DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 082 201 CS 200 685

AUTHOR Kitzhaber, Albert R.; And Others
TITLE What Is English, Working Party Paper No. 1; Response, Report to the Seminar, and Supporting Papers One through Six.
INSTITUTION Modern Language Association of America, New York, N.Y.; National Association for the Teaching of English (England).; National Council of Teachers of English, Champaign, Ill.
PUB DATE Sep 66
NOTE 100p.; Working papers of the Anglo-American Seminar on the Teaching and Learning of English (Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, Aug. 20-Sept. 16, 1966); For related documents see CS 200 684, CS 200 686-200 700

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Communication Skills; Composition (Literary); Conference Reports; *Educational Theories; *English; *English Curriculum; English Education; *English Instruction; *English Programs; Language; Literature
IDENTIFIERS *Dartmouth Seminar on the Teaching of English

ABSTRACT

In his paper addressing the question, "What is English?" Albert Kitzhaber suggests that English is a body of knowledge called grammar, and a body of knowledge called literature, with the skills of communication as a unifying element. James Britton responds to Kitzhaber's paper and suggests that what needs to be asked is, first, "What is the function of the mother tongue in learning?" and, second, "What ought English teachers to be doing?" A response is then made to Britton's paper, and it is suggested, first, that the English teacher should engage pupils in activities which enable pupils through language to represent internally those experiences which are of moment to them, and to improve their mastery of the language. Secondly, English should be viewed as the objective study of language and as a medium in the study of other subjects. The remaining papers explore process, knowledge, and the English program; language as an intellectual study; what is teachable in composition and how (response is also provided); bifurcation or continuity in English programs; exclusion and inclusion of subjects in English programs; and child-centered curricula. (HOD)

WORKING PARTY PAPER NO. 1

What Is English[1]

by

Albert R. Kitzhaber

The subject usually called "English" is required of virtually every child in English-speaking countries, from the beginning of school instruction until graduation from secondary school or until school-leaving age. The same cannot be said of any other subject taught in the schools, neither arithmetic nor history, geography nor science. So universal a requirement suggests a widespread faith in the value and efficacy of this study, not only among educators but among the general population, for the requirement could scarcely be enforced without strong popular support. The average citizen's sense of the importance of English accounts, in fact, for the keen if not always informed and helpful interest that he takes in such matters as methods of teaching reading and spelling, the presence or absence of grammar lessons, and the choice of literature to be studied.

The reasons for the popular conviction that English is central in education are not hard to find. It is self-evident that training in the use of language is essential to any child. Until the child has learned to utter his thoughts with reasonable clarity and fluency, to listen and understand, to read and write, he cannot be a fully effective member of the

[1]In this paper I will address myself mainly to the American scene, of which I have direct knowledge. I trust that much (though certainly not all) of what I have to say about the teaching of English in United States schools will be relevant to English teaching in Canadian and English schools as well, and that the representatives from these countries at the seminar will fill in details and make needed corrections during the course of our discussions.

society he finds himself in. This is especially true when the society is democratically based. Moreover, since vertical mobility is characteristic of a democratic social order, it is important to try to give every child a command of the standard dialect. Although it is obvious that not every child will become a banker or a physician or a government official--or the wife of one of these--and therefore need to speak the prestige dialect, one cannot be absolutely certain that he won't. Therefore the schools have to assume that nearly every child is potentially able to rise in the social scale to the point where he will find it important to shun "ain't" and to prefer "he doesn't" to "he don't." To the average citizen this is clear enough so that, even though he himself may not be a habitual speaker of the standard dialect, he will usually want his children to master it for purely practical advantage.

As for the teaching of literature--an invariable part of the English course--literary scholars and English teachers in the schools would defend it as the chief bulwark of the humanities in public education, that part of the curriculum in which a major effort is made to transmit to young people an important part of the cultural heritage due them as speakers of English. The average citizen, on the other hand, is more likely to tolerate literature in the English course than to support it wholeheartedly; or, if he does support it, he may often do so for what the teacher and scholar think are the wrong reasons. Literature--especially poetry--is often suspect to the common man, at least in the United States. He regards it as effete, if not effeminate. But if he is willing to put up with the presence of literature in the curriculum studied by his children, it is often because he sees it

as a convenient way of inculcating attitudes and values that he approves of--a belief in orthodox social philosophy and moral standards, or merely the stock responses to flag, home, and mother.

As the object of so much attention and interest, and the occasion for so vast an expenditure of effort by thousands of teachers and millions of pupils in each generation, it would not be unreasonable to hope that English as a school subject was reasonably well defined, clearly organized, and rigorously taught. But we all know that it is not. Barring only perhaps the conglomerate school subject known in the United States as "social studies" (referred to by the sociologist David Riesmann as the "social slops"), English is the most confused, the least well defined, of any subject in the school curriculum.

It is true that, at a minimum, the English course does include some characteristic content--literature (but of widely varying kinds and quality), and grammar or usage or an indiscriminate mixture of the two. And also, at a minimum, the English course tries to foster certain skills--reading (though explicitly only in the early years), and writing (though often more by precept than practice). But English, at least in United States schools, also may include a fantastic variety of other kinds of content--journalism, play production, study of the mass media, forensics, advice on dating, public address, career counselling, orientation to school life. And it may accept responsibility for developing such other skills as library use, elementary research technique, proper study habits, use of the telephone, procedure for filling out forms and taking standardized examinations, choral reading, group discussion, parliamentary practice. It is noteworthy that we at this

seminar, having devoted many years of our professional lives to the study and teaching of English, must begin our discussions by asking what exactly it is that we have been working at all these years.

As a background for this inquiry, it will be useful to take note of the circumstances that have led to the chaotic state of this basic school subject. At least four main causes may be listed.

First is the vagueness of "English" itself as a term. Originally, "English" rose in opposition to "Latin" as a rival scheme of education, one more suited to the needs and conditions of a changing and increasingly democratic society. But Latin necessarily implied a relatively restricted subject-matter--Latin grammar and literature, with exercises in translation and composition to help the student master a foreign language that was itself narrowly limited in its uses. English, on the other hand, as the native language, takes in vastly more territory. As the language of everyday life it is subject to pressures and has a range of purposes that Latin could not have had as a specialized second language. "English" as the native tongue is in one sense a part of all other subjects that the child studies in school. As the general medium of communication and expression, it touches every aspect of existence and so must inevitably appear blurred when regarded as a special school subject, alongside geography, arithmetic, biology--disciplines whose outlines are sharply defined in comparison to "English."

A second reason why the English curriculum is confused is that, since it is taken by almost all children, it is an easy way to reach all children with any item of instruction that someone or other--an organized pressure

group, a school administrator, an educational theorist--thinks all children should be exposed to. And since English teachers and English textbooks have not shown a strong sense of identity, the resistance point of the English course has sometimes been almost vanishingly low. As a result, all sorts of odds and ends of instruction, from suggestions on how to achieve social success, to the importance of reforestation and of preventing cruelty to animals, get dumped into the English course, often through the subterfuge of improving the students' writing ability by assigning essays on such topics. When the teacher of algebra or geography ceases to teach algebra or geography, the shift is not hard to detect; but an English teacher can teach almost anything without anyone, including the teacher, realizing that it is no longer English that is being taught. English, as someone has said, is not so much a curriculum as a receptacle.

English teachers themselves are a third cause of the confusion in English courses. Certainly in the United States, if not elsewhere, their training in their own subject is likely to be extraordinarily uneven. Less than half the people teaching English in American secondary schools, for example, have an academic major in English; others have specialized in home economics, Spanish, physical education, social science, or almost anything else, and have been assigned to teach one or more English classes on the simple-minded theory still held by some administrators that anyone who can speak English can teach it as a school subject--literature, grammar, writing, and all. Even when a teacher does have an academic major in English, there is no certainty that the pattern of preparation has been either thorough or wholly relevant. Courses in literature have likely been emphasized, to the

virtual exclusion of courses in writing or language; and those teachers who have had a course in language may still be ill prepared to teach any of the various new systems of grammar now so strikingly evident, since the grammar they studied may have been as much as half a century behind the present state of linguistic knowledge.

Because of widespread deficiencies in professional background, English teachers often reflect in their attitudes and their teaching the confusion that exists in the English curriculum, and in turn help to perpetuate it. They hold varying theories, of varying degrees of validity, about the purposes and content of the course, and they are likely to cling to these theories with a grim and uncritical tenacity. Unlike most teachers of such subjects as, say, biology or economics, English teachers sometimes give the impression that they "learned" their subject once and for all when they were in college, and they have been teaching it without change ever since. They developed, early in their career, the private conviction that the only way to teach writing was through workbook exercises, or the research paper, or sentence diagramming, or précis, and they are impervious to suggestions for other approaches. Or they worked up a set of lesson plans on Julius Caesar or The Tale of Two Cities twenty years ago, and, though schools of criticism have come and gone, they teach imperturbably from the same notes year after year and are unnerved at the thought of change. (Let me add at once that these phenomena are by no means unknown in college and university English departments.)

This basic conservatism might lead, one would think, to a degree of uniformity, but unfortunately it does not, since one teacher's orthodoxy

may be another's heresy. One gets the impression that many teachers want things this way. Secondary school teachers in one English Institute in the United States this summer were frank to say that they did not especially want to have a cumulative, sequential, purposeful curriculum in English, for it would oblige them to take account of the year's course on either side of their own and restrict their field to skills and knowledge mutually agreed upon. As one of them said, with disarming candor, "Actually, we like chaos."

A fourth cause of the lack of clarity in the English curriculum, particularly in the United States, is the influence of educational theorists, to which English has been peculiarly susceptible. This influence, exerted mainly through administrative planning, teacher indoctrination, and textbooks, can be traced, for better or worse, back to Schools and Departments of Education in the colleges and universities. It is only fair to admit at the outset that, if some college English professors and English teachers in the schools do not wholly approve of the results of this influence, the self-imposed isolation of the English professor from the teaching of his subject in the schools is principally to blame. The aloofness, until recently of college and university English teachers created a vacuum which professors of Education, to their credit, have tried to fill. They have worked hard and closely with the schools to improve the quality of teaching and of the curriculum. But in the nature of things, a professor of Education usually does not have quite the same view of English as a person whose entire interest lies within this subject. The main loyalty of the professor of Education may rest with an educational theory or philosophy applicable to a wide range

of subjects, and not merely to English. The Education professor, therefore, may sometimes reveal a lack of suitable regard, from the English teacher's standpoint, for the claims of the subject we call English and for its integrity as a body of knowledge worth studying for its own sake.[2]

This difference in viewpoint can nowhere be seen more clearly than in conflicting attitudes toward the "language arts" rubric, under which a great deal of English instruction in the United States is commonly ranged. Originally this term, which can be traced back almost three-quarters of a century, was used with some precision. B. A. Hinsdale, for example, the first professor of pedagogy at the University of Michigan, published a book in 1896 called Teaching the English Language Arts, in which he restricted the phrase to specific skills: "speaking, reading, composition." He drew the familiar nineteenth century distinction between arts and sciences, ranging the "language arts" alongside arithmetic, drawing, manual training, etc., which had as their object the development of a specific skill. Sciences, on the other hand, included not just the natural sciences but also "geography, history, grammar, literature, mathematics," all of which aimed at an intellectual grasp of a body of knowledge.[3]

Hinsdale's view is in sharp contrast with that of later theorists who were affected by the "progressive education" movement. By the 1940s and 1950s, "language arts" had come to embrace the entire province of English

---

[2]Whether or not this generalization applies in England and Canada, I do not know. I would argue that in the main it does apply in the United States, though an exception should certainly be made for the professor of English Education--a growing specialization, and a needed one.

[3](New York), p. 7.

as taught in the schools.[4] "The work of the English teacher," according to a popular "English methods" textbook of the 1950s,

> is to improve both phases of the process of communication. The English teacher assists his students in sending by teaching them the skills of writing and speaking, and he assists them in receiving by improving their ability to read and to listen. He knows that his students, to get along well in this complex world, must be able to make their meanings clear to others and understand what others are saying to them. . . . "Where does literature come in?" may well be asked. The answer, of course, is that literature is included under reading.[5]

Behind this attitude lies the assumption that the main purpose of the school curriculum is to "socialize" the child, to teach him things that will enable him to "adjust" to life and get along well with others, both in school and outside it. Whether or not one agrees that this should be the primary aim of education, there can be no question that the skills of language, of communication, are central in accomplishing it. But, as can be seen from the above quotation, subject matter, intellectual content, is made subservient to the development of the skills. Literature is studied as a means of improving skill in reading, grammar supposedly as a way of improving writing.

More than this, since the overall purpose was to socialize the "whole child," and since language touched the child at every point, there was no

---

[4]Sometimes, probably through administrative expediency, it included Latin and modern foreign languages as well. It was not uncommon a few years ago to encounter in American high schools or in the administrative offices of school systems a "Chairman of Language Arts" or a "Director of Language Arts," who was responsible for overseeing courses in Spanish, French, German, and Latin, even though the person often knew only his native English.

[5]J. N. Hook, The Teaching of High School English, (New York, 1950), p. 29.

real need to use only grammar and literature to develop the necessary communication skills in the English class. "Content [for the English course]," said the 1956 Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, "is selected on the basis of the 'activity-experience' approach. Since many kinds of activities-experiences may presumably contribute to pupil growth in reading-writing-listening-speaking, no particular activity-experience can necessarily be assigned as best for any one class or grade."[6] Another theorist at about the same time wrote that curriculum decisions in English should be based not on considerations of subject matter but on "the nature and needs of society. . . and the needs, problems, interests, and growth patterns of youth as determined by expert opinion and research."[7]

Where all this led can be seen in another quotation from the same ASCD Yearbook quoted from above:

> The many courses of study being produced reflect the confusion in the field of English as teaching has moved from organized content to activity-experience. . . . The variety and range of topics are so great that no clear answer can be given to the question, "What is English?" . . . In some respects, therefore, English is "what English teachers teach."[8]

A parallel development, also serving to confuse the identity of the English course, was the so-called "core" program that, though no longer so

---

[6]Kenneth Hovet, "What Are the High Schools Teaching?" What Shall the High Schools Teach? (Washington, D.C.), p. 86.

[7]Arno Jewett, English Language Arts in American High Schools (1958), p. 54

[8]P. 86. A striking example of the influence of this trend on popular thinking was revealed during the hearings in the U.S. House of Representatives on the amended National Defense Education Act in 1964. When federally supported institutes for English teachers were being debated as a part of the Act, one Congressman proposed an amendment that would have substituted the phrase "language arts" for "English." Under questioning, he admitted that by doing so he meant specifically to exclude instruction in literature from the institutes and confine the teaching solely to communication skills. This is, of course, also another instance of the national view of literature as a mere "frill."

common as it was a dozen years ago, still flourishes in parts of the United States. In its characteristic form, it combined "English" with "social studies" under a single teacher in one or more grades of the junior high school. The class met for either two or three consecutive hours, rather than for the usual one. This arrangement was commonly justified by two arguments: the child would get to know this teacher two or three times as well as he would any of his other teachers (being in this class that much longer each day) and so would regard the teacher in loco parentis and feel more "secure"; and the combination of English and social studies would create a significant integration of subject matter, thus enriching the child's education. Regardless of whether or not the former argument was well founded, it was evident from the beginning that the latter was not. Teachers rarely were competent in both of these fields; instead, they were specialized in English or in social studies--or in neither--and found themselves unable to do justice to the diverse content they were confronted with. More serious for the study of English, however, was the invariable tendency to regard the social studies content as primary (since socialization of the child was the aim) and to select the English content to fit the social studies content. What this meant in practice was that when, as in one large city school system, the class studied the people and cultures of Asia and Africa, the literature read was selected because of its relevance, real or imagined, to Asia and Africa. The consequences of such a policy on the kind and quality of literature studied may be conjectured. English was made the handmaiden of social studies, which in turn served the ends of "life adjustment."

Widespread dissatisfaction with the educational results of the "core"

courses and the heavy emphasis on "language arts" skills at the expense of well-defined subject-matter has been largely responsible for the current efforts to reform the English curriculum in the United States and Canada. Typical of these undertakings is the conviction that intellectual goals must come first, not be subordinated to socializing aims. As Northrop Frye says in the introduction to Design for Learning, ". . . the aim of whatever is introduced into the school curriculum, at any level, should be educational in the strict and specific sense of that word. It was the confusion of educational and social functions, implicit in the motto, 'The whole child goes to school,' that made 'progressive' theories so fatuous."[9]

Along with this intellectual emphasis goes a greater respect for the claims of the subject itself, considered as an organized body of knowledge with an integrity of its own that should not lightly be violated. No one denies, to be sure, that an important part of the concern of an English curriculum must be to develop language skills; but there is a strong feeling that English also has a specific subject matter that deserves to be taught in its own right, not merely as a means of improving the skills of communication, and much less as a way of "enriching" the social sciences. This subject matter must be defined more clearly than it has been in the past, so that the English curriculum ceases to be a catch-all.

The new emphasis may be seen in typical statements made by individuals and groups interested in bringing forward a "New English" to take its place alongside the "New Mathematics" and the "New Science" now being taught in

---

[9](Toronto, 1962), p. 7.

many United States schools. As long ago as 1959, the report of the Portland (Oregon) High School Curriculum Study declared:

> It is a basic premise of this study that the English course must resist both the pressure and the temptation to be all-inclusive. It must, rather, have two basic purposes: (1) To help the student read with understanding and appreciation some of the significant works in the world's literature. (2) To give the student some understanding of the nature and working of language, particularly his own, and to help him use his language in thinking, writing, and speaking.[10]

George Winchester Stone, Jr., then Executive Secretary of the Modern Language Association of America, wrote in 1961 that

> English, the humanistic course required of all students in our schools from the grades to college, has, as a subject and a discipline, long been drifting toward chaos in our schools. The values of reading the literature which forms the magnificent English and American heritage, of achieving precision and effectiveness of style in writing, and of knowing the grammatical structure of English (the three staples of an English course) would seem to be self-evident.[11]

And in Freedom and Discipline, the final report of the Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board, Recommendation 12 is "That the scope of the English program be defined as the study of language, literature, and composition, written and oral, and that matters not clearly related to such study be excluded from it."[12]

---

[10]Robert M. Gorrell and Paul Roberts, English Language and Composition, vol. 3 of the complete reports (Portland, Oregon), p. 5.

[11]Issues, Problems, and Approaches in the Teaching of English, ed. George Winchester Stone, Jr. (New York, 1961), p. v.

[12]Freedom and Discipline in English (New York, 1965), p. 13.

It is, of course, one thing to issue statements and definitions, and quite another to carry them into practice. Many projects and agencies are now at work in England, Canada, and the United States to reform the English curriculum, but even with the somewhat clarified view of English that is beginning to emerge much remains to do. One can, for instance, agree with the Commission on English that the English course should be restricted to "the study of language, literature, and composition, written and oral"; but this still leaves unresolved such specific questions as whether the English curriculum should include journalism, public speaking, "yearbook," dramatic production, library research, remedial reading, and literature in English translation. "English" still looks like a hodgepodge, even after telephone technique and career counselling have been eliminated.

Because of this dilemma, a number of arguments have been advanced in favor of a particular subject-matter "center" for the English curriculum around which could be ranged the legitimate content and activities of English in a way that would indicate their relative importance and their interrelationships. "English," says H. L. Gleason, the American linguist, "must have a center about which it can integrate--a center of such significance that it can overcome the centrifugal forces clearly at work to dismember the field of English."[13]

It is still an open question whether such a "center" can be agreed upon--whether, that is, English is basically a single subject at all, or whether it is merely a group of related subjects that are more conveniently taught in one

---

[13]"What Is English?" College Composition and Communication, October 1962, p. 2.

classroom than in several. Gleason argues persuasively that language (not just the English language) should be regarded as the organizing center.[14] The Commission on English seems to agree: ". . . language, primarily the English language, constitutes the core of the subject. . . . the study and use of the English language is the proper content of the English curriculum."[15] D. F. Theall, in an "Appendix: On Rhetoric" in Design for Learning, appears to argue that, as rhetoric was once the center of all education, it might now be made the center of at least the English curriculum, where it would make possible a spiral structuring of the course of study.[16] Frank Whitehead, in his new book The Disappearing Dais, presents a vigorous case for the value of imaginative exercises in drama as a part of the English curriculum and says that such dramatic activities should have "a place of honour near the very centre of the curriculum. . . ."[17] J. N. Hook says that the English teacher should think "of his task not as the teaching of unrelated fragments but as the teaching of the whole art of communication. . . ."[18] George Winchester Stone, Jr., says that English does have its own characteristic subject matter, and "That subject matter is the cultural heritage, in literary form, of the English-speaking people."[19] Esmor Jones writes in a recent article that "Literature is, after all, the true heart of our work."[20]

---

[14]P. 7.

[15]Freedom and Discipline, p. 2.

[16]Pp. 71-72.

[17](London, 1966), p. 122.

[18]The Teaching of High School English, p. 44.

[19]Issues, Problems, and Approaches, p. 2.

[20]"Education Across the Atlantic," Teachers World, 13 May 1966, p. 20.

All of these statements are plausible, and there is no question that they are made in good faith and in all earnestness. But, as Hans Guth has observed, "Often, what at first seems to be a comprehensive interpretation of our task as teachers of English turns out to be but the lengthened shadow of a specialist's personal interest and commitment."[21] It will be a part of the concern of this seminar to decide whether there must be and in fact is a subject-matter "center" for the English curriculum, and what that center consists of; or whether there is no single identifiable center. I will return to this at the end of the paper.

But aside from this problem, it seems evident that nearly everyone would agree that "English" as a school subject must include literature, of whatever kind and for whatever purpose; and must attempt to teach skill in the use of language--reading and writing certainly, speaking and listening probably. And many people, though by no means all, would argue that language itself, chiefly English, should be taught as a kind of subject matter, whether for its own sake or for some hoped-for bearing it may have on the development of language skill. I should like now to draw attention to some of the specific problems touching on literature, language skills, and language itself that must be dealt with if the question "What is English?" is to be answered authoritatively.

Literature

To begin with literature, the first question one might ask is whether literature comprises the only legitimate subject matter for the English course.

[21] English Today and Tomorrow: A Guide for Teachers of English (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1964), p. 4.

Some people forthrightly believe so, and many teachers conduct their classes as if they believe so. Instruction in the skills of communication seldom is ruled out in the thinking of these people, but such instruction, even when it makes use of specific rhetorical and logical principles, does not constitute a subject matter in the sense that literature does. Though rhetoric and logic are disciplines with a long pedagogical history, they are instrumental, having, as Aristotle said, no proper subject matter of their own. What is ruled out usually is language, particularly grammar, on the grounds that it is irrelevant or futile or stupefying, or all three.

Another question which bears on the nature of the literature curriculum is whether or not we can accurately identify the central or organizing principles of literature, for these will affect not only sequence (the concern of another Working Party Paper) but also content and approach. ". . . The ability to explain the elementary principles of a subject to children," says Northrop Frye, "is the only real guarantee that the subject itself is theoretically coherent. The physical sciences are theoretically coherent by this test at present; literature and the social sciences much less so."[22] Nevertheless, several English curriculum projects are using Frye's "pre-generic forms"--Comedy, Romance, Tragedy, Irony--to organize a curriculum in literature, usually emphasizing the first two in the earlier years and the last two as the child grows older. Another project has settled on the concepts of Subject, Form, and Point of View as organizing principles, recognizing that these are not all-inclusive (setting, for example, or character cannot easily be fitted

[22]Design for Learning, p. 5.

under any of the three heads), but arguing that these principles (unlike setting and character) are exhibited in any literary composition, regardless of genre. These schemes, whether one subscribes to them or not, have the advantage of rising from the literature itself, rather than being imposed upon it from the outside, as schemes are that are based on chronology or national origin or quasi-sociological themes.

A third problem that needs to be considered is the reasons for teaching literature in the schools, since these also will affect the nature of the literature curriculum. A consequence of the "literature-as-preparation-for-life" theory, for example, has been the organization of literary anthologies according to various themes embodying attitudes that the anthologist wants the literature to inculcate in the child--"The Significance of Freedom," "Understanding Our Neighbors," and the like. The effect on the literature curriculum has been to water it down with selections that have been chosen because they say the right things about freedom and neighbors, rather than because they have any significant claim to literary merit. Teaching literature as cultural heritage will markedly improve the quality of the literature taught, but it will raise other questions of choice: English literature alone? Or good literature originally written in English, whether in England, the United States, Canada, or elsewhere? Foreign literatures in English translation? If so, representative masterpieces from certain literatures? Or only those works which, like classical myths, the fables of Aesop, the Homeric epics, the Bible, have become reservoirs of theme and allusion for literature composed in English? Again, if an understanding and appreciation of literature are a major purpose of the curriculum, how much technical information about literature

should be taught--devices of structure and style, literary theory and criticism--and at what age-levels should it be introduced? Or should such information be avoided and reliance placed instead on wide and relatively undirected reading? Are historical background and biographical details relevant to understanding and appreciation? If so, how can they be made to enhance the reading of the work rather than substitute for it?

There is a whole range of other questions. What weight should be given to the student's own preferences in selecting works to be studied in a literature curriculum? Should it be assumed that the student cannot be interested in anything that he does not already find interesting? Some educational theorists have so argued in the past. Or is Robert B. Heilman right when he says that "The idea that knowledge follows interest is a scandalous half-truth," and that "it is a better-than-half-truth that interest follows knowledge"?[23] Should the average student's difficulties with older forms of the language be a reason for weighting the curriculum with works from the last half-century? Or should an effort be made to teach Shakespeare and Milton (if not Spenser and Chaucer) to most children before they graduate or reach school-leaving age? Should all major genres, including epic and tragedy, novel and lyric, be taught? Or are some less important than others for the purposes of popular education? Should the literature curriculum be confined to belles lettres? Or should it include both discursive prose and a selection of great speeches from the literature of rhetoric--Burke on conciliation with America, Lincoln's Second Inaugural, Churchill on Dunkerque? If stage drama

[23] "Literature and Growing Up," English Journal, September 1956, p. 310.

is a proper concern of the literature curriculum, what about television drama and the film? These two media provide the overwhelming part of most children's experience with drama. Finally, though this may be only an American phenomenon, is it realistic to regard "reading" as a separate subject from literature (or indeed from English)? Obviously, reading cannot be taught without something being read. Should what is read have a measure of literary merit? Is it the business of the literature curriculum to teach reading throughout the school years? Or is this the concern of "reading specialists"?

The Skills of Communication

Whereas one can argue over whether literature has or ought to have a direct practical value for the students asked to study it, no one doubts the practical value of mastering the skills of communication--reading, writing, speaking, listening. It is the popular conviction of this value that makes English a required subject throughout the school years. Yet this part of the English curriculum, which everyone agrees is of the utmost importance, is easily the least effective. Perhaps it could hardly be otherwise. Language, the tool which is to be sharpened by instruction in the English classroom, is employed not only there but everywhere else, in school and outside it; and whenever it is used, for whatever purposes and under whatever circumstances, the act of using it may perpetuate errors and reinforce habits that the English teacher futilely tries, in a few hours a week, to eliminate or change. More than that, because of the inseparable relation between language and thought, any attempt to render the use of language more precise, more meaningful, is

really an effort to change habits of thinking--which again cannot be isolated and worked on exclusively in the English classroom.

This part of the curriculum is also the most confused, mainly because of conflicting theories--often supported by no more than hunch and prejudice, but passionately held--as to how language skills can best be taught. The theories are free to flourish since, in the first place, not many English teachers (in the United States at least) have had any significant professional preparation for teaching writing, speaking, or listening. (Only the elementary school teacher will usually have had adequate preparation for teaching reading.) And in the second place, when training in the teaching of these skills has been available, it has generally suffered from the lack of a coherent modern theory of rhetoric and has often been disfigured by the same kind of uninhibited theorizing that is so evident in the schools. The textbooks that the teachers must use in teaching language skills reflect the same limitations, purveying injunctions about topic sentences and emphasis and outlines, the barrenness of which has been apparent for the last fifty years. Above all, both teachers and textbooks have been oppressed by what Donald Lloyd a few years ago called a "national mania for correctness," which may not be unknown to England and Canada as well. The tremendous popular pressure for a narrow and rigid standard of conformity in spelling, punctuation, and usage has sometimes squeezed nearly everything else out of the English course. Certainly "good writing" and "good speaking" mean little more than "correct writing" and "correct speaking" to the general population--and, it is to be feared, to many English teachers. This fact has distorted instruction in writing, particularly, and led to unrealistic expectations for the English course and mistaken

notions of its content, scope, and purposes.

With these general considerations in mind, it will now be appropriate to raise a number of specific questions about the several language skills, their place in the English curriculum, and the means of fostering them. To begin with writing, we might ask whether this skill is as important for a great many of the slower students as speaking, reading, and the ability to listen and comprehend. Does the low-ability student actually do enough writing after his schooling has ended to warrant the heavy emphasis placed on it throughout his school life? Or is writing perhaps the best way to make his thinking more precise and therefore to be justified for its general educational value? Is it possible to establish at least a plausible, if not a rigorously logical, sequence in writing instruction? When the student writes, he needs punctuation, spelling, usage, vocabulary, sentence structure, transitions, paragraphs, substance--and he needs them all at once. Are there central principles of rhetoric or logic that could be identified and taught early with simple applications, then, in a Brunerian spiral, repeatedly in later years with increasingly sophisticated applications? If not, how can the deadly repetition and aimless eddying so apparent today in the teaching of writing from one year to another be avoided? Should rhetoric be explicitly taught, or should instruction in writing be entirely through supervised practice with no mention of a systematic theory of discourse? Should both "creative" and expository (or discursive) writing be taught? If so, what should be the relative emphasis, and in what years? What specific forms, if any, should be singled out for practice? Should logic, formal or informal, be taught as a

part of the English curriculum for its bearing on language use?[24] If so, should it be the traditional classical logic of Aristotle, which few English teachers know well; or modern systems of logic, which they do not know at all and probably have so far not even heard of? Should class instruction be given in general semantics? In propaganda analysis and study of the mass media as aids to clear thinking and hence clear writing and speaking and discriminating reading? Can a meaningful relationship be established between exercises in writing and the study of literature, so that the one reinforces the other? The present practice of merely assigning three hundred words on a character from a play or a scene from a short story can hardly be said to exemplify such a relationship. Finally, how can adequate instruction be given in spelling, punctuation, and usage, making clear the great social importance attached to these things but not allowing them to pre-empt the course as they now so often do? And how could it be made clear to students that the use of "ain't," though not to be condoned in educated circles, is really not a moral matter?

To turn now to speaking: ". . . Of all the different aspects of English," says England's Central Advisory Council for Education in its 1963 report, "speech has by far the most significant contribution to make towards" the "personal development and social competence of the pupil." "Inability to speak fluently," the report declares, "is a worse handicap than inability to

[24]"As part of their language study all high-school students should be given some formal training in logic and the application of logic to the study of language." "Report of the English Study Committee" in Design for Learning, ed. Frye, p. 50.

read or write."[25] Yet speech instruction is nearly always neglected in the English classroom, although speech is as logically a part of the English teacher's responsibility as writing is. The separation in the United States of speech from English, as a separate subject, is perhaps more a political than an educational matter; but it is nonetheless a fact that has helped to downgrade speech in the English class. Other factors are involved also. If English teachers are often not well prepared to teach literature and writing, they have even less claim to a professionally adequate background in speech. The speech lessons in English textbooks are, as a rule, little better than pitiful, hindering adequate instruction rather than helping it. And finally, since learning to speak well requires that one practice speaking under supervision, the English teacher is faced with the problem of how, among the many other concerns of the English class, time can be found to have each child speak often enough to afford significant practice. A single three-minute talk by each of thirty or thirty-five children, with some discussion of each presentation, can eat up the better part of a week of class time.

In view of all these difficulties, is it possible to teach speech adequately as a part of the English curriculum--not just hints on voice and gesture but thorough and rounded instruction in the principles and practice of oral presentation, with attention to finding and selecting subject matter, organizing it, and presenting it in suitable language, with due regard to purpose and audience? Or should the English teacher resign such instruction, once and for all, to a speech teacher, along with such specialized activities as choral reading, forensics, speech therapy, and the like, which, though often regarded

[25]Ministry of Education, Half Our Future (London, 1963), p. 153.

as a part of the language arts curriculum, are most often taught by a specialist?

Perhaps this is the place to mention the exercises in dramatics that are so popular in British schools but almost unknown in those of the United States. One of the claims made for such exercises is improvement in "the range, fluency, and effectiveness of children's speech." But much more is claimed as well. Frank Whitehead, who has just been quoted, continues as follows:

> . . . under the stimulus of an imagined situation words move from their passive "recognition" vocabulary into active use; as children lose themselves in their roles and so become freed from inhibiting self-consciousness, they learn to move gracefully and easily; they acquire poise and the capacity for expressive gesture and countenance; they learn, too, to work together, for drama cannot exist without cooperation and teamwork. Yet to say all this does no more than scratch the surface. More fundamental, if less clearly demonstrable, is our awareness that, in the successful drama lesson, acting is felt by the children to be a fulfilling and, in some sense, creative activity--one in which the whole personality is involved and through which are expressed significant perceptions and observations drawn from their own living. Dramatic activity of this kind is no childish parlour-game, nor is it a mere technical exercise. It is, on the contrary, a vital imaginative experience; and the value of it goes deep for the child because, essentially, acting is the child's natural way of enlarging his imaginative understanding of other human beings--and therefore his understanding of the nature and conditions of human life itself.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . we may say that acting, seen as a development and elaboration of the play-instinct, is a positive outlet for wish-fulfilment which is available to all children, including those who could not easily obtain comparable satisfactions through reading. It has the advantage, moreover, that the child's fantasy has to express itself through a medium which is social, not solitary, and which enforces its own restraints and provides its own necessary discipline.[26]

[26]The Disappearing Dais, pp. 123, 125.

We may hope that the seminar will have the opportunity to discuss this kind of activity fully, for it opens up possibilities--and raises problems of teacher preparation--that in the United States have received almost no attention so far.

Like speech, reading has recently assumed a kind of autonomy in the United States. There are now, for example, federally supported institutes in reading and still others in English, under the National Defense Education Act. The International Reading Association, a large and effective professional organization, is distinct from the National Council of Teachers of English and enrolls more elementary school teachers than the Council does--teachers who, by the way, sometimes do not think of themselves as "English" teachers at all, though on the average they spend about forty per cent of their time teaching language skills, and literature or language content. One of the questions this seminar might address itself to is whether this separation is natural and inevitable, or illogical and undesirable. To what extent is the teaching of reading, after the elementary instruction in the first years of school, a separate mystique outside the English teacher's ordinary competence? Remedial reading, "speed" reading, and the like, are clearly special techniques. But to what extent is every teacher of literature a teacher of reading? Should the English curriculum do more, especially in the later years of school, to teach reading overtly? If so, by what means? Or should reading improvement be left to a reading specialist, as speech might be left to a speech specialist?

Finally, a word on listening, an activity which is always included under the language arts designation and which everyone agrees is important, but

which no one appears to know how to teach. Can it be taught at all in a direct way? Or is it something that we should assume comes along naturally with the other language skills and therefore needs no special attention other than what it normally gets in the course of classroom activity? Current practice suggests the latter, but one suspects that this situation is due more to default than to logic.

Language

For as long as English has been a recognizable school subject, English grammar has been a part of the course of study. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, grammar was taught (mainly out of Lindley Murray) as an effective means of enforcing "mental discipline," in accordance with the faculty psychology of the day. Rules were memorized, and sentences were parsed--etymologically, orthographically, syntactically. Generations of students testified to the deadliness and futility of the study. Later in the century, though grammar was still heavily emphasized, the justification changed from mental discipline to the improvement of writing, by which was meant simply making it more correct. Students still found the work deadly; and it was apparent from the first that the alleged connection between the study of grammar and improvement in language use was negligible, possibly non-existent. Grammar study declined after the turn of the century, disappearing entirely from some classrooms but usually surviving in a vestigial form--definitions of the parts of speech, and exercises in sentence-diagramming.

This is about where the study of grammar is today in most classrooms. What has largely supplanted it is exercises in usage, which a great many

people--including English teachers--confuse with grammar.

Linguistic research, however, has gone forward with great rapidity, especially since about 1940, and at the present time we have in England and America a number of new scientific grammars to choose from--structural, transformational, tagmemic, stratificational, to name the best known. An invariable feature of the various curriculum-reform projects in English that have been undertaken in the last ten years in the United States has been a renewed emphasis on grammar and language, as proper English subject matter, equal in importance to literature. The grammar introduced is always one of the new systems, usually either structural or transformational. Several textbooks have already been published for use in American schools, and many others are being written or are in press. Structural grammar has made some headway in Canadian schools; but one gets the impression that none of the new grammars is yet being used in England except for a few limited experiments.

In the American curriculum projects, the justification of the new language study is primarily on humane grounds: language, the most important and complex of all human inventions, is deserving of study for its own sake, just as literature, history, and "pure science" are. Advocates of this point of view usually do not expressly deny any relation between the study of language and greater skill in its use; they simply say that, in the present state of knowledge, such claims cannot be substantiated. Many of them hope that a detailed study of an accurate grammar of English will make children more aware of the patterns and resources of the language and eventually give them better control over it; but they carefully avoid saying so at present.

The question of whether or not linguistic material, especially one or

another of the new grammars, is a legitimate part of the English curriculum is likely to be one of the most vigorously debated issues at this seminar. In the hope of giving this debate a starting point, let me call attention to a number of specific problems and questions that might be considered.

Is the scientific study of language, as exemplified in the new systems of grammar, appropriate content in a course of study that has traditionally been ranged with the humanities? Is it true that this kind of language study is itself humane, as its advocates argue, leading children to a genuine understanding and appreciation of language? Or do the premises and methods of science, which underlie this study, make it inappropriate matter for the English course and incompatible with the experience and perhaps the natural bent of most of those who teach English?

Assuming for the moment that a scientific grammar would not be unacceptable on philosophical grounds, can it be taught successfully to children? Certainly the new textbooks in transformational grammar look as forbidding and incomprehensible to one who knows only the old grammar, as the textbooks of the New Mathematics look to someone who learned his school mathematics a generation ago. Frank Whitehead, mentioning a number of books (not school texts) presenting scientific grammars, says that the teacher who studies these "will soon realise that the concepts and methodological approach now obligatory in the study of grammar are far too difficult for children below the age of sixteen. . . ."[27] Against this view, however, is the experience of numerous curriculum projects in the United States which have taught, with

[27]The Disappearing Dais, p. 232.

apparent success, structural and transformational grammar to both elementary and junior high school children.

If grammar is to be studied, does it matter which of the several competing systems is presented? Is it true, as transformationalists argue, that their kind of grammar achieves "explanatory adequacy," and develops a general theory of language, whereas structural grammar achieves only "observational adequacy" and does not shed light on language itself? Does tagmemic grammar have a better claim to attention in an English course because of its concern with prose units larger than the sentence? Or should an attempt be made to develop an eclectic program?

One of the most pressing questions is whether, if linguistic material is judged appropriate for the English course, time can be found to teach it adequately without slighting other necessary instruction. The English course is certainly already full enough, though it seems likely that a clearer definition of English that would exclude the peripheral activities and topics mentioned earlier in this paper might create room for other work. Whether it would be enough remains to be seen; some of the Curriculum Study Centers in the United States will have partial evidence on the question.

Assuming that room can be found within the English curriculum for the study of language--not just grammar--what other kinds of linguistic knowledge should be included: dialects? linguistic geography? lexicography? history of writing systems? phonology? All of these and others have been introduced in experimental programs in the United States. How well have they succeeded? What criteria should be used in selecting such material for study? And--a central question--how can teachers be equipped to teach linguistic subject

matter when their professional background almost certainly includes little if any work in this area?

Finally, there is the question of whether or not language furnishes the only reasonable basis for the unity of English. A number of writers have so argued--Edwin H. Sauer[28] and Hans Guth,[29] to name two--but the most extended case for this point of view has been made by H. L. Gleason in his article "What Is English?" "I am asserting," he says,

> . . . that language must be the integrating center about which a new English curriculum is to be built. It must be that center for several reasons: First, language underlies both composition and literature and is the only fundamental point of contact between the two. Second, it is with language that school education begins, and it is out of the reading and writing instruction of the elementary grades that the English program of higher education must come. Third, language is one of the most important characteristics of human existence, and it most emphatically deserves close and scholarly study. Fourth, it is here in the close study of language that the English curriculum can best advance the integration of the humanities and the sciences.
>
> Do not miss the point here. I am proposing a shift in the basis of integration. It has traditionally been in English as a language. I am proposing language. You must move your focus from the specific language to the language in general. English must become not the defined center of attention, but the central exemplification of a far broader interest.
>
> Along with this shift of the focus, there must come a reforming of the internal structure. I would foresee emphasis on three points: the understanding of language, the manipulation of language, and the appreciation of language.[30]

---

[28] English in the Secondary School (New York, 1961), pp. 1-2.

[29] English Today and Tomorrow, p. 5.

[30] P. 7.

Gleason is to be commended for trying to provide a philosophical basis for unity in the English curriculum. But it might be asked whether his notion of a language-centered curriculum would really unify English. Or would it merely underline the obvious and superficial fact that grammar, literature, and linguistic skills all employ language? If language is not the "integrating center" of the English curriculum, what is? Or is one needed at all? Would it be possible to introduce language subject-matter into the curriculum without subordinating all other subject-matter and skills to it? Would we all agree with Gleason's argument that, since the sciences are becoming more humane, the humanities "at peril of death" must "become more scientific"; and that a language-centered curriculum would at once insure the survival of English as a school subject and go far toward closing the breach between Snow's Two Cultures?

In this paper I have tried to provide some of the educational context necessary for a fruitful discussion of the question "What is English?" and to raise a variety of subsidiary questions which I believe will have to be considered in the course of working toward an answer to the main question. I have also tried to avoid suggesting answers myself, since it is not my responsibility to do so but that of the seminar as a whole. A thoughtful and generally acceptable answer to "What is English?" is a prerequisite, it seems to me, to useful discussion of all the rest of the topics with which the seminar will concern itself. I hope this paper may help, in a modest degree, to lay the groundwork for a satisfactory answer.

Response to Working Party Paper I - "What Is English?"

Opening Remarks by Douglas Barnes, Chairman:

The discussion papers imply conceptual frameworks each of which supplies a completely different answer to this question. But, upon reflection, I needn't have worried; since this is perhaps our task. It is not to find a single monolithic answer, but to find one map upon which all the directions can be put. I take it that to a large extent, we tend, each of us, to have a map of English in the terms of our own concepts - probably deriving from a specialist approach. And, on this map, our particular interest comes in the center. If we are asked to put in someone else's interest, it is liable to fall somewhere in a corner. Whereas, if the other person's map has our interest and attitude put upon it, that too will fall into a corner. Now I take it that our main task is to find some conceptual pattern whereby all of our different approaches may be placed upon the same map, and not the impossible task of coming to an agreement between such a large number of different people. It is, I suppose, our first steps toward the kind of exchanges that this map-making will require that we are embarking upon now.

James Britton, Discussant:

Although I am not one for formalities, I feel there is a courtesy involved in thanking Professor Kitzhaber for his paper, for the very determined way in which he has struggled to open the question, or, perhaps, struggled to keep the question open. It has been part of what I have done in reading his paper

to pursue the lengthening shadow of his own special interest - such as he has quoted somebody as putting it - to find what his stand himself would be upon the topic that he is laying before us. And, I have no apology for the fact that what will come out in the end from what I want to say will be the lengthening shadow of somebody else's special interest.

The problem is no less than an attempt to identify, as stated by Professor Kitzhaber in his paper, essential organizing principles for English. His method has been to examine the subject English itself within the terms of his experience of it - English as it goes on in his experience. I want to make my first comment very clearly that it seems to me English is itself an element in a larger structure - a larger structure of education. I can see no possibility of defining English, or, if that is putting it too strongly, I can see no useful way of defining it without considering its place in the total structure. English as a subject in the university is paralleled by psycholinguistics, by anthropology, by biochemistry, by many other subjects which have their respectable place in the university curricula. But until somebody comes to look at their possible contribution into a larger structure, their possible place in the larger structure, one can say nothing useful about them as teaching subjects.

Professor Kitzhaber recognizes this fact on his first page. But, I think, he sidesteps it by putting the blame on public opinion. In other words, the educator may have views about it, but public opinion allows those views to come into practice. Now, it seems to me that public opinion can

allow a course of action to take place or disallow it. It can't justify or refute its value as education. For this reason, I think the question may need dividing. I don't want to come down sharp on this, but I want to suggest that possibly this question we are facing may have to be divided in the end. We may have to ask, "What is English in the University?" "What is English in the schools?" I'll leave it at that at the moment, although obviously you could subdivide there if you wanted to. Or, possibly even some other way subdivide, "What is English for the college-bound student? What is English for the terminal student?" I think anyone searching for a unifying organizing principle would be very loath to accept this division and would try to find some formulations which subsumed the various kinds corresponding to those divisions, but they might have to give up in the end. I should be very loath to accept the second of those divisions and I think if we found ourselves at a later stage in our discussions as a group proposing that, I should want to bring strong arguments in favor of the first division, the university/school rather than the division, the total career of those going to the University and the career of those who are not.

I hope I am not misreading between the lines, but in trying to pursue this lengthening shadow, it seems to me the underlying assumptions of Professor Kitzhaber's paper suggest that English is:

1. a body of knowledge called grammar
2. a body of knowledge called literature
3. the skills of communication

This may be unfair to the paper. I may have put it much more sharply than he would want to do, but there are a number of references to support my interpretation that he approves, to some extent, of what Hinsdale says - Hinsdale is saying the first two of these - a body of knowledge called grammar and a body of knowledge called literature - and certainly Professor Kitzhaber himself, in his final section, refers to the skills of communication as a possible unifying idea. I think I would suppose also that of these three, the skills of communication perhaps are less important in Professor Kitzhaber's view.

Now, there certainly exists a body of knowledge about English language - both a grammatical body of knowledge and other kinds of linguistic bodies of knowledge. There also exists a body of knowledge psychologically speaking, sociologically speaking, and anthropologically speaking. If we need to consider these, we must look at their educational claims per se, their claims in their own rights to be a part of a child's schooling. Is there a body of knowledge called literature? And, here I think, is a major question. Certainly, there is a body of knowledge <u>about</u> literature - there is an historical body of knowledge, there is a critical body of knowledge. I would gather from the papers, if not only from my colleagues from the United Kingdom, that there would be a strong view to resist the idea that literature itself can be regarded as a body of knowledge. Those of us who have taught in schools, in England anyway, have only to think of the difference between knowing <u>Julius Caesar</u> for an examination and whatever we may feel <u>Julius Caesar</u> is meant for. They seem to be two quite different things.

Third are the skills of communication. Now, I feel to formulate this as the skills of communication is altogether to underestimate the importance of language. In other words, there are respectable bodies of facts and theories from sociologists and psychologists which establish the function of language as something much more than is suggested by "the skills of communication." In bringing this element into the English syllabus, we have to take account of those more general facts about language. This is fully set out in James Moffet's paper that was sent to us reprinted from Harvard Educational Review. The Newsome report which we brought copies of has made a strong impression on teachers in England in recent years and one of its major points is that it is indeed very difficult to separate the educational from the social objectives.

In the latter part of the paper, Professor Kitzhaber goes on to ask whether any part could be the unifying principle - the organizing central principle. I must say I thought his comments on the shortcomings and pitfalls in common practice in attempting to put these into practice are extremely helpful. What I think lies behind it in the end is what I might call the Oregon Trident. We have in fact an idea of literature as cultural heritage, knowledge about language on humane grounds, and thirdly skills and knowledge of rhetoric. So that we have two "out there" components and a third component which is partly a process, an activity, a skill and partly "out there." By "out there," I mean that the question itself, "What is English?," is an "out there" question. It assumes that English is something

and it makes the very large assumption that if we find out what it is, it follows that this is what the English teacher should be teaching. Now, this seems to me to be a very big assumption for the setting of this paper and for the paper itself to make. The answer is in consistent terms - in terms of "out there" commodities. I strongly suggest that in order to avoid reification we need to rephrase the question and not say, "What is English?," but ask more simply, "What ought English teachers to be doing?" "What ought teachers of English in the university, the school, etc., to be doing?"

On that basis, I want to lengthen my own shadow, or rather the shadow of my own special interest. I think we need first to ask, "What is the function of language - the function of the mother tongue in education?" - and putting it into its larger structure - its larger context, "What is the function of the mother tongue in learning?" What I am going to say now as briefly as I can will duplicate much of what has been said in papers already, including Frank Whitehead's paper; I think there is a necessary overlap. If you look for the criterion by which you define English, then look for the criterion by which you articulate the subject, you are bound to be looking for the same thing. A good deal of what Frank Whitehead says, I might well have said in response to this problem that is facing us in Paper No. 2. Some of this comes also into David Holbrook's comment and his quotation particularly from Susanne Langer and some striking examples of it come from Douglas Barnes' paper on drama. What we want, it seems to me, is an operational view of language - an operational view of the teaching of the mother tongue.

Then, of course, it is open to you if you want to say "What is English?"; "Well, at least it is not an operational view in the teaching of the mother tongue." Edward Sapir discovered, or rather formulated, this for us a long while ago - about 1930: "It is best to admit that language is primarily a vocal actualization of the tendency to see realities symbolically." Then, he explains this a page or two later in his book: ". . . actualization in terms of vocal expression of the tendency to master reality not by direct and ad hoc handling of that element, but by the reduction of experience to a familiar form." Now, this is of the same stable as Susanne Langer's quotation David Holbrook has used, it is of the same stable as Cassirer's statement comparing man to the animals on the basis of the fact that man has a third system shunted across his two systems. The animals have the effector and receptor systems; man has a third system, the symbolic system, shunted across the two. Crudely and oversimplified, it all adds up to this: we use language to represent the world (and ourselves in the world) to ourselves and from then onwards, we act in the real world by the light of, with the aid of, in the terms of that representation. Well, if we represent the world to ourselves in language and then operate in accordance with that representation there are two kinds of activity open to us. One, we may do just that - we may operate in the real world by means of representation. Secondly, this is a point that I think has been missed, we may also act directly upon the representation itself. We may improvise upon the picture of the world we built up from experience in all kinds of ways and to suit all kinds of purposes - and we habitually do. I

should like to establish a distinction between the two situations as far as the use of language is concerned, saying that we can use language to operate in the real world - call that the role of participant - and we can also act directly upon the representation in language - call that the role of spectator. It seems to me that this is a fundamental distinction of use in our discussion. We have seen it confused - the small child who goes to the school's matinee and calls out, "Look out guvner, he's behind ya," is not able to save the hero. It is in the nature of the distinction that he is using participant language in a situation which is a spectator situation. By saying spectator, I do not mean uninvolved or not participating in the world's affairs and the distinction of participant is somebody who is participating in the world's affairs and getting things done. So we use language in these two roles and in both of them we are structuring or we are shaping experience. I used the word structuring and David Holbrook didn't like it, but I still want to use it. You can call structuring experience, jargon if you like - but on the other hand, it is of great value in this sense that if you look up "structure" in the Oxford dictionary, you will find that it has, as a noun, two senses: one, the shape that we find that is there and that we perceive; and two, the shape that we have given to something. Put both of those into the verb - and I want to suggest that in using language to shape experience we are not only finding shape, but that we are giving shape. And, to distinguish the two is very difficult.

We learn from experience, but not the meaningless flux of sense impressions. We learn from experience as it is structured - as it is shaped. And, the primary means of shaping experience is language - our own language

and other people's language. The best example, I think, of this is to think of the young child whose curiosity goes in all directions and whose curiosity in all directions is served by his speech, then comes to school. Now, Frank Whitehead suggests that at school we primarily want to improve the efficiency of the child's use of his mother tongue. Yes, I want to go a step further and say "Yes" emphatically to that. But, more than that, learning lies in the actual operation of language. So we are not simply concerned to improve the efficiency of the process, we are concerned to use the process at whatever stage of efficiency he may be at. By that I don't mean that we resign responsibility to improving efficiency, but the substantive thing is the use of the language to learn, whatever its state of efficiency may be. And, that is what I was meaning by an operational view of language. A simple example: whenever a student writes effectively, he does two things. He copes with experience he has been writing about by shaping it in words and the writing may be the act of perceiving the shape of experience - not the evidence that it has been perceived, but the act of perceiving it. Whenever a student writes successfully he shapes the experience and he also gets a bit better at doing so next time. Whenever he successfully reads something which has tested his ability, strains his ability, he has coped with experience with the assistance of the author. He has shaped experience - entered into and altered and shaped experience - and has also improved his skill, his ability to read difficult passages. Now, we have consistently given our attention to the second of these and ignored the first of these. That is what I mean by the substantive

operational value of language in learning. We confuse it in our word "practice" which we can use with two meanings. By practice, I want to mean operations and not dummy runs.

So, for us there are two problems, it seems to me. One is how to improve language proficiency and the second is how, on what, and where should language operate. Let me take the more orthodox of these questions first. How to improve the language proficiency of a child? Well, I believe - and it is clear from many of the other papers that we have been reading - that we learn to write by writing, learn to speak by speaking, etc., etc. But, we have to ask after that, "To what extent does language study aid practice?" This is a major question. I don't think it can be settled by discussion but I think knowledge of any research there may be and also the commissioning of further research is probably essential in order to get an answer to this question. To what extent can the study of language aid in its operation? Gleason's formulation at the end of Professor Kitzhaber's paper seemed to me to be a good formulation of these two particular points - the practice of language and the question of the study of language aiding in its practice in one way or another. Obviously grammatical study is intended here, but not the only one considered by Gleason.

Secondly then, the latter, the unorthodox question, "On what should language operate - in what areas of experience?" Here I am treading on very difficult ground, I know, but let me return to the small child whose curiosity goes in all directions, who goes to school where socially acquired areas of knowledge and concern are carved out of his curiosity and pursued

in different parts of the curriculum. In his science lessons, history lessons, geography lessons certain areas of his curiosity continue to be explored with the aid of language. I know that science is more than a body of scientific facts, but let us begin with it as a body of scientific facts which leads to the systems which lead to philosophies in the end, etc. What about English lessons then? I think there is a clue to the area of operations in English lessons in what actually goes on in English lessons in England. On both sides of the Atlantic the two major emphases, I would say, have been upon literature, and upon writing - creative writing, personal writing, whatever you like to call it. These are not answers. It seems to me that these are clues to where the answer might lie. I suggest that the area in which language operates in English lessons is that of personal experience, in other words, relations with other people, the identity of the individual - the relation between the ego and the environment, however you like to phrase it. Personal experience is a very difficult term to use, but if you consider that to be a human person, you have a feeling concomitant in your experience and that the socially derived bodies of fact, etc. are concerned primarily to exclude that - not from their processes, but from their end results - then I think you can see that personal experience has a quality which is not to be found in other areas. This seems to me to be the area of operations for language in English lessons. We could dig out of this area socially derived bodies of public fact - sociologists do so and psychologists do so and anthropologists do so, and so on. For the moment, we don't do very much

of this in schools; we operate by another method. We operate by what I call the spectator role, not the participant role. In other words, we use literature. After all the themes of literature are the human themes; they are the relationships between man and his environment; and not every type of relationship, but only the relationships in which the human quality or the emotional relationship is a part of what is afoot. Just very briefly on that. The importance of this area isn't simply its intrinsic importance, but this is also the area in which, in fact, all knowledge must come together for the individual. It is, in fact, the integrating area for all public knowledge. My mother used to make jam tarts and she used to roll out the pastry and I remember this very well - I can still feel what it is like to do it, although I have never done it since. She used to roll out the pastry and then she took a glass and cut out a jam tart, then cut out another jam tart. Well we have cut out geography, and we have cut out history, and we have cut out science. What do we cut out for English? I suggest we don't. I suggest that is what is left. That is the rest of it.

Summary

One, we learn language by using it. By that I mean operations and not dummy runs. Two, we learn to live by using language. I would like to defend myself against the progressive labels, or should I say the criticisms Professor Kitzhaber very rightly attaches to some results of progressive education. By learning to live, I don't mean learning to use a telephone; I might mean learning to write a sonata or a novel or govern a country. By

using language we learn to live. Thirdly, in English lessons the area of operations is that of personal experience; and that is the nearest I can go to finding a substance which I would call, "This is English." In other words, if I look for the substance of the teaching of English, this is where I would find it, in my view. Fourthly, insofar as study of language aids the practice anywhere in the curriculum, not simply in the area of English concerns, that also is the responsibility of the English teacher.

What I have omitted is a part answer to the question that I thought we might have to frame. I have not faced up to the obvious bifurcations of this study which will necessarily take place as it gets more advanced. I mean there is clearly an intrinsic value in the study of language at university level. We must ask whether it has intrinsic value also at an earlier state in education. Again, how far at university level will literature be a specialized historical or critical study and will it in any respects be a continuation of the process I have described in referring to schools - the structuring of personal experience as a means of learning to live.

Finally, on this vexed question of articulation of the subject, experience is cumulative and growth is sequential; we have to face the possibility that we may not be able to go further than that. Perhaps we can only program to provide the circumstances most favorable to the experiences and the growth of individuals and of groups.

In facing such a possibility, we may be helped by a remark made by George Kelly when he lectured in London recently:

Man does not always think logically. Some take this as a serious misfortune. But I doubt that it is. If there is a misfortune, I think it more likely resides in the fact that, so far, the canons of logic have failed to capture all the ingenuities of man, and, perhaps also in the fact that so many men have abandoned their ingenuities in order to think "logically" and irresponsibly. For each of us the exercise of ingenuity leads him directly to a confrontation with his personal responsibility for what happens. But, of course, he can avoid the distressing confrontation if through conformity to rules, he can make it appear that he has displaced the responsibility to the natural order of the universe.

Reading Aloud

The teacher should reach a confidence and competence in reading aloud for these reasons:

1. Good reading aloud is essential for "getting into" a poem or passage of prose. With many poems, good reading aloud is all that is needed in the way of classroom treatment; with others, discussion by students of various readings-aloud is sufficient elucidation.
2. Reading aloud by the teacher of good literature is an excellent practice in all primary and secondary programmes. (Normally there will be no comment; the British Broadcasting Corporation schools programs have for years set an admirable example here, presenting good passages of prose and verse without any introduction or criticism.) Such reading is good in itself, and needs no further justification; it provides experience worth having.

It is also a most effective way of "advertising" a good book or author. Any teacher knows that the reading of an attractive passage prompts an immediate demand for the book. In drawing up his plan of readings the teacher should try to make sure that the books are readily available in classroom or other library.

Report to the Seminar

The working party accepts that its task is as defined by Albert Kitzhaber in Working Paper One, that of finding organizing principles for "English," by which we mean not English the language, but English the means of nearly all education, and--more particularly--English the school subject. Since we wish to stress the operational aspect of English as "language in use" we have accepted James Britton's suggestion (in his response to Working Paper One) that the question be reframed as "What should the English teacher do?" First we answer this in general and inclusive terms, and then indicate distinctions and choices within the field thus bounded. (This report, which has been accepted by all members of the group, is supported by seven papers which express more individual opinions about aspects of our subject.)

English: An Inclusive Framework

1. English as Operation

The English teacher should engage his pupils in activities which:

a) enable the pupil through language to represent internally those experiences which are of moment to him; and

b) improve his mastery of the language.

Many of these activities fall within both (a) and (b), since it seems a reasonable hypothesis that pupils will most improve their mastery of language when they are using language for purposes that are important to them. There

will be times when the teacher organizes classroom activities in terms of the pupils' immediate concerns in living, with no consideration of what particular language learning is involved; he may wish at other times to organize activities in terms of his conception of the language uses to be mastered. (It will be clear that we have deliberately avoided using the terms (a) "content" and (b) "skills" in this formulation; our reasons for this are laid out (a) in supporting Paper One, and (b) in the last section of this report.)

We have so far put our emphasis upon the operational aspects of English, yet the pupil as he reaches the stage of (in Piaget's terms) formal operations should be capable of conceptualizing his awareness of language, should be able to use language about language. It is our intention to distinguish between knowledge about language which contributes to the mastery of language (and which can therefore be subsumed to category 1.b.) and the study of language as an end in itself. (We acknowledge that we have at the moment little objective evidence of what kinds of conceptual instruments do contribute to the mastery of language at each state of the pupil's development. We would, however, hesitate to introduce extensive direct conceptualisation about language before the upper grades of secondary school.)

2. English as the Objective Study of Language

Within this category we suggest three levels of study appropriate to different purposes:

i. Language as a liberal study.

ii. Language as a professional study (for teachers).

iii. Language as a scholarly study.

The liberal study of language would stand amongst other studies of a socio-scientific nature as an option in the higher grades of High School or in the Sixth Form. Its purpose would be to free the student from disabling misconceptions about language by giving him some of the tools of linguistic thought, rather than to take him through exhaustive study of grammar. (See Frank Whitehead's paper on linguistics.) The other levels of study would be appropriate to college and university.

Furthermore we suggest that similar distinctions may be made within other objective studies of linguistic behaviour, including the rhetoric of spoken and written discourse, and literary critical theory (as distinguished from the discriminating reading of literature). (See Supporting Paper Two.)

3. English as a Medium in the Study of Other Subjects

In the primary/elementary school this distinction hardly exists, since such activities are continuous with the language activities in category 1. In the secondary school, however, such instrumental uses of English are defined by the fact that the teacher sees himself as a teacher of History or of Chemistry, not of English.

We would apportion the responsibility for this area of English in this way: although the specifically English Subject activities may be seen as supplying a reservoir of verbal resources, the specialisation of language into the register of such a subject as Chemistry is so intimately bound up with the specific materials and operations of that subject that the two must be taught together. (It is part of the central responsibility of the English teacher to take pupils to the stage where they can benefit from such teaching; beyond that the language is the subject teacher's responsibility.)

Some Implications of this Framework

Category 1.a.

When we look at category 1. from the point of view of (a), that is, the relationship of the activities to the personal needs of the pupils, there appear to be two significant dimensions, "Areas of Experience" and "Situations."

Areas of Experience

Our definition in category 1.a. that the English activities are "to enable the pupil through language to represent internally those experiences that are of moment to him" implies that much of the talking, listening, writing, and reading is to be focussed--at least initially--upon personal experience, and that when an English lesson is at first sight concerned with matters within another discipline (such as Civics) the orientation is towards language as enabling the pupil to explore his own reaction and attitude to the topic, rather than towards objective study. We have included here the reading of literature since we see it as operational, in that each reader must himself recreate what he reads. We wish to reject the idea of literature as a content which can be "handed over" to the pupils, and to emphasize instead the idea of literature as contributing to the sensitivity and responsibility with which they live through language.

If the area of experience dealt with is to be of importance to the pupils it must not be chosen by the teacher without reference to the pupils; this is not to say that a good teacher cannot create interest in unexpected areas, but that much of the development of the topic should be shared by teacher and class during the progress of the classroom conversation and that when the

class works in small groups or individually an increased degree of self-determination is possible--and beneficial, in that it ensures that each pupil engages in linguistic activities that are meaningful to him. (See Supporting Paper Four.)

Situations

The idea of a developing classroom conversation is linked in important ways with the idea of the classroom as context of situation for talking (see Appendix Two), reading, and writing. The audiences for talking and writing in the classroom are three--the teacher; the other pupils (in groups of varying size); and the larger school community--and since the audience both provides much of the incentive for language use, and in part determines the register to be used, it behooves the teacher to ensure: (1) that the pupil understands who his audience is on any one occasion, and (2) that appropriate means of publication are available. (This is not to deny the right of the pupil who is writing for himself--see Supporting Paper Four--to keep his writing private.) And while the pupils may be asked to conjure up other audiences, the teacher should keep in mind the artificiality of such exercises: the pupils are still in fact writing for him.

The classroom as context and incentive for language has another characteristic: it should provide a relatively permissive atmosphere, free from heavy adult censoriousness either of the attitudes expressed or the means used. Any criticism of spoken or written techniques must be introduced very delicately; criticism is in any case an inefficient teaching method because it is after the fact (see James Moffett: Drama: What is Happening, p. 52).

The tacit presentation of alternatives is preferable. If the pupil has spoken or written because he has something urgent to say, he has a right to expect from his audience a reply to what he has said. Discussion of how he said or wrote it should be subordinated to this, and in any case would be more effective as part of the productive activity itself. (See Supporting Paper Three.)

This leads to the third characteristic of the classroom, seen both as context of situation, and as a developing conversation in that context. As language is the symbolic instrument by which men can collaborate in working upon their internal representations of the universe which thus become both individual and social (as the instrument itself is social, that is, shared) so it is wrong to see language learning as progressing only in the isolated pupil. A class of pupils and their teacher who are using language to explore their common universe can be regarded as a language community in which they are all learning together as they develop a classroom dialogue which can in part be internalised by each pupil. (This dialogue is dramatic in a sense which has been explored in the report of the Study Group on Drama.) This suggests that there are significant relationships between the class (and smaller group) talk and the solo language productions. (See Appendix III: On Reading Aloud, and James Moffett: Drama: What is Happening. pgs. 17-20.)

(It is perhaps here appropriate to note that we envisage that this classroom talk would not necessarily be in a homogeneous dialect: we see advantages in a multi-lingual school community.)

Category 1.b.

When we look at category 1. from the point of view of (b), the mastery of language, we may find it necessary to structure the concept "mastery" in terms of various skills and abilities. While it is necessary to do this in order to ensure that at each stage the pupil has been provided with those language abilities that will enable him to pass on to the next stage of education, many of us fear that such theoretical differentiation may improperly influence practice, and destroy what we value as the unity in the classroom of activities which are here described as diverse. (Supporting Paper Five, Bifurcation or Continuity, suggests alternative ways of organising courses for older students; and in Supporting Paper Six, Inclusion and Exclusion, two members of the group give a sample version of English mainly in terms of the relevant skills. Appendix One, Speech is Civilisation, describes the role of speech in society, and Appendix Four Exercises and Circumstantial Learning sets out a case against exercises.) We recognise, moreover, that the teaching of the basic reading and writing skills are part--but only part--of the primary school teacher's language responsibilities, but hold that as the pupil becomes more competent these change into something more than skills, and require methods of teaching which focus more upon area of experience and situation than upon separable skills. The English teacher has the responsibility of fostering both intensive reading (with close attention to the pupil's precise response to the language) and extensive reading. The teaching of spelling should for the English teacher be no more than an incidental accompaniment to his work, just as it is for any other subject teacher. The

very fact that when we use the concept "skills" it is easier to be precise about such peripheral matters as spelling, penmanship, and methods of voice than to be precise about talking, reading, and writing warns us of the relative inappropriateness of the concept to the task of describing the English teacher's work.

The concept "content" which is often put parallel with "skills" leads to difficulties which are examined at length in Supporting Paper One, Process, Knowledge, and the English Program. That paper ends by displaying the implications of choosing to organise the English curriculum either in terms of areas of experience or of bodies of knowledge. The categories upon which this paper is based constitute an attempt to define the curriculum in terms both of areas of experience and--as a more generally acceptable substitute for either "skills" or "content"--of mastery of the language. Thus we have regarded the skills as aspects of mastery, and have separated that content which makes for mastery from that content which is an end in itself.

Appendix I

Speech Is Civilization

Speech is central to man's relations with his fellowmen. Like many truths, this one is commonly taken for granted without realizing all of its implications. On the figurative level let Thomas Mann suggest them in The Magic Mountain: "Speech is civilization itself. The word, even the most contradictory word, preserves contact--it is silence which isolates." In a more practical level the implications are clear in a well-known study of administrators and supervisors who spent their communicative time on the job this way: reading took up 16 percent, writing 9 percent, listening 45 percent, and speaking 30 percent. (A fair guess would be that their school and college training had been in reverse proportions.)

Man cannot avoid being a communicator. As a human being he has learned that the critical point in resolving misunderstanding and in strengthening human relationships is that point at which we talk with one another. As a professional person he needs to transmit information clearly and effectively, and to express judgements and justify them, inseparably linking the processes of thinking and communicating. And as a participating citizen in a democracy he recognizes that intelligent public discussion is the first step in the management of public business. The one indivisible element in society is the individual, and it is through communication that individuals join together to sustain or shatter society. In short, speech provides the social force by means of which man interprets, controls, modifies, or adapts to his environment.

Appendix II

Talk or the Classroom Conversation

Throughout this report "talking" is used instead of "speaking" because the latter (at least in the U.K.) is often used to refer to formal and public oral discourse, and we wish to imply that the classroom conversation should include the whole of the continuum from intimate exchanges between two friends through formal oral reports to the teacher and class. This will require of the teacher a flexibility in the grouping of the pupils as they go about their work, and an avoidance of setting up a standard "schoolmarm speech" that will inhibit the pupils from responding to the demands of the various groups in which they find themselves. The classroom thus becomes not a special situation set up as it were "outside life" in order to "learn about" life, but a real situation in which pupils and teachers alike are using language to live with. As James Britton said in his response to Working Paper One: "I mean operations and not dummy runs."

(Of course the classroom situation is always real to the pupils: it is difficult if not impossible to set up an "exercise" situation without the pupils transposing into it whatever is the norm of classroom usage and the norm of classroom relationships. And it is probably from these last two that they are forming their linguistic expectations--from which they are learning--and not from the exercises.)

All that has been said in the sections of this report headed "Areas of Experience" and "Situations" applies especially to talk. The matter is also dealt with in D. Barnes's Study Group Paper on Drama, pp. 1-2. It is also

relevant that the Drama Study Group has found it valuable to look at the linguistic activities of the English classroom in terms of a dramatic interplay.

(As a general comment on the reluctance of many teachers to realise the importance of the classroom conversation as a means of learning and discovery, it may be worth pointing out that we ourselves have relied upon talk, laced with writing, in our attempt to arrive at new concepts concerning the teaching of English.)

Appendix III

Reading Aloud

The teacher should reach a confidence and competence in reading aloud for these reasons:

1. Good reading aloud is essential for "getting into" a poem or passage of prose. With many poems, good reading aloud is all that is needed in the way of classroom treatment; with others, discussion by students of various readings -aloud is sufficient elucidation.
2. Reading aloud by the teacher of good literature is an excellent practice in all primary and secondary programmes. (Normally there will be no comment; the British Broadcasting Corporation schools programs have for years set an admirable example here, presenting good passages of prose and verse without any introduction or criticism.) Such reading is good in itself, and needs no further justification; it provides experience worth having.

   It is also a most effective way of "advertising" a good book or author. Any teacher knows that the reading of an attractive passage prompts an immediate demand for the book. In drawing up his plan of readings the teacher should try to make sure that the books are readily available in classroom or other library.

Appendix IV

Exercises and Circumstantial Learning

A teacher may, for example, want to have children practice sentence development or expansion, to the end that they will habitually write what are called mature units of expression. This is a plausible end: of course students should be able to say all that they want or need to say. But if, as we are now told by linguists, a child of five has "internalized" all the basic structures of the language, presumably without direct and organized practice, we wonder if it cannot be supposed that he might, in the proper circumstances, similarly "internalize" at least some of the operations by which relatively simple statements are changed into relatively complex ones. Obviously, such a supposition has important implications for classroom management and teacher behavior. We mention only one, however, and that because of its extreme importance. We have been told that sentence expansion exercises are necessary if only because of the "non-expanded" sentences that children meet in their readers. The comment of course recognizes the point we are making about "circumstantial learning." And we could add only that teaching by exercises seems to us, too, a poor exchange. We urge that teachers (and publishers also) keep in mind the child's need for rich, varied, and stimulating reading materials. Similarly, and for the same reason, we urge that teachers have it always in mind to make the classroom conversation as full and rich as possible.

We will say categorically that the time given to exercise activities in the primary school should be very small. It may be increased in the upper grades and in secondary school when, in individual cases, it may seem to be helpful.

Supporting Paper One

Process, Knowledge, and the English Program

How far is "a body of knowledge" a satisfactory description of what the educated child should take away with him?

In attempting to consider this we looked at knowledge in use in moment to moment experience. Past experience is available to us, in the form of knowledge or in other forms, as we make judgments, choices, decisions in moment by moment living. What organization has made it available?

We suggest that one form of organization of past experience provides the individual with bodies of facts, sets of ideas. This is a cognitive organization. Viewed from the aspect of moment by moment living, the bodies of knowledge are bodies of expectations or framesof reference.

Whereas in actual behavior there must always be "feeling" present when there is "knowing," it seems probably that the feeling aspects of experience are organized in a different way from knowledge, and result, therefore, in "affective," as distinct from "cognitive" frames of reference. In fact the building of a cognitive frame of reference probably involves the progressive elimination of affective elements (which will tend to bear the color of our wishes about the world). Nevertheless any mental process, any use of the frames of referance, will be both cognitive and affective in operation.

A subject or a discipline, geography or history for example, we would regard as a cognitive frameof reference. We suggest that affective frames of reference are a major influence upon our relations with other people. And "common sense" seems likely to be, in these terms, frames of reference of a

partly affective and partly cognitive nature. Taking a crude example, if we walk into a room, find people in it and engage in conversation with them: our response to what is happening in the room may be predominantly in the realm of feeling, and whatever organization our expectation may have in this field will probably seem of a very different kind from that which constitutes the "body of knowledge" or "set of ideas" we bring to bear when someone asks us a factual question or engages us in discussion. Again, if the discussion is in a historical field, a historian will be referring to a highly organized cognitive frame of reference, whereas a non-historian may refer to what we call "common sense," a frame of reference part affective, part cognitive. Finally, it seems to us that affective organization is dominant in a work of literature and it is therefore affective frames of reference that we bring to bear as final arbiter when we engage with a poem, a story, etc.

As children talk, write, read in English lessons they are structuring experience, that is to say they are developing cognitive and affective frames of reference. (Bodies of knowledge--about life, about literature, about language and its uses--are therefore one of the end products. We may regard these bodies of knowledge as the "content" of the subject English though such a view would not satisfy us all.)

A curriculum in English might be envisaged in terms of areas of experience in which the language-structuring-experience process would operate; or in terms of the frames of reference (including the bodies of knowledge) which it is hoped will result from such a process. In either case we suggest the

following criteria of selection would apply:

1) Variety.

2) Kinds of experience (crude examples: being a saviour, being alone, being rejected; home, growing up, leaving home).

3) Points of view, perspectives on life.

4) Needs and capacities of individual children.

5) Needs and capacities of the group as a group.

If we see the curriculum in terms of areas of experience, the resulting bodies of knowledge may "have gaps in them," but because of the stress upon process and the child's expanding perception of the world, it may leave the child with the capacity to fill these gaps for himself. If we see the curriculum in terms of the knowledge (etc.), we shall plan to avoid these gaps, but may fail to develop the child's personal capacity to operate language as a means of extending his own knowledge (etc.). Requirements (4) and (5) above would be more difficult to satisfy in a curriculum planned in terms of knowledge (etc.). Problems set up by a mobile population might, as things work out in a fallible system, be better tackled by planning for operations than by planning for content.

The success of either approach depends upon intelligent and sensitive teachers who know their children and the kinds of experience they are capable of. In the operational approach an insensitive teacher may underestimate the capacities of his children; the content approach may encourage an insensitive teacher to deal with the forms and neglect the essence. The content approach limits the choices open to the teacher, reduces his responsibility--which many of us would feel was not so undesirable.

Supporting Paper Two

Language as an Intellectual Study

We have agreed that the teacher of English engages his pupils in activities (1) which enable them to use language for "here and now" experiences; (2) which improve their mastery of language; (3) which provide for the intellectual study of discrete aspects of language and literature.

For the most part, we see the intellectual study of special aspects of language primarily emphasized in college and university courses for teachers and for graduate specialists. At these levels intellectual study becomes a separate "discipline" in itself--in literary criticism, critical theory, literary history, rhetoric, linguistic geography, grammar, etc.

We believe that teachers require some preparation in these various areas of specialization as well as in areas defined under (1) and (2) above.

We are concerned, however, about the extent to which the study of language, "for its own sake," may be justified in the school. We believe that the English programs for all students through elementary and secondary years should concentrate on areas (1) and (2) above. For some students, perhaps not for all, some direct study of certain specialized areas of English may be desirable.

We do not believe there is need for the direct study of literary criticism, literary history, or critical theory in the elementary and secondary school. (Thus we reject courses like "The History of American Literature," "English Literature," "World Literature," which are patterned on college models.)

On the other hand, we readily admit that to understand a literary work and to approach the experience that it offers, a student may very often need extrinsic information about, for example, the historical or cultural setting in

which a work was written, or about the life, the thought, the sensibility of its author. The teacher should be able to judge how much such information is, in fact, necessary in any given case, considering the particular needs of the students in front of him. It follows, therefore, that his education should, first, train him to make such judgments and, second, equip him with the information to frame and support his teaching.

Similarly in the language and rhetorical areas the teacher, who himself should have some understanding of at least two systems of grammatical analysis (if only to free him from a conception of a single grammar) would normally use elements from his own understanding of English grammar to assist the pupil in achieving mastery of language, but would not generally present his knowledge as something for students to learn systematically. Here it may be well to be specific. We believe that some tactfully presented information about, for example, the history of English or the dialectal and stylistic varieties in English may be of direct aid to students who are developing or strengthening their ability to use words in general or public communications. Such information will enrich and refine a child's attitudes toward language and should, therefore, increase his ability to make contact with people of various sorts.

Some of us believe, however, that a place may remain for studying some aspects of language or rhetoric as an intellectual study, "as humane study," "for its own sake." If this is done, the teacher must avoid the temptation to introduce the direct study of all dimensions of language which he has pursued in his own collegiate study, the priorities for other important experiences in English classes alone being such as to prevent this concentration.

The teacher who introduces the direct study of language "for its own sake. . . as humanistic study" must recognize further the responsibility which this purpose imposes upon him and must organize his study so that it indeed will be humanistic. Insofar as grammar is concerned, this seems to mean that pupils would study grammar in an organized, consistent body of information, so that they may gain some genuine understanding of the grammatical system itself, rather than merely study a series of isolated, often unrelated generalizations. Isolated study of elements of grammar spread over several school years, however systematic the total curriculum may be, seems unlikely to lead young people to any perception of the system. Rather the teaching of grammar for this purpose would seem to point toward a concentrated study--a special course or perhaps an extended unit at an advanced level. (One suggestion at the junior or senior year might be a twice weekly study of grammar directed by a specialist teacher, paired with General English classes meeting the remaining two days.) Such study we believe is best and most appropriate for advanced levels of schooling.

Supporting Paper Three

What is Teachable in Composition and How

This paper is a sort of comment on or retort to a passage in James B. McCrimmon's Writing with a Purpose, a textbook which for more than fifteen years has been one of the most popular of those designed for the course[1] that is known in the U.S. as Freshman Composition. The popularity of the book is quite deserved, though not, I think, because of the ideas--both those set forth and those implied--in the pages to which I refer. In them McCrimmon discusses and judges a theme written by a freshman at the University of Illinois; assignment, paper, and comment all quite typical, and it is the consequences of the teaching method there illustrated that I want to consider. Starting in this fashion, by commenting on a comment on writing in a book on writing, I may seem to be insufficiently interested in or aware of students as human beings, or even as language-possessing animals. But if the U.K. has its external examinations, the U.S. has its Freshman Composition. And my circuitous approach may, I hope, allow me to say some useful general things about teaching composition by means of these rather specific comments on freshman composition.

* * * * * *

In American colleges and universities the freshman course in English is found in two forms. In a number of private institutions the focus of the course is on literature (or, more precisely, on the analysis of literary texts), and the students' writing experiences are limited to papers of literary analysis. This kind of course is often conceived as introductory to advanced work in the English department. But it may even so be required of all freshmen whatever their immediate interests or probably major fields of study. Hence it is

nearly always said to have as one of its purposes that of improving the student's use of English. In some cases--my own university, for example--an accommodation to this purpose, which is the one in which all freshman English originates, has been attempted by devoting the first part of the course to discussion of general writing problems, by way of paper topics or forms that allow students to draw on their own stock of material. But the compromise is almost always an uneasy one, and the turn to literature is made as speedily as possible.

The more typical form of the freshman course is one in which students write "papers" on a variety of subjects and in a variety of modes. The syllabus of the course generally suggests beginning with a "grammar review"--that is, a brush up on definitions of the parts of speech and on sentence analysis. Along with this study there may be a series of paper assignments on relatively personal and anecdotal topics, presumably also as a review. Later the students will be moved into college writing, more or less impersonal (not to say depersonalized) exercises in exposition and, finally, argumentation. The climax is often a "research paper." It is argued that by such assignments students are taught to think and also are given practice in collegiate level writing. But in practice, the papers are little more than means of testing the students' command of the mechanics of the written language.

Since decency and decorum are the defining properties of improved use of English, a main teaching tool of this course is the "handbook." Originated by Edwin Woolley in 1907, the handbook is a compendium of rules of grammar and style, presumably intended as a handy reference for students when writing, but in reality used, if at all, only when correcting is going on, if any is required.

About twenty-five or thirty years after Woolley the handbooks were augmented by discussions of topics like "Finding a Subject," "Narrowing a Subject," and "Organizing a Paper"--in other words, by topics touching on the composition as well as the proofreading of papers. Sometimes this more or less rhetorical material supplements the handbook pages of rules; sometimes (as in McCrimmon) the handbook is presented as a kind of appendix to relatively lengthy chapters on rhetoric. It is a perhaps odd fact that this sort of book will be required even in the freshman course that has literature as its staple, but even in general composition courses its value may be more apparent than real.

A book of "readings" is an important part of the composition course, since it is supposed (and with some justification) that most American students do not arrive at college stocked with ideas and materials to make their papers interesting to their instructors. The nature or subject matter of the readings has changed from time to time in response to changes in the educational or political notions among English teachers. In the Twenties and early Thirties rather classic essays from Bacon to Ruckin, T.H. Huxley, or even Percy Lubbock were the fashion. In the later Thirties and the Forties students were reading more contemporary and often journalistic pieces by such as Lippmann, Hutchins, and H.S. Commager. The word democracy kept turning up in titles. Then sometime in the late Forties or early Fifties interest shifted to the rather longer problems that in this country are associated with liberal education or the western or humanistic tradition. At the moment, it looks like the next shift in the market will be toward collections of essays on rhetoric and, in some cases, logic, which have the undoubted (and, surprisingly, till now undiscovered) advantage of appealing to the taste for the ancient and the literary

reflected more or less uniformly among those who are helping young people "express themselves in writing." It is conceivable that collections of readings will stock students with academically acceptable ideas. I am unable to see how essays running from, perhaps, fifteen hundred words to five thousand words offer useful models to writers who are practicing with "papers" or "themes" most of which are under a thousand words long. But that is a claim often made.

The second sort of freshman course, the one that assertedly improves the students' use of English by having them practice writing themes on subjects of personal and general interest--this course is found in its purest form at our public universities and technical schools. It is required of all except a very few students, perhaps one to five percent, who are exempted because their scores on a placement test prove that they do not "need" the course.[2] Since the course is required of all students, it is known as a "service course." That is, it is a course offered as a service to university requirements in general education or, as in the case of freshman composition, to equip students to do college work. Indeed, to a certain extent, a service course may be a device to determine whether freshmen can, in fact, do college work at all; and the failure rate in freshman composition is often quite high, though perhaps not so high as student folklore says.

Though a service course, freshman composition is managed by English departments. It is staffed by teaching assistants and junior members of the department; there may be close to a couple of hundred such involved in the course. A teaching assistant is a graduate student who will teach from one to three sections of the course while carrying on his own studies in the history

of literature. Today junior members of an English department are likely to be writing, or at least to be thinking about, critical analyses. Staff meetings, noncredit courses in teaching methods, class visiting, internships are but a few of the devices that have been developed to palliate the effects of this obvious conflict of interests, about which there is continuing and widespread concern.

* * * * * *

The point of my long description is this. For most school teachers the sole source of theory and technique for teaching composition (or helping students to express themselves) is memories of one or another sort of freshman English. I hope it is clear that, so far as teaching composition is concerned, the two sorts of freshman course differ only in the material that is considered to be proper for students to work with. Otherwise they are quite similar. In both the paper is either a test or a trial; both assume that writing is merely the habit of talking with a pen instead of the tongue (but talking to whom, in what circumstances, and for what purposes?); both also assume, as a consequence, that teaching composition consists of providing occasions for correcting the propriety or accuracy of the language used in what might, I suppose, be called pen-talking. For is it not so, by constant trial and correction that, presumably, we all learn to talk? It is curious that a course to improve students' use of their mother tongue should have for model one of the practices, or former practices, of teachers of foreign languages.

Of course the unfortunate effects of this system may be somewhat palliated when the teacher is sympathetic and encouraging, instead of punitive. But I notice that most of the people who talk about the importance of the compo-

sition teacher's attitude seem to have in mind the effect on content in his assignment and treatment of papers, most often, indeed, the treatment alone. That is to say, attention is given to the beginning of papers and to papers as completed products. But what of the student as he is writing or, in my terminology, composing?

No doubt it is only by a very long process of practice, discovery, growth, and perhaps even a little instruction that we ever come to terms, if we do, with "language." For better or worse, though, some of that process does go on in the school; that is, in a place where growth may be nurtured or even nudged. Susanne Langer herself says that seeing things in detail is not a natural capacity in human beings; that it is to be acquired by learning. If so, I should suppose that its acquisition may be open to some sort of teaching, however modest and indirect. After all, even Mrs. Marshall provided that magnifying glass; whether she thought it seemly to demonstrate and test its use is beside the point. Presumably she showed loving approval when it was being handled, and even more when, for example, by using it (however unnecessarily) little Maria was able to mediate her experience by no fewer than six quite "poetic" comparisons, two or three of which get right down to being similes. I take it that seeing "things" in detail is the basis of all successful writing; if you want, of successful living too. And I judge that Mrs. Marshall managed to get that across to her students, even though she may never have violated the extreme sensitivity of their minds by stating a general proposition.

Still it does seem fair to say that Mrs. Marshall designed her talk, her gestures, and her expression so as to encourage in her children the develop-

ment of what might vulgarly be called the skills of looking at things in detail for the purpose of recording in words. It seems also to be true that Mrs. Marshall's classroom activities must have included some coming pretty close to direct teaching. She spoke of "giving" them "patterns" by much reading. At the very least she must thereby have been adding to their vocabularies; perhaps she was also, however slightly, affecting the way they saw things. Perhaps I would be unfair if I suggested that all that reading would nudge children in a rather literary direction; but the plain fact is that Mrs. Marshall's Maria is a bit different from Mr. Holbrook's Rose.

But the point is really this. I judge that Mrs. Marshall is always in touch with her children. It seems likely that her presence must be with them as they write, just as Mr. Holbrook's must be with his students--with rather different consequences. If not by precept, at least by example and general or specific expressions of approbation, their children learn at once a style of seeing and feeling and also a style of writing about what is seen and felt. They learn what is wanted or expected. It is not, I think, that they just <u>feel</u> a diffuse responsiveness in the situation which makes them also feel good about writing and willing to express themselves freely, though of course that is part of it. It is rather that they <u>know</u> what behavior in writing on their part will stimulate the teacher into more or less overt signs of approval. I hope I will not seem too completely behavioristic in my interpretation of Mrs. Marshall's teaching techniques. But I do think that this sort of interchange of feeling is the basis--and a most direct and compelling one--of all successful teaching.

I say "all successful teaching" with intention. And what I want to do now is to suggest how Mrs. Marshall's technique, as I understand it, might be applied to the problems of teaching composition in the upper grades and even in college. So now, at very long last, let me turn to the freshman paper from McCrimmon's Writing with a Purpose. I ask you to read his comments as well as the paper.

Considering the title, "My First Impressions of the University," I judge this to have been an early paper in the course, probably the first. No doubt the instructor thought it would give him a line on his class, while at the same time starting them off with a simple sort of writing problem on a subject of some interest to them. And in spite of much current opinion to the contrary, I cannot persuade myself that this is a bad exercise to set a young man in his first weeks at college. For many, going to college must still seem a rather exciting business, though perhaps less so than in my own day. And surely it is not simple-minded to suppose that a freshman might want to find various means of expressing his feelings about his new state. Whether he would want to do so in writing is, I suppose, another question. And in these days, it is quite possible that some freshmen will have been conditioned by their teachers below to think of personal papers as somehow not worth doing, or at least as not being worth the time of a college man. Such students would more than likely show their readiness for challenge by turning out a careless or unfinished sort of paper. But in this case the assignment seems to have worked. The student did do some writing about his impressions.

And as a piece of writing his paper is not unsuccessful; at least it is

not unsuccessful in the ways that McCrimmon makes out. Since the assignment, or anyway the boy's title, used the notion of "first impressions," there seems to be no special reason why he should have concentrated on one impression. The style of the paper is pure theme English; note the first sentence of the fourth paragraph. But at least it is the plain, not the fancy, variety of that artificial language. The material of the paper is like the style--plain and inconspicuous. But it has a modest realism about it, and the light under the door is a good detail, though perhaps it need not have seeped. The physical structure is somewhat rigid and formal, as if the boy had in mind the formula about introduction, body, and conclusion; but this is a failure in execution, and the accusation of planlessness cannot stand. On the whole, then the paper shows a fair number of virtues. And the question for the teacher is, or ought to be, why could it not have been better.

The answer, I think, is to be found in the circumstances in which it was written. I imagine that the instructor followed typical American practice and gave his assignment by title alone: "Write a paper on your first impressions of the University." Perhaps he added some indication of word length. Since the paper counts out to 278 words, he may have said something like "around two hundred and fifty words" or "between two and three hundred words," or something equally as casual. Very likely he said something about being specific and concrete, writing simply, and avoiding wordiness. These days he almost certainly would have added a direction to "write for somebody," though without giving, or perhaps even seeing any reason for, much explanation of so mysterious a direction. (Surely they must have learned something in school.) I can

quite believe that the instructor's most extensive directions were about the mechanical form of the paper: double space all copy, if typed, wrtie on one side only, fold down the center, endorse with your name, the date, the section number, and the number of the paper.

The questions that such an assignment raises in a student's mind are obvious, and of two sorts. First there are those coming from the unexplained terms. What is a "paper"? What are the implications of the directions as to word length? What are the differences between specifity and concreteness; and how does one achieve or become either? Who can one write for, if one is a freshman? And what does "write for" mean anyway?

The second kind of question comes up from problems that are not even touched on in this assignment, nor are they much treated in any American composition class. I mean the questions in the strategy or writing, or those that involve choices among the conventions of writing. What kind of material should be used? How much of the "idea" must be made explicit by means of detail or example, with or without comment? How much can be left to inference or conjecture? What kind of opening should be made? What sort of arrangement should be developed? What style should be chosen? Above all: what are the criteria for answering these questions? Or--finally--how does a writer make proper choices among the alternatives available to him? By "proper choices" I mean simply choices that result in acceptance, by someone other than the writer, of what he intends to communicate and also of the way he is communicating.

Now I call your attention again to what seems to me to be the central fact about composition teaching in this country: that it is dominated by the

production of a succession of "papers." That is to say, we do, of course, consider such matters as communication, adequate structuring of experience both inner and outer, and full, rich command of language. But we always see these objectives as being realized within a formally structured piece of writing--the "paper." This means that, in our school tradition, students in classes that are doing composition are involved in a situation that immediately, if only implicity, defines them as writers. This is not because most of the "papers" in school writing have their counterparts in real writing. It is simply because a "paper" is, in its way (perhaps it is a mimetic way), a real piece of writing, having conventions of form and content which must somehow be perceived and followed if success is to be achieved.

I am not sure I would want it otherwise, certainly not so far as the study or practice of composition in the upper grades and college is concerned. But I do realize that we have not yet developed a teaching technique to go along with the strategic situation. As I have suggested, we proceed as if we were, say, Latin teachers doing composition exercises. In the case of the boy at Illinois, for example, I have no doubt that his instructor, having made the assignment, went on about his business, staying not for questions, but just waiting for the papers to be "turned in." Meanwhile he perhaps did a couple of grammar exercises and talked about an essay or two. In a sense I suppose he might be said to be killing time until he had some papers to teach from. As he waited, his students would be trying to fulfill his assignment; or to put it another way, they would be experiencing some sort of language growth, as a consequence, presumably, of their attempts to find the register that their instructor thought proper to them, as students, and to the paper

as either a literary form or an instructional device, or both. Later, when the papers had been turned in and read, the students would hear a great deal about their mistakes and failures, perhaps even a little about their few successes. But these would be evaluations of the results of past actions, and except perhaps for very general principles, such as those applying to style in the hypothetical assignment, would have little relevance to future assignments, each presenting its own special problems.

An educational method would seem to be of somewhat dubious value, if it puts the burden of instruction wholly on the child, asking him to learn by blind trial and error or to discover his own directional principles. I hope it will be clear from my comments on Mrs. Marshall that I do not consider a set of rules or precepts to be an adequate or even a feasible alternative to the method I have described. Socrates criticized the Sophists for not being able to conceptualize their own practices; his own method (as a teacher of composition) does not seem to have depended on the statement of rules to be learned. And I would propose for the modern composition teacher a role somewhat like that filled by Socrates.

What the composition teacher needs to do is to conceive his students as being engaged, when they write, in a process. And he needs to fit himself into the process. His role will not be to provide answers but rather to direct discussion so that answers may be found. Presumably he will sometimes, at least at first, judge the answers his students come to. Judgment is inescapable in teaching. But primarily he will want to be helping his students to develop some sense of how to find the answers to the problems that writers

face, how to make the decisions that writers do make.

In the instant case, for example, I should want there to be a fairly long period when the implications of the assignment would be discussed. The suggestions of "impressions" should be taken up: breaking the word into "im" and "press" might help some; a reference to the Latin form might give something to others. Some readings of literary impressions of college or college towns (Wordsworth, Arnold, /Beerbohn on Arnold?/, Sheean) would be in order, with comments on their organization and material. Here might also be raised questions about the audience for such a piece: publication to the class by reading, publication in some sort of journal, or by display--in any event for a wider public than the teacher.

During and especially after these preliminary maneuvers, students would be collecting their impressions; i.e., exploring their memories for material to go in the kind of piece that perhaps is already developing in their minds. The material should be discussed in the class and by the class, but with the instructor able to participate as a result of his own greater experience solving writing problems. He should also be able to suggest supportive activities, such as revisiting the scene of an "impression" to collect more accurate details to realize it.

As material accumulates, the discussion or investigation can begin to take up questions of organization, of general effect, of major and minor ideas. In other words, at this stage the form of the paper should be developing out of the complex of relationships set up among (1) the material, (2) the sense of audience, (3) the ideas that have been generated, and (4) above all, the

feeling of the self as being involved in the act of making something. This last is the hardest to achieve, but it is also the essential center of the process. And I think the teacher's greatest contribution goes to its creation. If he fails in that, he fails in all.

At some time in the process drafts should be made: drafts as drafts; that is, as writing to be read in search of improvement. The time for drafting may vary from student to student; and students will differ in the number of drafts they will need to reach a satisfactory paper. During the drafting there may be occasion for further supportive work; it might, for example, be desirable to investigate the apparent preferences in style and material of the proposed medium of publication. The class should be organized to accommodate such differences in the rate of development.

This may seem an excessively long and tedious process to produce so small a thing as a student paper. But so far as we know anything about the productive activities of writers, we seem to see that they do go through quite as tedious and long a process. And insofar as students have come under our observation in this context, we are surely all aware that their writing process is truncated either in its parts or in the time given to it. Students do not know what they should do, and we do not allow them to learn. It seems to me that it is at least worth considering the possiblity that the best method for the composition teacher would be to design his class so that his students could, to the extent of their varying capacities, experience all the activities that belong to the writing art.

Footnotes

[1]"Course"--a unit in academic book-keeping and curriculum planning; recognizable as an instructor and a group of students who come together for a predetermined number of times (generally three) a week during an academic term; courses bear academic "credit," generally, though not always, equal to the number of weekly meetings, which, though fifty minutes in length, are known as "hours." Graduation is determined primarily by the accumulation of course credits. In most institutions Freshman English carries three hours of credit.

[2]Students whose dialects are peculiarly deviant (at least when they are writing) will be placed in remedial English; if they complete it satisfactorily, they will then do the regular freshman composition course.

In many institutions students must take what is known as a proficiency examination, to demonstrate their retention of the skills acquired in the freshman course. The reason for this indignity is, of course, that so little writing is done in our universities that students whose native dialect is rural, lower class, or minimally educated American may well lose the forms they so painfully learned in their freshman year.

[3]The first, the chief trouble with this paper (pedagogically speaking) is that, because of our system of non-teaching, it had to be turned in as something finished, whereas, of course, it was something only begun.

Response to Supporting Paper 3

As I approach this task I am troubled by questions that keep buzzing like mosquitoes inside my head. Writing for whom? Why? What? Of those sixty out of a hundred young people who finally show up in freshman composition class, how many will ever need or wish to write again except for those interminable term papers? Papers that worry many instructors, but not enough to do anything about the quality of writing except complain. I shift my sights back to the secondary level where I contemplate perhaps ninety out of a hundred youngsters imprisoned in classes and asked to produce not only utilitarian writing assignments but personal or creative ones as well. And again I feel compelled to ask, Why write? Why spend all of this precious school time perfecting a skill that will seldom or never be used? Another question joins the rest. Is the child ever free to write not to please the teacher in content, style, mechanics, etc., but to please himself? Perhaps if he were able to make some of the choices himself, he would welcome the help English teachers can give him.

I am not trying to beg the question of teaching writing but merely trying to see this problem in its true perspective.

If a small child says he has to talk so he knows what he thinks maybe we can justify writing for all on these same grounds. On the other hand should not people who pass through our schools be reasonably able to write their mother tongue? Why?

I shall not expound all the scholarly reasons for being able to write. You know them better than I do. I know that being able to put my thoughts on paper clearly, logically, and coherently would be most desirable. I also know that I enjoy and am comforted and healed by writing poetry (I call it that).

But for these very reasons and for all the above reasons I still must ask the question, Why must everybody write?

From the time the child first comes to school, even before he has the physical skill for writing he should be nudged, even prodded along the writing way, because writing is an important facet of language skill. But the writing itself is not the important thing--rhetoric is. The self-verbalizing or interior monologue (really interior dialogue /Moffet, p.10/) is important; the expanding interaction with other language-producing animals is important. Reading and "listening to" are important but I ask if we teach well all that which precedes the actual writing it down; does it really matter whether a large proportion of the population can actually write in various modes and genres? It is my honest opinion that every child should be encouraged to write but that at some point on the continuum he should be able to opt out and find some other media for self-expression.

The child early sees a use for writing when he wishes to communicate to a person not present or to remind himself of something. He is willing to accept the discipline of making letters, spelling words conventionally, and punctuating in order to record his message. He will become aware of the other uses of recorded language more slowly and with the help of adults. As his teachers or parents read to him and as he begins to read himself, he will discover written down language for something other than function. Poetry, realistic stories, imaginary tales, expository prose, etc., become a part of his experience.

Wanting to write presupposes the child has a purpose for writing. If the child writes because the teacher asks him to, then it is the teacher's purpose that must be explored. Whether children write by invitation or by assignment will determine to a large extent when the teaching begins.

Whether the child will write or not should make no difference in the preliminary steps to writing. Collecting impressions (there is no escape from cognitive limitations unless the school provides them /Moffet, p.9/) is the business of the teacher. This kind of sensory and feeling exploration (more accurate speech refines observation--and more accurate observation refines speech /Moffet, p. 10/), exploring memory for material, relevancy and appropriateness of material, all can be discussed with the writers-to-be. The composer involved in his material, his process, his product is seemingly the aim of this personal type of expression. All children can profit from these discussions. As the writing begins, usually in the early years in the classroom the teacher is on hand to help when help is needed. The right question at the appropriate time is often all it takes to keep a child going.

This first writing is a first draft and should be considered just that. Sometimes a work is abandoned after the first draft and that is quite as it should be. Sometimes the piece re-worked with the teacher or even in small groups. Part of the process of writing from the inside out commits the child to saying what he wants to say in the best possible way (his best, not the teacher's).

From the beginning the teacher is concerned with the material. The sense of audience develops early if not quite in the way meant by Mr. Douglas.

Children want to share their stories and poems as long as they know that their efforts will not be scorned by children, emasculated by the teacher. They are willing to consider their audiences, but there will always be children who write for themselves and their privacy should be respected. If children from infancy are encouraged to use their own experiences and feelings to generate orally and in writing realistic and imaginary tales as well as poetry, college teachers later will need not be concerned that the students lack "above all, the feeling of the self as being involved in the act of making something" (Supporting Paper 3).

Writing strategies grow with teacher guidance and exposure to writing of many and various kinds. The study of literature (not the teaching of reading from a reader), now at last coming into its own in American elementary schools, provides in a rather informal but sequential way a look at prose and poetry that is quite different from the free recreational reading of yesterday. Children are still urged to read on their own time but now discussion and teaching accompany the "reading of" and "being read to" of carefully selected classical and modern writing for children. The literature is not separated unnaturally from the writing children do for in the unstructured framework of the elementary schools input and output go hand in hand.

The comments apropos to the elementary school are characteristic of teaching the six-year-olds as well as the elevens. Materials, concepts, terms, and time vary interms of the maturity of the children and the skill of the teachers.

Supporting Paper Five

Bifurcation or Continuity in English Programs

We are agreed that each child or adolescent should have a continuous educational experience in a general English class until age 15, the equivalent of the American 9th grade and the British 4th form. This general English class should be directed by one teacher who strives to provide a balanced program involving experiences in literature (both imaginative and rhetorical), oral language (including considerable emphasis on dramatic experiences as well as other modes), writing in various modes, reading, and language. Certain children may need individual help in remedial reading, speech therapy, and the like, but such important specialized help should support the pupil's continuing general experiences with all varieties of language, rather than be substituted for them at any educational level. Thus the preparation of the primary (or elementary) teacher and secondary teacher of English must be sufficiently broad to ensure his competence in the basic aspects of English needed by pupils through age 15.

For pupils from ages 15 to 18, present programs in fact actually provide highly specialized programs in English. In the U.K., division into 5th and 6th form classes tend to stress, almost exclusively, literary studies and expository writing of the type required by external examinations. In America, courses for college-bound students not only are influenced by "what the colleges expect" (i.e., literary study and expository writing) but tend to be divided into courses patterned on college models (American Literature I, American Literature II, World Literature, Public Speaking, History of English

Literature, etc.).

Both countries at the present time are faced with a cadre of teachers ill equipped to direct balanced general English courses at an advanced level for pupils from 16 to 18. Indeed, the present pattern of preparation of secondary teachers in both countries seems geared more to preparing for the specialized teaching of literature, speech, rhetoric, and composition, rather than for continuing a general program. The separation of Departments of English and Departments of Speech in American universities and colleges (not to mention separate Departments of Language); the brevity of post-graduate professional training in Britain with its one school teaching practice; the separate British colleges of speech and drama; the lack of emphasis upon oral English in university programs in Great Britain and the corresponding miminal attention given to such specialized study in the one-year institute programs for graduates--these testify to the problem. In a few colleges of education in the U.K. and some teacher education institutions in the U.S., attempts have been made to develop a broad "language arts" major which provides study in the general related fields, but even such work when built upon the current secondary school structure tends either to be introductory or fragmentary or both. An introductory speech or drama course, like an introductory course in literature or composition, may be better than no course at all, but is not likely by itself to provide adequate preparation for the teacher in the upper secondary school.

The working party seems to agree that opportunities should be provided for pupils, age 15 to 18, to pursue their individual interests in various

kinds of language activities--dramatic production, public discussion (forensics), creative writing, journalism, etc. Such activities may be provided as extracurricular activities; to ensure that they are "education" in total effect may require a specially prepared teacher. But any one of such special activities does not engage a large number of students.

What does concern the working party is the continuing development of pupils beyond age 15 in all dimensions of linguistic experience, regardless of their cultural, educational, or intellectual backgrounds. Any program which tends to limit or restrict the continuing development of pupils in English is faced with the current problems of teacher preparation and program organization contrary to the purposes of English education. The working party is not agreed on the best ways of achieving the continuing development of pupils in English. To some, the single general English course taught by a gneral English teacher for the final years of school will almost certainly result in reduction of a student's classroom experience in those aspects of English with which the teacher is unprepared to deal (rhetorical discourse, for example, or classroom drama). For others, requirement of any special course for all pupils, such as a course on speech, tends to interrupt the pupil's continuous development.

Bearing these conditions and differences of opinion in mind, we therefore recommend consideration of several possible patterns of organization for class instruction in the secondary school for pupils beyond age 15.

Pattern 1 - Continuous General English. Continuation of the general English course for all pupils throughout the secondary school - and perhaps

into the college and university - may be the most desirable program if adequately prepared teachers are available. If this is the pattern, however, care must be taken to avoid sharp limitations on the kinds of literature studied and kinds of writing experiences introduced. Secondary classes modelled on specialized college courses (World Literature, Advanced Composition, American Literature, etc.) seem clearly antithetical to achieving a balanced education in English, as does neglect of rhetoric, imaginative writing, classroom drama and oral interpretation, study of modern media, speech activities (argumentation and persuasion in our "meeting centered" culture, if not in formal speech or debating situations). Where such general programs are organized, departments do well to include on their faculties some teacher of English with specialties (reading, speech) and to encourage these teachers to make their special insights available to their colleagues.

Pattern 2 - Required Specialized Courses. Others believe that under the present conditions the best balanced English program for individual pupils can be achieved by introducing required specialized courses, perhaps to supplement a continuing general program in which pupils will be engaged much of the time. Normally such required specialized courses would be those for which general English teachers are least likely to be prepared - speech (or drama), film study, advanced composition, a special emphasis in literature such as American Literature. The advocates of such specialized offerings presume that the total program will have a unified, overall effect on the pupil. Where such required courses are introduced, it seems wise that the relationship between the specialized offering and the general program be carefully discussed and, regardless of the

particular emphasis of the course, other kinds of English activities be included in the program. (Thus in speech, both writing and reading of rhetorical literature should be included; in a specialized literature course, some attention would be directed to language, writing, and speech, etc.)

Pattern 3 - Diversity Within a Course. A third pattern would require all department members teaching a particular course for a particular year to assume responsibility for the general education in English of 11 pupils, but might provide within a particular year for the development of specialized interests and programs. Thus, all 5th form (10th grade) classes might be scheduled for the same hour and during a 36 week year, and include some 18 weeks of general English for all students. The remaining 18 weeks, perhaps the central portion of the year, could permit pupils, with teacher guidance, to elect nine weeks each of either drama, speech, literature, writing, or language. Although the scheduling problems are as great as the task of assembling a team of teachers possessing general competence in English with specialized competence in different aspects of English, the program does offer a way of utilizing diverse teacher interests and of considering diverse pupil needs. Such a program denies, however, the possibility of engaging all pupils in advanced educational experience in any depth in all areas of English.

Pattern 4 - Guided Pupil Choice. Maximum freedom of choice in English may be achieved by secondary programs which permit pupils to elect, with both individual and group guidance, from a series of different English courses--each with a specialized focus, perhaps, but each with some experiences in literature, writing, language, and speaking. To ensure that pupils are ready to engage in

some specialized study, schools operating on this program normally require some evidence of general language ability (perhaps by examination). Those entering students who display marked deficiencies may be required to complete an additional year of general English before electing specialized courses. Others are permitted to elect from a variety of courses with emphasis on aspects of literature (the novel, poetry, Shakespeare, world literature), rhetoric and composition (public speaking, drama, advanced composition etc.). To ensure some overall balance in the total program, a certain number of courses in each general area of English is usually required. Independent study or self-proposed courses would be available for the specially qualified pupils.

Pattern 5 - General Program with Additional Assistance in Special Areas.

Where departments recognize the special deficiency of general English teachers in a particular area of competence but wish to retain the continuous experience in English for all pupils, they normally retain the general class but supplement such teaching with assistance from a specialist. Thus, the pupil may be required to complete a general English program in which some attempt is made to provide a balanced offering with, at some point, an additional course or unit of instruction in speech (or possibly advanced reading skills). An additional course is not the only possible approach. Schools also employ an independent teacher of speech reading who, within a designated year, might take the class for three or four weeks of specialized instruction (or for two days weekly for nine weeks, etc.). When this happens, the connection between specialist study and general study is probably best maintained when the general teacher of English works closely with the specialist and attempts to relate the

work of the specialist to the pupil's continuing experiences in Engli .. Because it requires employment of an additional specialist to work with classroom teachers, such an approach may be economically unfeasible for many schools.

Pattern 6 - Team Approach. At any designated grade level, three or four English teachers, each sharing general competence but each with specialized interest in aspects of English, may plan together the course for a large group of students who meet as appropriate in different large groups, seminar groups, and individual tutorial sessions. When well planned, such courses potentially can allow for introduction of well-taught specialized study as well as a balanced general program in which the various dimensions of language experiences are interrelated.

There is no disagreement on the need of all pupils for some advanced work in aspects of English other than imaginative literature and expository writing beyond age 15. It seems unlikely, however desirable, that a well-prepared cadre of teachers will be available in the foreseeable future to provide such balanced instruction. Thus options such as those described here need to be examined carefully by secondary schools as possible ways to assuring a richer, more inclusive education in English for all pupils.

Supporting Paper Six

Inclusion and Exclusion

It is important to get priorities clear, and to exclude a number of irrelevancies that have been thrust upon English. (See Albert Kitzhaber's paper, p.3.) For example, "advice on dating, career counseling, orientation to school life" should positively be the responsibility of other than the English Department. Again, "proper study habits, procedure for filling out forms and taking standardized examinations" would appear to be concerns of all departments of the school as a whole. "Socializing" and the "mechanical side" of daily school life must not creep into the English program.

A principle of exclusion might be: specialized vocational training should be the responsibility of the business concerned--there would not be time for all the demands that might conceivably be made, nor would they add up to much of educational or even practical value.

On the other hand, we should include a strictly limited amount of instruction in the writing of business letters in grade 12 (say 4th or 5th year in English secondary schools) especially for terminal students (in England, leavers). Such work should be a part of English composition at this stage, when it is meaningful to students and relevant to their needs and interests. It should not be taught, as it commonly is, over and over again in the high (secondary) school; in the earlier years it makes no sense to students, bores them and is consequently forgotten. Again, with the telephone: in an age when every child is born with a telephone in its cradle, there is no justification for spending more time on it than ten minutes at the end of the main high school

course. However a small amount of "How would you say this in a cable, on a ...(?), over the telephone...?" might appear in English composition lessons when relevant. Probably the best letter-writing, whether social or business, comes from students who have developed a general ability to organize their material and express it clearly--from a general English competence rather than special instruction. This could also apply to journalism.

Mass media: ...(?) their offerings are of such interest to students and play such a large part in their lives that the teacher must be prepared to discuss them with students as part of their oral and composition work. They represent a ground on which teacher and student can make profitable contact.

Further, the mass media are a major influence on adolescents, great perhaps than that of education, in deciding their field of interest, supplying them with ideas (aims, ambitions, etc.) and determining their emotional responses. They are therefore a concern of the English teacher, in that they may largely erode his efforts. There is a sense in which the teacher must educate his students against their environment. A frontal attack, however, would be misdirected and largely a waste of time which ought to go on more positive material. The mere discussion of films and T.V., close attention to them, the most elementary comparisons..., all these prompt the critical discriminating attitude that will make students more active and less passive in their choices.

For teachers who are interested, the analysis of advertizing appeals should certainly form a small part of the English program. It helps students to be more critical of appeals to them as consumers or voters, to use the media rather than be exploited by them, and to be more sensitive in their use of and response to

language of all kinds. It needs to be remembered that poetry and advertising utilize words in the same mode, for their emotional overtones, their associations, their change of feeling.

Speaking should be included among the major skills, along with reading, writing, and listening. Speech for the development of the individual has been much praised but little taught. We accept Jean Piaget's statement: "It is on the verbal plane that the child makes the chief effort of adaptation to adult thought and to the acquisition of logical habits," but often fail to make an adequate and specific place for that effort, and commonly fail to encourage it, much less direct it.

The total Primary School program, and especially the portion of it devoted to English, should be constructed to create virtually unlimited opportunities for speech communication. (Speech communication involves both speaking and listening experiences, and informal to formal experiences in varieties of direct discourse, discussion, oral reading, and classroom play reading and acting.)

Included should be opportunitites for children to talk informally and also spontaneously about their experiences and feelings (for developing self-conceptualization and for conveying ideas to others), or even somewhat more formally at the Infant School level in "show and tell" periods when the children may want to share with others. Later the children may structure "oral reports" as commonly as they write compositions.

Informal conversations and group discussions should be encouraged (for developing abilities to analyze ideas and audiences, and to begin habits of categorizing, generalizing, and so on, as children become ready for these cognitive behaviors). In the Infant School surely the teacher must be the dis-

cussion leader (a term that may mean only encouraging children to ask questions, essay answers, and listen attentively to each other), but in the Junior School the teacher should want children to take over many of the leadership functions.

Oral reading--and perhaps even choral reading--should be linked in at every stage of the child's reading development (as another way of "possessing" ideas, and for communicating them to others), and early opportunities should be given for group readings of dialogue materials. As early as it can be done, play-reading, dramatizing, and classroom acting should be a normal part of the English program (but the formal school play should not necessarily be the job of the English department).

In general these experiences suggested for the Primary School may be labelled simple, informal, minimally structured, certainly unprofessional, and introduced at "the right time." They should be integrated naturally into the program so that reading, writing, speaking, and listening are all normal activities in the English work. These comments are intended to suggest something about the teacher's own speech communication training, that while she must have an understanding of the normal development of oral language in children, and some experience with specific skills and forms of speech communication, she need not be prepared to teach formal "public speaking" and "play production." Since both in pre-school and Primary School speech patterns are more often caught than taught, of course the teacher's own speech should be such as to provide a model for imitation and motivation.

It is at the Secondary School level that direct instruction in more formal speech communication should be available, and from specially trained teachers.

A basic general speech course (with emphasis upon the student as both producer and consumer of informative and persuasive discourse) should be required, and optional courses should be available in public speaking, dramatics, debating, and so on. The reason for offering independent and direct instruction in speech communication, of course, is that while up to a point written and oral discourse share techniques as well as problems and goals, there are significant differences in the two modes if maximum proficiency is to be developed in oral communication. These differences relate to (1) the selection of evidence, arguments, and appeals, (2) the adaptation of language, (3) the sensitivity to other persons as senders and receivers of verbal and visual messages, and (4) the skills of vocal and bodily expression.

The regular English courses, whether emphasizing composition or literature, however, should continue to provide speaking and listening experiences appropriate to the subject matter of the course and the development of the student. If the course stresses composition, for example, the oral reading of an occasional theme may help a student develop a sense of writing for an audience. If the course stresses literature (and surely it should include some rhetorical literature), the oral reports on special readings or panel discussions of general readings, for example, should help students to personalize their critical reactions. And group readings of plays can continue to add a special dimension of understanding of dramatic literature.

Beyond the specific courses in various types of speech communication, and beyond the English courses, Secondary School programs should include public dramatic productions and forensic activities, under the direction of specially qualified speech teachers. (And at all levels, from Infant through Secondary, we assume the availability of qualified speech therapy and hearing conservation consultants.)

Supporting Paper Seven

The "Why" of the Lifted Eyebrow

The young child who is reported to have said as he came to school one morning, "Must we do what we want to do today?" is perhaps responsible for the tongue in cheek, sneer on the lips, or glint in the eye that appears when the "teaching the whole child" cliche is voiced. Educators and laymen alike have used this or similar comments to belittle several movements that have contributed more good practice to educational techniques than any harm that may be attributed to them. That our schools needed careful scrutiny was unquestionably true, but to say that they were all that bad was unjust.

What then we may ask happened that led to such sharp and often irresponsible criticism? Beginning late in the twenties--social, psychological, medical, and educational changes combined to produce a stereotype of the school that never did in fact exist to any great extent. If a criticism were to be levied against education as a whole it more likely would have been that they, the schools, were too much like the schools of the early 1900's. As the writer views it some of these movements are as follows.

There were changes in child rearing--the breaking down of rigid eating and toilet training routines; self selection by the infant in when, what, and how much to eat; the Freudian analytic approach to behavior, i.e., not to insist that the child say "I'm sorry" or "thank you" until he, the child, really feels it. "Don't frustrate him you may damage his self image," often interpreted to mean let him do what he pleases. Even Sunday Schools changed from moralistic preaching to free expression nursery schools. In some circles at least

"children should be seen and not heard" was a thing of the past. Some of this rubbed off on some parents and some educators rightly or wrongly adapted a rather laissez-faire attitude.

Within the more formal educational circles kindergartens and nursery schools began to appear. Froebal, Montessori, Rousseau and others had an effect on early childhood education. The informal, exploratory schools in which there was freedom to speak, paint, dance, sing, engage in dramatic play, build with blocks, listen to stories and gradually mature through ego-centered, parallel play and finally interaction became a reality in our society. However, even today more schools do not have kindergartens than do and nursery schools are usually the concern of some other agency than the public schools.

At about the same time Dewey's "learn by doing" was having an effect and the "activity" movement was underway borrowing freely from the preschools. Capital "P" progressive schools appeared. Often these were private and co-operative schools that felt free to experiment. Enough filtered into the public schools to ripple the pond, but not to cause any sort of a deluge.

Another force at work was the education of the retarded. In small classes, with special equipment certain innovations looked promising and these too were incorporated into some regular programs.

Sometime in the forties the Child Study movement was begun. A major center was established at the University of Chicago, which later was to transfer to Maryland. Teams were invited all over the U.S. to teach teachers how to study children. Many observers of these programs felt there was a real lack of concern for the curriculum and learning and too much emphasis on the individual.

Perhaps as an outgrowth, perhaps as a counter force Group Dynamics suddenly became "the thing." In this movement attention centers on processes of interaction and individual social needs rather than on content and skills.

To say that any of these movements had a unilateral affect on the schools seems preposterous. Change in the schools was slow and cautious. More and more was added to the curriculum; watering down became the only way to teach all the children of all the people what pressure groups were demanding.

If one takes a look at the movements one sees in each a child-centered core. A "whole child concept" if you like.

Then suddenly there was Sputnik. A scapegoat was necessary. Back to the 3r's screamed the often unknowledgeable layman. Before long scientists or mathematicians who didn't know a six year old human child from a rhesus monkey were telling teachers not only what to teach but how to teach. The lift of the eyebrow is a hangover from those days when people had to have something or somebody to blame, so "teaching the whole child" became the villain.

More good has been abstracted from these movements than has yet been assessed. With the help of the scholar, educators are taking a long look at curriculum development in terms of the whole child, learning theories, group processes, and content.

"Something good must come from that."