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**ABSTRACT**

Designed for teachers who are unaware of desirable places to visit, of whom to contact, or of services and materials available to students, this pamphlet contains specific information on how to collect and construct a file of pertinent, available community resources. It will help the classroom teacher assemble and organize information about a large number of places which, though they vary from region to region, are available in every community. Sources of direct experiences to be found in many communities are listed under the headings of commercial, communication, cultural, governmental, historical, industrial, transportation, and recreational community resources. A guide is provided for teachers on how to construct a card file of pertinent, available community resources. Suggestions for planning a specific trip to correlate with classroom work; example illustrations of community experiences at different grade levels; and a discussion of contributions community members can make to the instructional programs are presented. Concluding the bulletin are discussions of the social studies teacher's role in introducing community resources, the limitations of community study; and some of the beneficial outcomes of using community resources. Related documents are SO 005 979 through SO 006 000. (Author/SJM)

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**Keeping Touch With Reality**

Educators increasingly recognize the principle that schools need contact with the realities of life; that curricula are most effective when closely related to the communities they serve; and that boys and girls learn best when dealing with direct, concrete experience.

Mounting concern that children may not be getting sufficient direct experience was substantiated in a study by the Detroit Citizenship Education Study which shows that students have missed many opportunities for enriching educational experiences outside the school building. Three conclusions from the study, as listed in the pamphlet entitled *Exploring Your Community*, are:

1. Teachers cannot assume that their students have had large numbers of enriching direct experiences.
2. Some schools are not making sufficient use of neighborhood facilities for direct experiences.
3. Schools are not providing direct experiences which acquaint pupils with activities of government.<sup>1</sup>

Isolation from direct experience is a real danger. It is possible for schools to become so isolated from parents, community agencies, media of communication, and other unifying agencies that they lose touch with the organic life of the community. When this happens, the school program not only becomes meaningless but the school jeopardizes its much needed community support.<sup>2</sup> While the singular term "community" is used here, it is recognized that the child lives in many overlapping communities and that all of these community resources

<sup>1</sup>Citizenship Education Study, *Exploring Your Community*. Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1949, p. 1.  
<sup>2</sup>Dale, Edgar, *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching*. New York: The Dryden Press, 1954, p. 95-105.

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must be drawn upon for enriching community experiences. Frequently teachers are unaware of desirable places to visit. They may not know whom to contact or they may be ignorant of the services and materials available to students.

This pamphlet contains specific information on how to collect and construct a file of pertinent, available community resources. It will help the classroom teacher assemble and organize information about a large number of places which, though they vary from region to region, are available in every community.

**Sources of Direct Experience**

The list on page 2 of possible sources of direct experience is by no means exhaustive. Some of the sources mentioned will not be found in many communities. On the other hand, every community because of its inherent uniqueness will have some that are not mentioned.

Minor excursions to the school heating and ventilating plant, school and neighborhood gardens, a busy street intersection for traffic observance, and neighborhood commercial and industrial enterprises are, in general, not included. This exclusion is not intended to imply lesser values in such experiences. Space here is limited, and teachers are most likely aware of experiences close to the school.

The organization of sources as it appears here is a suggestion only and may be changed at the teacher's discretion. It is intended as a checklist to stimulate thinking about the numerous sources in the teacher's own community.

**A. Commercial**

1. Large offices and office buildings



2. Department stores and others
  3. Banks
  4. A stock exchange
  5. Hotels
  6. Wholesale produce markets
  7. Large retail markets
  8. Stockyards
  9. Lumberyards.
- B. Communication**
1. Telephone company
  2. Telegraph office
  3. Newspaper offices
  4. Radio stations
  5. Television stations
- C. Cultural Opportunities**
1. Public and private libraries and museums
  2. Public and private art institutes, traditional and contemporary
  3. Aquariums and conservatories
  4. Observatories
  5. Orchestras, bands, recitals and other musical programs
  6. Good motion pictures, stage productions, pageants, ballets, choruses, operas, operettas
  7. Local entertainments: horse shows, flower shows, dog shows
  8. Churches and synagogues.
- D. Government: Local, Regional, National**
1. City hall: board of zoning appeals, city clerk, city dump, city plan commission, city treasurer, election commission, fire department, garbage disposal, police, parks and recreation, public lighting, public works, sewage disposal, water works, welfare commission
  2. City council in session
  3. Hospitals
  4. Public health department
  5. County building
  6. State capitol
  7. Post office and offices of federal government
  8. Courts
  9. Jury commission
  10. Civil service commission
  11. Weather bureau
  12. Public housing projects
  13. Forest service.
- E. Historical Places of Interest**
1. Plaques
  2. Statues and monuments
  3. Markers
  4. Historic homes
  5. Memorial parks
  6. Missions.
- F. Industrial Enterprises**
1. Factories: production, engineering, testing, sales promotion, labor relations
  2. Power plants
  3. Foundries and blast furnaces
  4. Gas and electric companies
  5. Printing and lithography
  6. Dairy industries
  7. Baking industries
  8. Laundry and dry cleaning industries
  9. Bottling works
  10. Canneries
  11. Petroleum industries
  12. Housing construction
  13. Sawmills and lumber yards
  14. Greenhouses and plant nurseries
  15. Farms.
- G. Transportation**
1. Local transportation systems
  2. Bus depots
  3. Railroad stations
  4. Airports
  5. Steamships and docks
  6. Shipyards
  7. Large or unusual bridges or tunnels
  8. Road construction.
- H. Recreation and Play**
1. Zoos
  2. Parks and playgrounds
  3. Swimming facilities: oceans, lakes, rivers, swimming pools
  4. Commercial spectator sports: baseball, football, basketball, hockey
  5. Seasonal amateur sports and recreation
  6. Community houses
  7. Organized youth clubs: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Woodcraft Rangers, Boys' Clubs.

### Constructing a File

The teacher should have readily available a long list of places for pupils to visit, so arranged that the addition or deletion of individual sources will not disrupt the master plan.

The use of a 5 x 8 card file or of a loose-leaf notebook is recommended for permanent placement in the

classroom. Sources may be alphabetized or they may be grouped by units of work. Individual sources, however, frequently apply to several units.

Information about each place should be organized under a ten-point system. These divisions were worked out carefully and have been used successfully by teachers in one large city over a period of years. Obtaining and retaining in a personal file the information suggested in the ten-point plan will place at the teacher's fingertips all information necessary to refresh his memory about the relative merits of individual excursions and the procedures for arranging future visits.

Information about each place should include location, telephone number, person to contact, when to call, length of visit, maximum number of students acceptable, materials and services available, and a brief résumé of what is to be seen. There should also be space for a record of the trip after it is taken and the teacher's comments and impressions.

These items are discussed in detail below.

#### The Ten-Point System

1. *Location*—This should include street and number, city and zone (especially if different from the school address), and perhaps a note about distance and travel time. An accurate address is helpful in correctly routing thank-you letters and requests for additional information.

2. *Telephone number*—A complete telephone number including extension number, if there is one, is a time-saver.

3. *Contact person*—Get the full name, with title, of the individual who is in charge of handling your type of request. This helps in future telephone conversations and is essential for written correspondence.

4. *Time to call*—This is merely a record of the office hours of the person or organization involved. Since teachers seldom have much free time during the school day, a notation about Saturday hours is helpful.

5. *Length of visit*—Many organizations will be able to say how much time they can give, and some even have a timed tour. Most organizations, however, will fit the time limit to the teacher's convenience, but it is best when arranging the trip to specify the time of arrival and departure. Failure to do so can upset transportation plans and may involve prolonged waiting upon arrival while an escort or guide is located.

6. *Number of students*—Most places can handle an average-sized class and some can take care of larger numbers. The maximum number is worth knowing if

two or more teachers wish to plan an excursion together. Where a source can accommodate very few visitors only, arrangements can be made for an interview or tour by a class member or committee who can report back to the rest of the class.

7. *Materials available*—Many organizations will supply explanatory booklets, folders, pictures, charts, or souvenir materials. A few are able to supply motion pictures, filmstrips, or other materials which may be used for preplanning or evaluation work. Care should be taken to note in the permanent record whether or not these materials seem biased in any particular direction. If biased, the class should recognize and discuss the bias.

8. *Services available*—These include notations of willingness to grant interviews, to conduct groups through facilities, to prepare special demonstrations and records of periodic or seasonal events of special interest to school groups. Some organizations will send a lecturer to the school as part of the preplanning. Some prefer groups at certain times of the day. All special information of this nature should become part of the record.

9. *Trip outline*—A description of what was seen and done is an integral part of the permanent file. A brief outline of the high lights of a tour is good for reference in years to come. It can help in making wise decisions concerning future experiences.

10. *Dates of trips, other comments*—It is wise for the teacher to record for future reference the dates of the trips, the groups of students involved, and his own impressions or comments.

#### Planning a Specific Trip

Educational trips have a great motivating influence in helping children to attack and solve problems. They give a group the opportunity to plan, to share experiences, and to think along broad lines. They help to teach children respect for the worth of other people in the community. They assist in establishing a sympathetic understanding of other people's contributions as citizens. Trips have great value as a public relations device, both in helping children to understand their community and in helping the community to understand the work of the school.

Trips should be planned to correlate with the work in the classroom. Teacher and students should cooperate in both preplanning and postplanning. Assuming that the trip grows naturally out of the work of the group, the following suggestions may be helpful:

**A. Preliminary Arrangements**

1. Clear with school authorities.
2. Place the request for the visit with the proper contact individual.
3. Arrange for transportation.
4. Secure parental permission.
5. Arrange for collection of notes of approval from parents, and money if necessary.
6. Arrange for classes in school to be taken by other teachers.

**B. Preplanning**

1. Class discussion about the trip:
  - a. What information do we already have about the place we will visit?
  - b. What will we see?
  - c. What is its value to us?
  - d. How will this fit into our unit of study?
  - e. Do the people seem to enjoy what they are doing? Do they seem happy?
  - f. What questions would we like answered during our visit?
  - g. Have our parents any questions they would like us to investigate during the trip?
  - h. Are there any particular things for which we should watch?
2. Utilization of time on way to visit and return:
  - a. Discuss route to be taken.
  - b. Note interesting things en route about homes, schools, shopping districts and people.
3. Qualities of good passengers:
  - a. Keep voices low.
  - b. Share seats.
  - c. Keep driver's vision clear.
  - d. Do not lean out of windows.
  - e. Thank driver for safe ride.
  - f. Remain seated until teacher gives signal to leave bus.
4. Upon arrival at destination:
  - a. Remember that a good reception depends upon an orderly entrance.
  - b. Remember to ask all questions in a polite manner.
  - c. Stay with the guides and help see that the group remains together.
  - d. Remove and carry wraps if the building is warm.
  - e. Thank the guide before leaving.

**C. The Day of the Trip**

1. Assemble students before arrival of transportation.
2. Check to see that all are present.

3. Designate partners.
4. Review a few of the things to remember along the way—courtesy, safety.

**D. Post-Trip Evaluation**

1. Discussion regarding visit:
  - a. What interesting things were learned?
  - b. Were the questions answered?
  - c. What things were enjoyed most?
  - d. Did this trip help to demonstrate our dependence on other people?
2. Discussion of ride:
  - a. How did the homes en route compare with those in the student's community?
  - b. What kind of people, stores, and districts did the students pass on the way?
  - c. What items of special interest did they note?
3. Letter of appreciation:
  - a. Compose it cooperatively as a class or committee.
  - b. Send it to person in charge of trip.
  - c. Possibly send notes written by class to parents telling of experiences.
4. Follow-up activities:
  - a. Utilize new information in class work.
  - b. Capitalize on opportunity for extensive reading on the subject.
  - c. Prepare reports for other classes.
  - d. Construct slides of the trip.
  - e. Draw murals depicting experience.
  - f. Link experience to new learnings.

**Community Experiences at Various Grade Levels**

Four illustrations of community experiences at different grade levels are given below. They are organized according to the ten-point system previously described. Points nine and ten are omitted, since they are concerned with teachers' reactions, and their omission does not detract from the usefulness of the examples presented.

**Lower Elementary****Fire Department**

1. Location—250 W. Larned
2. Telephone—963-2100
3. Contact—Public Relations Department
4. When to call—8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday
5. Length of visit—One hour

6. Number of students—One class. For grades 1-3, there should be one adult for every eight children; for grades 4 and higher, there should be one adult for every 10 pupils.
7. Materials available—Pamphlets about fire prevention. When visiting a neighborhood fire station, arrangements should be made through this main office to have the materials sent out.
8. Services available:
  - a. Will take a group through headquarters as well as through the neighborhood stations. There is a museum on the second floor at headquarters.
  - b. Will explain how the fire department is organized to give instruction about fire prevention, reporting of fires.
  - c. Will send a representative to the school, on invitation of the principal, to talk to a large group.

#### **Upper Elementary**

##### **Ford Motor Company**

1. Location—Ford Rouge Plant, Dearborn
2. Telephone—322-0034
3. Contact—Tour Information Office
4. When to call—9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Reservations should be made two to three weeks in advance of the desired date.
5. Length of visit—One and a half hours.
6. Number of students—No limit, but there should be one adult for each group of 30 students. Grades 6 to 12.
7. Materials available—Various pamphlets about the Ford plant, the assembly line, etc.
8. Services available: Guided tour of the Ford Rouge Plant grounds, the Mustang or Cougar assembly lines, and the steel mill.

#### **Junior High School**

##### **Detroit Historical Museum**

1. Location—Woodward at Kirby, Detroit
2. Telephone—321-1701
3. Contact—Education Division
4. When to call—9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. (The Museum is closed on Monday).
5. Length of visit—One to two hours.
6. Number of students—One class. There should be one adult for every 15 students.
7. Materials available—Brief descriptive pamphlets on the permanent and current "changing" exhibits. There is a small Museum Gift Shop where postcards, flags, and other inexpensive souvenirs may be purchased.

8. Services available: A guided tour of the permanent exhibits such as the Streets of Detroit, the Model Railroad, and the Hall of Patriotism, and the current changing exhibits such as Nuclear Energy in Space, the Canadian Exhibit, and Bonnets That Bloom in the Spring.

#### **Senior High School**

##### **City-County Building**

1. Location—Woodward at East Jefferson, Detroit
2. Telephone—965-4200, extension 9 or 14.
3. Contact—Detroit and Wayne County Joint Building Authority
4. When to call—9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, as far in advance of the desired date as possible.
5. Length of visit—One and a half hours, from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.
6. Number of students—Limited to 35 and at least one adult.
7. Materials available—Pamphlet describing the building, "The City-County Building."
8. Services available: Guide service is provided by city and county employees. The group meets in the auditorium on the 13th floor to hear a brief history of the building, the city seal and flag, and a description of city and county government. They then proceed on a guided tour of the building, sit in on the city council which is meeting as a committee-of-the-whole (the group is greeted by name by the presiding officer), and then visit the courts that are in session.

#### **Bringing Community Resources into the Classroom**

Schools are very definitely a part of the community, and there are many ways in which the community can contribute to its schools apart from the financial support which makes them possible. There are, for instance, direct contributions to the instructional program on the part of community members.

In every locality are found numerous adults who have much to share with children—people who have lived or traveled abroad, or who have lived in distant parts of the United States. Some people have interesting hobbies, possess special talents, or are engaged in an occupation that children ought to know more about. An opportunity to listen to and question such people immeasurably enriches a school program.

In tapping human resources the teacher plays an important role. He must initiate a program for locating

people who can make a contribution and must demonstrate a need for the type of help sought. Often parents can be brought into the early planning. A canvass of the community can be made, and the results recorded and made accessible to every teacher. Evaluation of each visitor's contribution will facilitate use of his services again at some later date.

It is not always necessary, however, to bring a person before the class. Many times the same result can be achieved in the classroom by unusual exhibits, models, collections, or even a tape-recorded message from someone who finds it inconvenient or impossible to be present. The possibilities are numerous. An alert teacher will make great effort to see that the children have an opportunity to profit from them.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Role of the Social Studies Teacher**

The social studies teacher, particularly, should be aware of the merits of bringing direct experience into the learning situation. It is his function to promote common understandings, although he knows that they are sometimes difficult or even impossible to achieve.<sup>4</sup> Experiential backgrounds are often divergent and each person interprets phenomena according to his own experience. For this reason the teacher recognizes the importance of encouraging direct, community experience which will give children a sense of activity shared with adults and at the same time will give community members a feeling of sharing in the children's education.

Direct experience as part of the learning process can be promoted by informal chats or during group meetings. The experienced teacher can assist and encourage the less experienced by helping with program rearrangements to alleviate class conflict, helping to make transportation arrangements, and so forth.

He can also help plan teachers meetings at places of interest in the community, and thus give support by example. This type of activity introduces other teachers to direct experiences available to their own classes, and stimulates their interest in utilizing community resources.

Another way to encourage the use of community resources is for a group of teachers to prepare a mimeographed index of possible direct experiences in a specific community. A bulletin of this nature is especially helpful because it draws on the experience of all teachers who have previously utilized community resources in their instructional programs.

As teachers themselves become interested and active participants in their communities, their effectiveness in introducing and interpreting community life is increased. The teacher who participates in church, youth, and similar activities is more capable of guiding his students into out-of-school activities which will prove mutually profitable to students and community.

#### **Limitations of Community Study**

Use of direct community study has obvious limitations. Unless some radical and unforeseen changes are made in school organization and school curricula, most instruction will take place in regular school classrooms with the existing instructional materials which are generally available.

Even young children with very limited environments cannot experience directly all of the aspects of their communities. As children grow older and their overlapping and expanding communities widen out, teachers will need to rely more and more upon non-direct resources to assure a balanced social studies program. Happily, a multitude of audio-visual aids exist and are being expanded rapidly so that reliance upon a single resource—such as the traditional textbook—is less and less necessary.

#### **Outcomes in Better Learning**

Specific outcomes of using community resources for better learning will of course depend upon the types of experiences involved and the way each situation is handled. Students and adults learn more easily as concrete, direct experience is substituted for intangible, indirect verbalization. Citizenship improves as students are able to associate the goals of the school with their own problems and aspirations. Below are listed some of the beneficial outcomes generally recognized.

1. In-school work becomes more meaningful because of out-of-school experiences. Concrete situations form bases from which to build new learning concepts.

2. There is general improvement in citizenship as students become aware that they are actually involved in meaningful learning experiences.

3. Students demonstrate greater proficiency in problem solving. Experiences in real situations such as selecting the appropriate visit, making arrangements, and carrying on the follow-up activities are actual living, not playing "at" living.

4. Groups show superior ability in getting along with others. Better human relations are demonstrated.

5. An increased interest in school is evident. Pupils are rarely absent on the day of a trip. General attitude is better.

6. Students are increasingly aware of the ability of

<sup>3</sup>The Editorial Board, "Bringing the Field Trip to the Classroom," *Action*, V, No. 1, Detroit: Metropolitan Detroit Bureau of Cooperative School Studies (60 Farnsworth St.), December 1951, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>Kelley, Earl C. *Education for What Is Real*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947, p. 24-48.

many groups to contribute to the total community good.

7. Increased cooperation results in better understanding of the school and its problems on the part of parents and others in the community.

8. Students acquire greater knowledge of the functions of civic and governmental agencies and the specific services of these agencies to the total community.

9. Students gain firsthand experiences in determining available job opportunities, necessary qualifications, working conditions, remuneration, existence of employee benefits, and retirement plans.

10. Students acquire the concept of giving something to their community through participation in appropriate volunteer service activities and membership in community organizations. They obtain enriched understandings of the possibilities within the community for profitable use of leisure time.

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Jack W. Miller of the George Peabody College for Teachers is editor of this series. Dr. Miller welcomes comments about the items now in print and suggestions for new titles.