studied while investigating an area of world-wide importance. Given the goal of citizenship education, however, most of the topics selected for study should be related to significant aspects of the modern world — to trends and to relatively persisting problems which face the people of the world. Pupils should be introduced to the major areas of the world, since events in these places can have such a great impact on their lives. The social studies program should give greatly increased attention, therefore, to the non-western world and to international relations.

2 – The curricular framework should be open to change generated by new developments in the local area, the nation, and the world, as well as by new developments in the social sciences themselves, without requiring drastic changes in the overall framework within only a few years.

3 – The social studies program should emphasize thinking processes needed by citizens. In a democracy the goal should be a thinking citizen, not a person who accepts ready-made ideas without critical examination. The investigators for this project have given high priority to this goal of developing the ability to inquire. However, thinking does not take place in a vacuum; pupils can learn to think only by thinking about something. Some topics may stimulate inquiry better than others. Certainly, the goal of developing inquiry skills should be kept in mind while selecting content to be studied. However, other criteria usually can play an important part in this selection, since pupils can learn to inquire by studying many different kinds of topics. This goal of developing thinking processes should have as much or more influence upon teaching strategies and the selection of specific learning experiences within units as upon the selection of content

for study. Since concepts become tools of inquiry, moreover, attention must be given to developing key analytical concepts from the social sciences.

**4 –** The curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to examine value conflicts in our society and to examine and clarify their own positions on these conflicts. Pupils should learn to identify value conflicts and the factual questions needing investigation as they examine such conflicts. They should learn to use the social sciences to help them identify probable consequences of following different value positions and to select the course of action most likely to achieve their carefully-thought-out goals. Although this assumption has more bearing upon the secondary school program, it can have some influence upon the curriculum in the upper elementary school.

**5 –** A social studies program should include some topics which will help pupils understand themselves and hopefully help them in the task of developing their own philosophy of life. One study has concluded that emotional adjustment is the most crucial factor in good citizenship behavior around a school and neighborhood. Although emotional adjustment alone does not make the good citizen, it is important, particularly in a democracy. Studies of prejudiced individuals, of the people who join authoritarian movements, of those who are politically apathetic or those who are alienated from society would tend to justify educational attempts to promote emotional adjustment partly in terms of the goal of developing good citizens. There are no empirical data to show that studying any specific topic will help pupils become better adjusted emotionally. Certainly, it is probable that the ways in which teachers treat pupils, their teaching strategies and techniques, and the kinds of interaction among pupils which they promote are more effective than any content in helping pupils develop a positive self-image and emotional adjustment. However, staff members believe that the study of topics which would give pupils a chance to look at themselves and their relations with others, examine their own value conflicts, and consider their goals might have some impact upon emotional adjustment. Consequently, some topics should be selected for study because they relate to the immediate interests and concerns of pupils, not just to societal problems.

**6 –** A curriculum should be designed to create continuing interest in the social sciences. No matter how useful a curriculum design is in teaching concepts, generalizations, and skills, it would be detrimental to the goal of citizenship education if the program were to lead to the development of a dislike for the social sciences. A well-planned and interesting program should stimulate pupils to continue to follow current affairs and to read about, listen to and study topics from the social sciences.

#### Teaching the Cultural Heritage

Although schools are established by a society to help transmit the cultural heritage,

no school could transmit all of the existing heritage, nor should it. Racism is a part of the cultural heritage in the United States but hardly a part which a school in a democratic society should transmit. The transmission of the cultural heritage must be selective in terms of an analysis of the significance of different values in a democratic society, in terms of beliefs about what knowledge is and how one knows, and in terms of an analysis of society and the needs of citizens in that society.

### Values and the Social Studies Program

Given the beliefs which staff members held about the good society, citizenship education, and the characteristics of good citizens in a democracy, it was inevitable that they should pay serious attention to the role of the social studies in developing values. However, curriculum makers in a democracy face a far greater dilemma as they consider establishing value goals for schools than do those in other societies, for democratic beliefs as well as scholarly values make some ways of developing values untenable. Only some of the staff's major conclusions can be summarized here:

- 1** – Any attempt to teach social studies must include the teaching of scholarly values if it is to help pupils understand the social sciences and use them intelligently.
  
- 2** – Any society is doomed to internal disorder and chaos unless there is general acceptance of some basic values. In a democracy, these values include values related to human dignity and rights and also the process values related to the ground rules for the operation of a democratic form of government — processes and rules to be followed in resolving conflicts which are bound to arise in any society aimed at promoting free choice for all. It follows that the role of the school in a democracy includes the responsibility for helping to transmit these basic values as part of its role in transmitting the cultural heritage.
  
- 3** – Most of the scholarly values of the social scientists are similar to some of the process values needed for resolving conflict in a democratic society. Both demand a commitment to the free examination of social attitudes and data and support for independent thought and the expression of different points of view and interpretations. Both demand rational thought, respect for evidence, and objectivity in interpreting evidence in an effort to help predict possible consequences of following certain value positions. Both require critical evaluation of sources of information. Consequently, the goal of developing scholarly values, needed for a sound social science education, is consistent with and should promote the development of basic process values needed in a democratic society.



**4 – The values held by social scientists affect the topics which they choose to study. Therefore, partially basing the selection of topics on values goals is not inconsistent with a sound social science program.**

**5 – The means used to develop basic values of a democratic society and the scholarly values should not be inconsistent with the values themselves. They should not involve indoctrination, but the critical examination of the values by pupils.**

**6 – Although the school has the right and duty to attempt to develop certain basic values inherent in a democratic system, it does not have the right to inculcate particular viewpoints about specific public policies. To do so would be inconsistent with the democratic ideology.**

**7 – The means used to develop values should be affected by findings from educational psychology and sociology about how attitudes can be changed and at what ages attitudes can best be changed.**

**8 – An acceptance of a democratic philosophy leads to an acceptance of the belief that the school has certain roles in addition to the transmission of the cultural heritage. The school can be used as a means of providing individuals with equal opportunities to develop their talents. This task involves the development of a sense of self-worth which is as important as certain skills and motivations if individuals are to take advantage of schooling or later opportunities. Schools should help pupils achieve the emotional health and value commitments needed for living a good life. Sociologists and psychologists seem to agree that those people who have become alienated from the values of their culture and who have not developed a pattern of values by which they guide their lives tend to be unhappy people. Without consistent value patterns, the individual develops a "sense of aimlessness" and a "great anxiety." Studies have also shown that anomic individuals are much less likely to participate in political affairs than those who accept major group values and feel that life is worthwhile. If they do participate, anomic individuals are likely to become involved in extremist or totalitarian political movements. The goal of helping pupils develop feelings of self-worth and a commitment to values is important, then, both for helping the individual achieve the good life — a basic value in democracy — and for developing a citizenry which will work to support democratic values. It is important for both purposes to have pupils examine their values, to have them raise their values to a level of conscious rather than unthinking attachment, and to help them develop a consistent value pattern.**

**9 – Any examination of values should involve a consideration of the probable consequences of taking actions based upon certain value positions. In this consideration and in the analysis of causes of conflicts and societal problems, the social sciences have much to contribute even though value judgments in the long run cannot be supported by an appeal to proof.**

**10** – Since the school is a social organization, it cannot achieve its goals efficiently unless it attempts to develop certain values required for the efficient operation of a social organization which is set up to achieve particular purposes. A school cannot operate effectively, for example, if it fails to develop some attitudinal behaviors related to motivation to do a good job, punctuality, cooperation, tolerance of others, honesty, a respect for school property, and respect for the property of others.

These value positions on the place of values in a social studies curriculum have affected the curricular design and materials developed by the Minnesota Curriculum Center in a variety of ways. A few of these should illustrate the importance of attitudinal goals in the program. First, the staff has selected some topics for study in terms of the attitudinal goals identified for the program. For example, it has chosen to teach about many different cultures very early in the curriculum and at many different levels in the hope of developing an acceptance of diversity as well as an intellectual understanding of the psychic unity of mankind. Both should help promote the development of a value for human dignity and positive attitudes toward people of other races, nationalities, and religions. Second, the desire to develop scholarly values has affected the processes taught pupils, not just the content, concepts, and generalizations taught. For example, much time is spent on many different occasions in helping pupils develop skills involved in evaluating sources of information. In addition, scholarly values have affected the selection of teaching strategies, and both scholarly values and democratic values have affected the choice of media.

### Knowledge and Skills in the Social Studies Program

The Center's staff members believe that there may be several complementary ways of knowing but that empiricism and rational thought provide the most appropriate ways of knowing about social behavior. Empiricism demands a willingness to change one's views as improved research techniques and continued research turn up limitations in old knowledge. Knowledge is not fixed; indeed, knowledge in a discipline includes knowledge about what one does not know and the questions which need asking as well as a structure of organized knowledge which will change as men use empirical methods and reason to find out more about human behavior. Consequently, it is important to teach processes of inquiry as well as scholarly values such as skepticism of the finality of knowledge and conventional truths and a commitment to the free examination of social attitudes and data.

Transmission of the cultural heritage should be selective in the area of knowledge and skills, just as it is in the area of values. The selection should be made in terms of significance for helping pupils understand and cope with the world in which they live and with change in that world. It follows, too, that a curriculum must change as

changes occur in knowledge and in society.

Since concepts, and generalizations about them, are tools of inquiry, transferable concepts and generalizations have an important place in a curriculum designed to teach the most important aspects of the cultural heritage. Pupils should learn, however, that concepts are constructs whose validity depends upon their usefulness in answering the questions which men wish to raise. They should also learn the tentative nature of all generalizations and theories.

This is not to say that schools should not teach some knowledge other than concepts and generalizations which have transfer value. Transferable concepts and generalizations can be taught through the vehicle of content related to problems and topics of significance in the modern world. Pupils can use inquiry methods and can apply concepts and generalizations to the task of identifying singular propositions or so-called singular generalizations about places, trends, or problems which are significant at the moment and which appear likely to be of continuing significance for some time to come. It is useful, for example, for pupils to develop singular propositions or generalizations about the Soviet Union or minority group relations even though some of the propositions learned apply to only one topic and not to others which may be studied. It is the significance of the topic studied which determines how important it is for pupils to develop singular propositions about it.

This view of the role of the school in transmitting knowledge and skills from the cultural heritage has affected the curriculum in a number of ways. Some of these have been identified earlier in the discussion of the social sciences. This view suggests a heavy emphasis upon teaching inquiry skills. The goals for the social studies program in the area of knowledge have been stated in terms of concepts and generalizations which have transfer values for analyzing new data. Resource units identify such objectives. However, the outline of content for each unit also includes a number of important ideas or singular propositions about the topic which provides the focus for study. These ideas are also worth knowing at this time, even though they are not so important as transferable concepts and generalizations and even though pupils should recognize the transient nature of such knowledge in the light of rapid changes in the world around them.

Despite its emphasis upon teaching skills of inquiry, the Center's staff did not feel justified in focusing upon only a few inquiry skills to the neglect of many other skills which have been identified over the years as important to a social studies program. For example, the list of goals includes a number of skills related to a time sense and a series of important geographic skills. The staff also identified some communication skills which need reinforcement, even though taught in other areas of the curriculum, because they are important to success in social studies classes. The emphasis upon a broad range of skills distinguishes this curriculum from some of the other funded curriculum projects. An emphasis upon only a few skills may be appropriate for those developing a curriculum for only one or several courses. It seemed inappropriate for a curriculum center concerned with the entire K-12 program.

### Attention to Pupils' Needs

It should be clear from the discussion of the staff's position on citizenship education and on values, that they viewed part of the task of a school in a democratic society as that of helping pupils meet some of their immediate needs as well as preparing them for future needs as citizens in a democracy.

### TEACHING STRATEGIES

The curriculum emphasizes an inquiry teaching strategy which encourages children to find out things for themselves rather than one which emphasizes the absorption of generalizations presented ready-made by the teacher, a book or a film. Considerable confusion exists in the educational literature over the use of the term "inquiry." It is important to distinguish between inquiry as a teaching strategy and inquiry as a process of achieving new knowledge. The Center's staff has proceeded on the value judgment that it is important to teach pupils to use inquiry methods. Staff members believe that citizens in a democracy need to be skilled in the process of inquiry both as it relates to developing and testing non-normative ideas and as it can be used to help make decisions about courses of action in which policy decisions involve normative or value judgments.

A second question relates to the appropriateness of different teaching strategies to help pupils learn inquiry methods and skills and to achieve the other goals identified for the social studies program such as attitudinal behaviors, skills other than those directly related to the inquiry process, and the development of important concepts and generalizations which are transferable and thereby useful in analyzing new data. Research related to the psychology of learning is still needed in order to answer this question. However, research on reflective thinking strategies suggests that such strategies are as effective as exposition strategies in teaching a knowledge of content. They are more effective in teaching skills and attitudinal behaviors. Constantly giving children the answers to questions or the solutions to problems tends to hamper the development of thinking skills. Asking pupils to memorize a body of knowledge presented to them by the teacher or by books tends to develop dogmatism and the belief that there is a set, unchanging body of knowledge. Although research evidence is not conclusive as yet, inquiry as a teaching strategy seems more likely than other strategies to motivate interest in the social studies, to develop meaningful learning of concepts and generalizations, to teach the thinking processes involved in inquiry



methods of gaining knowledge, and to teach the attitudinal goals of the program, including open-mindedness.

Both inquiry strategies of teaching and inquiry methods of gaining knowledge involve deductive as well as inductive thinking. Pupils are asked to set up hypotheses (i.e., informed guesses). Pupils undoubtedly arrive at them by drawing upon previous experiences and upon previously learned concepts and generalizations. They decide that something which they have learned in the past might help them make sense out of this new situation. They cannot be sure, but they think that this might be so. At times they may draw upon single generalizations. For example, they may have learned that elevation affects temperature in one country. Looking at a physical map of a new country, they hypothesize that the mountainous areas will be colder than the lowlands in this country too. Or pupils may combine parts of several past generalizations in setting up their hypotheses. Suppose they have also learned that agricultural activities are more difficult to carry on in mountainous and rough areas than on plains or gently rolling land. Looking at both a physical map and a rainfall map of a new country, they can hypothesize about the usefulness of different land areas for agriculture. This aspect of thinking cannot be called induction. Pupils are deducing certain things as they try to apply learning to new situations.

Moreover, at times, pupils are asked to deduce consequences from a broad hypothesis to guide their collection of data. That is, they set up if-then statements which follow logically if the hypothesis is true. (i.e., *if* change in one aspect of a culture will bring changes in other aspects, *then* technological changes in a culture will have effects upon the family system.) Such if-then statements can be used to guide the collection of data to test hypotheses. If evidence indicates that the deduced statement is false, the broader hypothesis from which it has been deduced must be rejected or at least modified. If the evidence supports the deduced statement the hypothesis is not proved true; further investigations may show it to be false or to hold true only under certain specified conditions. However, each time that new investigations fail to contradict the hypothesis, the more confidence people can place in it. Developing if-then statements from hypotheses to guide the collection of data obviously involves deduction, not induction. However, inductive thinking is used in generalizing from the data collected. Thus, the Center's staff prefers to call the teaching strategy which attempts to involve pupils in an active process of finding out things for themselves an inquiry strategy rather than inductive teaching.

The staff does not believe that all teaching should proceed through inquiry. Some goals may be achieved as well or better and more economically through the use of other teaching strategies. One teaching strategy is no more likely to be appropriate for all situations than one military strategy for different types of wars or battles. For example, the development of such map reading skills as interpreting specific map symbols might not lend itself well to an inquiry approach, although the skill of drawing inferences from a comparison of different map patterns might be taught best by such a strategy. Exposition prior to practice might be as useful or more efficient than an

inquiry strategy in teaching pupils to locate information or in teaching them how to listen for main ideas. For achieving some goals, then, inquiry may not be the most appropriate strategy to use.

Moreover, exposition techniques may be used within an overall strategy which emphasizes inquiry. Some exposition by teachers, by guest speakers, or in stories, books, or films, is obviously useful within an overall inquiry approach. To promote understanding of the impact of certain events upon the people involved in them, it is useful to have children listen to or read stories. Children tend to identify with the characters of stories and to understand their feelings and point of view better than they would from studying other kinds of materials. Stories may also evoke emotional responses and so be more likely than other kinds of materials to affect attitudes. If the curriculum developer or teacher wishes to affect attitudes about human dignity or human rights or the importance of certain process values in a democracy, he may find the use of such reading materials more effective than others which he could use. However, he is still using an overall inquiry approach; children find out for themselves about how these events affect people, even though indirectly they are being told the effects through characters in the story.

A careful study of the resource units in this program will show that the kinds of telling called for in procedures is not telling pupils the generalizations suggested in the objectives. For example, in any unit on the family of another culture the teacher may tell children a number of things about the family. However, what she tells them consists of concrete data about how the family lives and what the people are like. She does not tell them that the family has similar functions to those they have found in other families or that the people are very much like us in certain specific ways. The procedures in the units suggest kinds of questions which can be used to help children generalize from the data presented by the teacher. Thus it is important to distinguish between a broad inquiry strategy and expository techniques. Exposition techniques may be part of the larger inquiry approach, but the types of exposition and the way in which the exposition is used would differ considerably in an overall exposition strategy as opposed to an inquiry strategy.

Inquiry strategies of teaching are recommended by many curriculum projects today and may differ in a number of ways. They differ somewhat in the role of the teacher — how much direction should she give to pupils by way of questions? They differ in the extent to which they use exposition techniques within the overall strategy. For example, the teacher could give pupils the concepts and generalizations and then ask them to use these ideas as they try to make sense out of new data. One inquiry strategy also differs from another in terms of what pupils are asked to inquire about. Our staff members believe that pupils can learn transferable concepts and generalizations as well as singular propositions about a particular place or society at the same time that they are learning to use the inquiry process. It is economical of time to have children think about matters of significance to them and to society as they learn to use inquiry skills.

The Center's staff members believe that time should not be spent on having pupils try to "discover" what some object is unless in doing so they find out how a social scientist might try to identify a similar object — how an archaeologist or an historian might try to identify artifacts or documents, for example. Staff members believe that pupils should develop their own generalizations through a process of inquiry and should learn to test these generalizations against new data. Pupils are not given a ready-made set of key analytical concepts and questions. They develop most of them through inquiry (even though they may finally be given the social scientists' term for the category), just as they then use these concepts as they inquire about problems, places, and topics.

The staff members also believe that children should develop through the process of inquiry some of the criteria used in critical evaluation of materials. Children are not told what criteria to use in evaluating sources of information. Rather, curricular materials are developed to help them identify these criteria for themselves.

There are many occasions in the units for grades one through four when children view pictures and are asked to make inferences about things from these pictures. Questions in the guides should help them make these guesses or inferences. Stories and other materials can be used to help them check on their guesses.

Teachers should attempt to accept children's guesses as being as worthwhile at certain stages of thinking as statements which present a commentary on facts seen in pictures or heard in stories. At other times, children should be asked to listen to or look for things which can be used to test these guesses or hypotheses. Even at this stage, however, children should be rewarded for coming up with new ideas about possible hypotheses or for asking questions which have not been raised earlier. Whether or not pupils will learn to ask questions, set up hypotheses, and generalize for themselves depends *in part* upon whether or not such behavior is discouraged or rewarded by teachers. However, the teacher should not always say "yes," "that's right," or "good," when a child suggests an idea which the teacher thinks good. Rather, the teacher may wish to suggest that it is a new or interesting idea and ask what ideas other children have. Then children can test all of their ideas. Teachers can reward or encourage the kinds of behavior desired in many ways besides saying that the child has come up with a "correct" answer.

At times children may fail to limit generalizations sufficiently or may arrive at faulty generalizations which cannot be supported by present data and knowledge in the social sciences. If so, the teacher should not correct children immediately. Rather, she should have children think of these generalizations as possible hypotheses to be tested later. Indeed, at times it is beneficial for children to overgeneralize and later discover that they must modify their generalizations. Thus if they have overgeneralized about the functions found universally in families, they may have to modify their generalization when they study the Kibbutz family. This experience should help them learn the need to hold generalizations tentatively.

The curriculum has been built to stimulate overgeneralizations at some points and

later to introduce pupils to new data which will force them to revise their earlier generalizations. Although this approach to curricular design runs counter to the learning theory which holds that material is learned better if errors are reduced and that reinforcement of correct responses should be immediate, some research findings suggest that other factors may also be important in learning. Moreover, the danger of creating some inhibition to the learning of a particular concept or generalization is one which the staff can accept in order to try to achieve goals which it thinks far more important — those of developing a skepticism of the finality of knowledge, an openness to new ideas, and a willingness to modify old ideas in the light of new evidence. In an era of rapid change both in the social sciences and in the world at large, a rigidity of thinking about knowledge is far more detrimental than the failure to learn specific concepts or generalizations as thoroughly as they might be taught if errors were reduced and reinforcement were immediate. This is particularly true in a field in which concepts and generalizations may be outmoded as social scientists carry on further investigations and as the discrete data about any particular topic which pupils study will become outdated by changing events in the world.

When children arrive at generalizations which are obviously contradicted by data, the teacher needs to consider two questions. First, do later parts of this unit or later units in the year provide data to help them test these generalizations? Second, do later courses in the curriculum provide material to help them test and limit the generalizations? For example, will units in grade two help them limit a generalization which they have arrived at in one of the first grade units? Or will study of one of the communities in grades three or four help them limit generalizations which they make in grade two?

If the answer to either question is "yes," it may be wise to let children hold these generalizations tentatively but to remind them that they should think of them as hypotheses to be tested in later units. This is probably the procedure to use if the generalization represents an over-generalization which does not take into account some of the more sophisticated limitations which a social scientist or even an older child might place upon it.

On the other hand, suppose the answer to both questions is "no." Or suppose that the generalization is not just too broad but is obviously contradicted by data which children have already come across or which could be presented to them in an understandable form within the unit being studied. The teacher should then spend more time helping children test their generalization at this time. Rather than telling them that their generalization is wrong or needs to be limited, the teacher might confront children with data. For example, she could read excerpts from books, tell stories, show pictures or films, or merely relate certain facts. These data should be such as to lead children to modify their generalization or arrive at a better generalization without the teacher telling them what is wrong.



## **CRITERIA FOR SELECTING TOPICS FOR STUDY**

The social studies program cannot include all or any large part of the scholarly materials which have been organized in each of the social science disciplines. It cannot and should not include all of the cultural heritage. Nor can it include all of the topics which pupils might find of interest. Some criteria must be established for selecting topics for study. These criteria derive in part from earlier decisions of the curriculum makers about goals for the program which, in turn, are derived from decisions about the nature of the social sciences and their major concepts and generalizations and philosophical questions about the good society, the good citizen in a democratic society, and the role of the school in a democratic society. Curriculum makers also must keep in mind learning theory and what is known about the interests and abilities of pupils at different levels of instruction as they identify criteria for selecting content.

The Center has developed eight criteria. The first five relate to the usefulness of the topic in achieving the goals of the program:

**1** – Does a topic lend itself to teaching important concepts in the social sciences, particularly those which cut across fields and which are important analytical tools in examining new data?

**2** – Is the topic of significance in the modern world? Is it, for example, related to a persisting societal problem, particularly one involving a major value-conflict in our society? Is it related to a significant trend in the modern world? If the topic is concerned with a place, is this place of importance in the modern interdependent world?

**3** – Is the topic of particular interest and concern and so significant to pupils at certain grade levels because it gives pupils either an opportunity to examine their own values or provides them with help in coping with personal problems of direct concern to them?

**4** – Does the topic lend itself to the development of one or more of the attitudinal behaviors identified as goals by the staff?

**5** – Does the topic facilitate the development of specific skills identified as goals of the program, particularly skills related to methods of inquiry?

The staff endeavored to select topics which would meet not just one of these criteria but as many different criteria as possible. However, at times topics of little significance in the modern world were chosen because they could serve as such excellent vehicles

for teaching important concepts, teaching a skill, or helping to develop an attitude. For example, neither the Trobriand Islanders nor the Manus are of great significance in the modern world. However, the Trobriand Islanders provide an excellent vehicle for teaching pupils about a kind of traditional economic system in which reciprocal relationships are more important than either a market or a command system in resolving the basic economic questions which face any society. The Manus, on the other hand, provide an excellent case study to teach children various ideas about culture change through a topic which has proved fascinating to them.

The staff recognized that different curriculum groups might apply the above criteria and come up with a different selection of topics. A number of topics would meet the same criteria. Moreover, the balance to be achieved among topics to meet different criteria (e.g., numbers 2 and 3), would be decided differently by different groups of curriculum developers, even though each group were to agree that both societal problems and topics of immediate concern to pupils should be included in the curriculum.

The selection of content is of necessity interwoven with the placement of topics by grade level. Consequently, the staff had to draw upon learning principles and what is known about maturation, abilities, and interests of pupils at different grade levels in attempting to choose topics which would fit three additional criteria. These criteria might be thought of as those related to the feasibility of certain topics at different levels of the program:

**6** – Is the topic suited to the maturity level and abilities of pupils at each grade level? Even if the topic can be taught at that level, is such teaching an efficient use of time? Can it be taught better and more quickly at another level? Are there other important topics which can be understood more easily at that level? Since the difficulty of topics at each grade level is related to the previous experiences of pupils at that level, can some experiences needed as background for this topic be included at earlier grade levels?

**7** – Can the topic be related to the interests of pupils at that level? Even if pupils do not already have an interest in the topic, is it easy to develop an interest in it early in the study of the topic? Will teaching this topic have a positive rather than a negative effect upon pupils' interest in the social studies?

**8** – Does the topic fit together with other topics at a grade level to form some kind of coherent theme of study so that pupils will find it easier to organize information into meaningful structures than they would if the topics remained isolated in their minds?

## **THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAM**

A brief analysis of the curriculum for the elementary school years should help the teacher see *The Family of Man* social studies program in perspective. The total framework is briefly outlined here, even though SEE has presently undertaken to develop multi-media kits for units in grades one through four only.

### **Kindergarten**

The kindergarten course serves as an introduction to the other primary grade courses. It introduces children to the idea of a world of many peoples whom they will study in more detail at other grade levels. It presents a number of geographic concepts which will be reviewed and developed more fully during the rest of the elementary school program. It acquaints pupils first with their local area and then with the world as a whole. It introduces simple map and globe skills. Stress is placed upon the use of pictures and other visual materials, upon direct observation within the community, upon manipulative activities, and upon the use of children's literature to teach children about other peoples of the world.

The units taught, following some study of the school itself, are: The Earth as the Home of Man, A World of Many Peoples, Our Global Earth, A Home of Varied Resources, and Man Changes the Earth. Since this course depends so heavily upon the local community, SEE is developing no kits for the different units. The resource units for the first grade suggest ways of developing some of the concepts and skills introduced in the kindergarten if children have not studied that course.

### **Grades One and Two**

This two-year sequence focuses upon "Families Around the World." Children study families from different societies, including one from a non-western culture at each grade level. The course does not begin with the typical study of pupils' own families. In a society in which so many families are broken, it is easier for children from such families to discuss families in their own community after they have come to understand the diversity of families around the world and within other cultures first. Children do make

comparisons with their own families, but their own families are studied obliquely in the early part of the year. At the end of each year, they look back over the families they have studied and are asked to generalize about families in their own community as well as around the world.

The family is used as a vehicle to teach a series of important social science concepts related to culture, social organization, social process, and site. The families studied have been selected to point up cultural diversity, to help children recognize the uniqueness of culture, to show that culture is learned, to teach children about norms and values, and to emphasize cultural universals and the psychic unity of mankind. The selection of families with very different structures and role differentiations helps to emphasize the variability of human behavior. The study of these families should also teach ideas about structure, role, role differentiation, and social function. Despite the diversity, children will notice that all people have to satisfy certain basic needs even though they satisfy them differently. They will learn that all societies have families and some ways of socializing children.

The families in this program have also been chosen with a view to teaching different site concepts. Consequently, children will study families in different types of physical environments and in villages and cities of different size. Each unit begins with some study of the site characteristics of the place where the family lives. Children also learn simple map and globe skills as they study each unit.

The two-year sequence has been designed to introduce pupils to the idea of cultural change. Children study a family in Early New England. This unit is included to show how functions of American families have changed. Other units contrast families in two different periods. By showing differences between groups in the same area, the units also contribute to the idea of the cultural use of the environment rather than the deterministic viewpoint which at one time dominated the teaching of geography.

The purpose of having children study more families than those in grade one is to make sure that they will be able to generalize about cultural diversity, uniqueness, and universals. Time should be saved at the end of the second grade for a culminating period in which children will fit together all that they have learned about families and about culture, social processes, and social organization. Children do not get bored by this two-year sequence on families, since each unit focuses upon a different culture. Children are not just studying the family as an institution for two years.

It is important to note that this is not the last time that children will study the concepts and generalizations identified in these two courses. These concepts are introduced in grades one and two but are reinforced through other content at later grade levels. As children advance in school they will become more sophisticated in their understanding of the concepts and generalizations and will increase the number of their generalizations about each concept. Moreover, the teacher should remember that even during this two-year program most of the major concepts are included in all or many of the units. The same thing is true of the skills and attitudinal goals.

There are four units included at each grade level. Those in grade one include the



Hopi Family, an Indian Family living in the children's own area, an urban family of Latin America, and the Japanese Family. In grade two children study the Family of Early New England, the Soviet Family of Moscow, the Ashanti Family of Ghana, and the Kibbutz Family of Israel. Other families could be substituted. For example, children could study the Quechua Family of the Peruvian Highlands or a family in Germany, Italy, or England instead of the urban Latin American Family. In making substitutions, the teacher should make sure that she is choosing families which illustrate differences in family structure, functions, values and roles as well as different site concepts. If different families are substituted, the teacher should handle the units so as to teach the same concepts and generalizations as those identified for the present program.

### **Grade Three**

The third grade uses the theme of "Communities Around the World" to introduce children to other social institutions and, in a simple way, to political institutions. Children do not study government as a political system; they study the need for law and some means of changing law, reasons for government services of various types, and the ways in which societies differ in terms of the kinds of services provided and the ways in which they are provided. Children do not study the school as a social organization as they do later in the junior high school. Instead, they study its functions, find out that all societies do not have organized schools, even though they have other means of socializing children, and learn that schools differ in different societies. Children do not make a thorough study of religion, but they do find out that all societies have some form or forms of religion or supernatural beliefs, that these beliefs differ, and that these beliefs affect other aspects of a society's culture. Moreover, children learn more in the first unit about how the members of primary groups other than the family affect the behavior of group members, about leadership, and about the importance of communication in a society. The third grade course also introduces the idea of a community and what a community entails. Also, as children look at the Manus or the Paris community, they notice certain things about family life in these communities.

By focusing upon communities and cultures not studied earlier, including another non-western culture, the course provides the data for further generalizations about cultural diversity and uniqueness, norms and values, and culture as learned behavior. The study of new cultures will support and expand children's previous learning about cultural universals and the psychic unity of mankind. As in grades one and two, the communities are used to teach children more site concepts and to review and extend their map-reading skills.

There are four units in the course. Children begin by studying two contrasting communities in the United States — their own and a neighboring rural or urban

community. The second unit deals with an American frontier mining community in California during the gold rush days. It was chosen to emphasize the need for law and government. The Manus Community of the Admiralty Islands is useful in emphasizing culture change and factors affecting change. Finally, the Paris Community illustrates an urban community in another culture.

#### **Grade Four**

The fourth grade course continues to use the theme of "Communities Around the World," but the course shifts to an economic emphasis. The different communities are used as vehicles to teach children about contrasting economic systems. Children spend a large part of the year finding out in simple terms how their own economic system operates. Later, they discover that in some societies the government plays a much greater role, and that in other societies there is a much greater emphasis upon exchange through traditional reciprocal relationships than upon either the market or governmental decisions. Children find out that the total way of life, including cultural values and the social system, affects the economic system. This is not the first course in which children have been introduced to some economic concepts. However, it is the first course in which they look at an economic system as a whole.

Although the focus of the course is upon economics, the economic institutions are added to other institutions studied in earlier grades. By the last half of the course, children study total cultures in order to see the relationship of the economic system to the rest of the culture. This means that the course continues to develop concepts related to culture, social organization, and social processes. Children acquire data to enable them to generalize more fully and carefully about cultural norms and values, about culture as learned behavior, about cultural diversity and uniqueness, and about cultural universals and the psychic unity of mankind. They should also be able to generalize more fully about concepts related to social organization, social processes, and social change. In addition, they learn new site concepts as they study new communities.

The fourth grade includes four units. It begins with a study of "Our Own Community — An Economic Emphasis." Children then build upon what they learned in the second grade about the Soviet Family as they study the "Soviet Community — Urban and Rural." The last two units focus upon the Trobriand Islanders (who used a reciprocal exchange system) and upon a Village in India (which combines a mixture of reciprocal exchange, government decisions, and market economy). Both are viewed as total cultures.

## **Grade Five**

The fifth grade shifts from the study of "Communities Around the World" to a series of regional studies in the United States, Canada, and Latin America. No attempt is made to cover all or even any great part of these areas; rather, a few topics are studied intensively.

The main theme of the course is that man uses his physical environment in terms of his cultural values, perceptions, and level of technology. The course centers on selected sequent occupance case studies showing how men have dealt with the same environment over time. Pupils begin their study of each general area (the U.S., Canada, Latin America) by examining and comparing a series of map patterns and working out a system of regions according to selected criteria. They then focus upon a handful of case studies rather than upon a detailed study of each region.

Each case study is chosen with two purposes in mind: (1) It can be used to teach pupils more about the region within which it is located, and (2) It illustrates clearly one or more factors which bring about changing use of the land. For example, the case study on Phoenix shows changes resulting from technological developments. The study of the Red River Valley shows changes in crops grown in terms of changing markets. The study of Birmingham shows changes resulting from the discovery of or new perceptions of mineral resources. Each case study also shows changes resulting from the movement into the area of different culture groups.

## **Grade Six**

The sixth grade course shifts from the study of geography to the study of the history of the United States, still with an emphasis upon the culture concept. No attempt is made to teach all of the traditional topics in American history. Rather, this course has been articulated with the senior high school course in American history—the only other American history course in the curriculum. An attempt had been made to eliminate duplication. Topics chosen for study in the sixth grade course were considered particularly appropriate to pupils' maturity and interest and are useful in developing ideas about culture, the cultural use of the environment, culture contact, cultural diffusion, culture change, culture conflict, and cultural diversity. As in earlier courses, the course also emphasizes cultural universals.

There are seven units in the course. Pupils begin by studying "Indian America Before the White Man," a unit which uses two case studies of Indians who later came into contact with European colonizers. Pupils then study "Spanish and French Settlement of North America" and the contact of these cultures with the Iroquois and the Aztecs studied in unit one. The unit on "English Settlement of North America" uses case

studies of the settlements in Jamestown and Plymouth and again looks at Indian-white relations. The next unit, on "Revolutionary America," uses case studies of Williamsburg and Boston in the eighteenth century to show change and continuity with the earlier English settlements of seventeenth century Jamestown and Plymouth. It also analyzes the changes which led to the Revolution and the Revolution itself. A unit on "National Expansion" (into the Old Northwest and the New South) is followed by a unit on the "Civil War and Reconstruction." This unit emphasizes the culture concept as a means of analyzing the causes of the Civil War and includes considerable material on black Americans and their African backgrounds. The final unit deals with the Completion of National Expansion. It uses two case studies of Plains Indians (the Cheyenne and the Mandan) and then turns to the contact of these Indians with the white men who moved into the Great Plains. The unit then focuses upon the cultural diffusion and conflict which resulted.

## **PRINCIPLES OF CURRICULAR ORGANIZATION USED IN GRADES ONE THROUGH FOUR**

Three general principles of curricular organization have been combined in selecting and organizing content for grades one through four. First, the curriculum developers have followed the principle of moving from the simple to the complex in terms of the degree to which a topic can be made to seem concrete either because it is easy to relate to past meaningful experiences of children or because of the kinds of media which can be used to teach it. Some slides, films, and stories can make certain topics about far-away places just as concrete as other topics which pupils might study in their local community. Certainly, not all aspects of the local community are easy to understand. In the first and second grades children study families around the world. Although the families in other cultures differ in structure and at times in functions, the family is an institution close to the lives of children. Therefore, it is not difficult to teach them about differences and similarities in families in other parts of the world. The third and fourth grade courses add other social, political, and economic institutions of increasing degrees of difficulty for children to understand. This particular progression culminates in the study of total cultures at the end of the fourth grade. Furthermore, the families chosen for study in grade two provide a transition to grade three by introducing the relationship of the family to the larger community in a more explicit fashion than was done in grade one. The second grade material also introduces a few concepts and topics related to the institutions studied in grade three. To reenforce this interconnectedness, the units in the later grade levels continue to include some material on the institutions studied earlier. For example, as pupils study life in the Trobriand Islands or in India, they find out about the family life and also about the other social and political institutions and see how they affect the economic institutions.

The principle of cross-cultural comparison has been added to the principle of moving from the simple to the complex. Information about families and communities in other cultures can be made meaningful through a process of comparison, of identifying both similarities and differences. Indeed, the contrast with other types of families and communities serves to highlight some of the characteristics of families and communities in our own society, making these features stand out more sharply. The usefulness of this organization for curricular purposes parallels its usefulness among social scientists who are turning more and more to cross-cultural comparisons in their efforts to develop explanatory and predictive generalizations and theories which will not be culture bound. This organizational principle has been used in each of the grades from one through four, as well as in the later elementary grades and parts of the secondary school curriculum.



Finally, the part-whole principle of organizing content has been combined with the other two principles. This principle calls for a study of the parts of a broader whole first and then moves on to a study of that whole itself. This principle can be used for organizing topics both within courses and from one course to another. For example, children study one institution after another before they finally look at culture as a whole at the end of the fourth grade. This principle can also be thought of as a means of organizing content topics to provide the raw data about a number of incidents, societies, or places which pupils can use to develop transferable concepts and generalizations. For example, pupils can study rainfall patterns in a number of countries and gradually develop a more complete generalization about factors affecting rainfall. The principle is obviously related to the cross-cultural organization used in this curriculum, since it is used to provide data about different cultures. Children are then asked to generalize on the basis of what they have learned about different societies to mankind as a whole. This principle of ordering content lends itself to having children generalize for themselves.

These three organizing principles have been selected so as to reinforce each other. They are consistent not only with the goals of the program but also with learning theory and the interests and maturity level of children.

## EVALUATION STUDIES ON MATERIALS FOR GRADES ONE THROUGH FOUR

A curriculum development center working on a K-12 curriculum cannot hope to do carefully controlled research on all levels of its program at once. However, some research was carried on to evaluate the program for grades 1-4 during 1967-1969, and more is in progress.

Marlowe Berg did a pilot study of the K-3 program during the second year of its use in one of the pilot school systems in Minnesota. The teachers had all attended a five-week summer workshop before they began teaching the course. Children in the Minnesota Project Social Studies Program were compared with those in the same schools who were not in the program. Children were shown pictures of people of other cultures. Berg taped group interviews with the children. She began the interviews by asking children: "What do you see in this picture?" After an initial non-directive probing, children were asked a second question: "How are the people in the picture *like* you and me? After time for responses to this question, children were asked, "How are the people *not like* you and me?" Finally, children were asked, "If you had a chance, would you like to spend some time with the people in this picture?" Transcripts of these interviews were subjected to content analysis.

Berg's conclusions can be summarized as follows:

- 1 – The pupils in classes using the Center's curriculum materials made a significantly larger number of responses noting *similarities* between themselves and the peoples of other cultures than did children in other classes in the same schools.
- 2 – There were no significant differences in the number of responses noting *differences* between themselves and other peoples of the world.
- 3 – Children in the classes using the Center's curriculum made significantly more responses noting differences in environmental use.
- 4 – Children in the classes using the Center's curriculum made a significantly larger number of responses calling attention to the fact that ways of living are learned.
- 5 – Children in the classes using the Center's curriculum made comments noting differences in skin color later during the course of interviews than did those not studying these courses.

6 – "Rather ambiguous results were obtained from the data relating to the question, 'Do children at the primary level understand cultural change?' The raw numbers indicate relatively few responses relevant to this category. The percentage, however, shows the Project groups in a more favorable light, although the differences are not statistically significant. It would seem that a number of things may have occurred: Children of this age may not be able to comprehend principles of culture change, the Project materials stressing this idea may not have been dramatic enough for this age group, or the study may not really have assessed this area."<sup>2</sup> The questions asked, for example, may not have been likely, when used with still pictures, to elicit ideas about change. Indeed, it may be surprising that children suggested as frequently as they did that the ways these people live might change. Nevertheless, this sixth finding in the study has been used by the Center's staff in revising materials in the primary grades to dramatize change more clearly.

In 1967-1968 a number of teachers in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota took part in a local in-service program sponsored by the Educational Research and Development Council in the area. These teachers took part in four, three-hour workshop sessions in the spring before they began to teach the courses. They met for additional three-hour sessions every other week during their first year of teaching the course. Most of these workshop sessions were conducted by other teachers who had taught the course successfully in the past. About seven months after teachers began using the program, they were asked whether or not they would like to teach the course again the next year. All of the second, third, and fourth grade teachers (24 in number) said yes. All but one of the ten first grade teachers said yes. The one who said no said, "No. Not experienced enough."

In 1968-1969 Speedier (Curriculum Study Research and Development Council of South Central Pennsylvania) conducted a study of four new elementary school projects developed by different curriculum centers around the country. One of these was the Minnesota Project. Teachers were involved in a three-day workshop before they began teaching the program. Children in the program and in the control classes were given pre- and post-tests. On the Primary Social Studies Test from Houghton Mifflin, the first graders in the Minnesota Project made significantly greater gains than did those in the control groups. At the second grade level, they made greater but not significantly greater gains. At the third grade level, they made less gain but not significantly so than those in the control groups. Indeed, *all* of the experimental programs at this level showed fewer gains at the third grade level than the more traditional programs. This suggests something about the evaluation devices used to evaluate new curriculum programs. The children in the fourth grade were given the STEP test. The children in the Minnesota Project classes made greater gains but not significantly so than did the children in the control groups. All but two of the fifteen teachers wished to continue the program

<sup>2</sup> Reported by Berg in the Final Report of the Curriculum Center to the Office of Education.

another year; the two who did not were in a school system which decided to adopt a different program for all classes in the school system.

Another study was made at Bellevue, Washington, by two University of Washington professors, Gilbert Sax and Theodore Kaltsounis. This study compared children in the Minnesota Project at the third and fourth grade levels with children in the regular social studies program in the Bellevue school system. An analysis of covariance was used to determine the differences between the two groups at the end of the study. Children were given the Primary Social Studies Test from Houghton Mifflin. This test is designed to test content usually taught in the lower grades. There was a significant difference in favor of the Project group at the fourth grade level. In the third grade the difference in adjusted means was in favor of the Project group but the results were not significant. The test was given again in the fall of 1969 to test retention of knowledge from the previous year. Both control and experimental groups showed a significant gain rather than a loss, with the experimental group gain slightly larger, but not significantly so. These results were obtained despite the fact that the test was designed to test traditional subject matter content. The third and fourth grade children were also given a "Ranking of Subjects Survey" developed by the investigators. Slightly more third grade children in the Minnesota Project group ranked social studies as the most preferred subject. The number ranking it least preferred was the same for both the control and the Project groups. Slightly fewer of the fourth grade children in the Minnesota Project ranked social studies as the most preferred subject, but "considerably fewer" of them ranked social studies as the least preferred subject.

Obviously, much more research is needed to evaluate the various new curriculum projects around the country in a variety of situations. Moreover, new tests need to be developed to evaluate the kinds of goals identified for the new programs. The research so far, however, indicates that the Minnesota Project curriculum for grades 1-4 does as well as or better than more traditional programs in teaching the content on tests designed to evaluate traditional programs. They have done better, as measured by content analysis of interviews, in learning some of the concepts identified as goals for the program.



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