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HAROLD L. ICKES : SECRETARY
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SURVEY OF EDUCATION
1934-1936

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOLUME I



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CONTENTS

- CHAPTER I. Elementary education, 1930 -1936.
- II. Trends in secondary education.
 - III. Higher education, 1930 -1936.
 - IV. Adult education.
 - V. Review of conditions and developments in education in rural and other sparsely settled areas.
 - VI. Effects of the depression upon public elementary and secondary schools and upon colleges and universities.
 - VII. A survey of a decennium of education in countries other than the United States.
 - VIII. A review of educational legislation, 1935 and 1936.
 - IX. Parent-education programs in city school systems.
 - X. Developments in educational method, 1934 -1936.

INDEX.

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ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

1930-1936

BEING CHAPTER I OF VOLUME I OF THE
BIENNIAL SURVEY OF EDUCATION IN THE
UNITED STATES : 1934-36



BULLETIN, 1937, No. 2
[ADVANCE PAGES]

BY
BESS GOODYKOONTZ
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

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Contents

	Page
FOREWORD.....	v
SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF PRESENT-DAY ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.....	1
CURRENT PROBLEMS IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.....	4
SOME STATISTICS OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.....	9
Children in the elementary school.....	9
The school program.....	17
The teaching staff.....	23
Extent to which the elementary school attracts and holds its clientele.....	27
Counting the cost.....	31

Foreword

When on a swiftly moving train, it is difficult to estimate with any degree of accuracy one's rate or direction of motion. It is much easier to do so from the vantage point of some safe and stationary platform. A similar difficulty is experienced by those who are in some way a part of the continuously moving current of elementary education. Changes take place swiftly in techniques, devices, materials of instruction. Fundamental changes in philosophy and procedures usually come more slowly. But always there is change—sometimes difficult to evaluate.

This review of elementary education is planned for those who for a brief time would like to dissociate themselves from the ongoing program, to stand aside and view it analytically, particularly in some of its quantitative elements. There are three major sections: First, a brief statement of some outstanding characteristics of elementary education today; next, an analysis of some of the major problems which elementary schools face; and last, answers to more than 60 often-asked questions of statistical fact about elementary education. It is hoped that the material thus presented will be of assistance to the many persons who are interested in the elementary schools—in the children they serve, in the teachers, in the kinds of changes taking place in the school program.

During the preparation of the report, Emery M. Foster, Chief, and David T. Blose, associate specialist of the Division of Statistics, have given much valuable help in the selection and special computation of pertinent statistical information about elementary education.

The illustrations throughout the manuscript were drawn by William Thompson, artist, Office of Education.

Chapter I

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Some Characteristics of Present-Day Elementary Education

In terms of the numbers of persons involved, elementary education represents our biggest educational program.—The numbers themselves are startling. Twenty-two and three-fourths millions of persons, in this case persons aged 5 to 14 or thereabouts, make up this educational group. All of them together represent nearly one-fifth of all the Americans on the mainland. Most of them are in public schools; 1 in 10 are in private elementary schools.

These millions of elementary school children represent a phenomenal increase in numbers. In 1880 elementary schools enrolled slightly more than 10 million children; in 1900, 16 million; in 1930, nearly 24 million—an increase of 130 percent in 50 years. Between 1930 and 1936 enrollments decreased 3.6 percent. Nevertheless something of the proportionate size of this school group can be seen in the fact that secondary school enrollments, which have certainly pyramided dramatically in recent decades, are now less than one-third of elementary school enrollments, with a total of about 6½ million. In fact, when September rolls around each year and students start back to school, 75 march off to the nearby elementary school, 21 to the high school, and 4 to college.

It is easy for the public to be unaware of this biggest school group. For one thing, the public sees the constant increases in secondary schools and sympathizes with the pressing problems of young people at that age. But so far as numbers are concerned, if the present small decreases in elementary school enrollments and the present dramatic increases in secondary enrollments continued at present rates (which is highly improbable), by 1950 enrollments in secondary schools would still be less than one-half of those in elementary schools. In other words, the sheer size of the problem of elementary education is a characteristic which cannot be over-emphasized.

The elementary school is typically grades I to VIII.—Traditionally this has been true since the early years of graded public education in this country, and at the present time in 41 States the common school is recognized as grades I to VIII; in 4 States it is grades I to VII; and in 3 States there are both seven- and eight-grade schools.

During recent years reorganization of the upper grades of the elementary school and the lower grades of the secondary school has been urged. This has come about partly because of pressure for space in many school systems as both elementary and secondary school enrollments expanded. But in addition; psychological and educational investigations showed the need for richer school programs for adolescent children. Therefore a new unit in the school system—the junior high school—developed to provide these richer programs. This new unit promptly took on some of the characteristics of secondary schools, with their specialized courses and instructors, departmentalization, course and credit systems, and so on. New-type programs included more of the social sciences; exploratory courses in science, mathematics, languages; courses in the practical arts.

However, the junior high school is by no means universal. In 1934, only 27 percent of seventh-grade and 30 percent of eighth-grade boys and girls were in reorganized secondary schools. In other words, 70 percent of all seventh- and eighth-grade children were still in elementary schools. In rural areas nearly all upper grades are still in elementary rather than secondary schools.

At the lower end of the age range, kindergartens are ordinarily thought to represent the beginning year for elementary schools. For about 80 years there has been continued interest in the establishment of kindergartens as an integral part of elementary schools. But in 1936, only 650,000 children were attending kindergartens, both public and private. Had they all been 5-year-olds, this number would have represented only about 30 percent of all the 5-year-olds in the country. Kindergartens must then be ruled out as a typical element in present elementary schools, so far as general practice is concerned. We are still dealing with an eight-grade elementary school.

The home backgrounds of elementary school children represent wide differences, all of which influence the school program.—Of every 100 children attending elementary schools, 52 live in the country or in villages; 17 in small towns from 2,500 to 10,000 population; 7 in cities from 10,000 to 30,000; 5 in cities from 30,000 to 100,000; and 19 in cities of 100,000 and more. These figures show that so far as elementary school children are concerned, 70 percent of them still live in the country or in little towns close to the country. This necessarily influences the thinking in regard to their school programs. Can there be a fixed State curriculum? What problems are there in the selection of State texts? How do statements of standards take into account these background differences? What problems are created for little children by the administrative demands for the reorganization of school units into larger geographic areas?

Nationality backgrounds also show wide variations. According to the census, one child in five aged 14 years or under is foreign-born or of foreign-born or mixed parentage. That is, one in five may speak or hear frequently some foreign language; one in five has emotional and social connections which color his beliefs, understandings, and reactions.

These are only two ways in which differing home backgrounds present school problems. There are many others, but these will serve to illustrate their importance.

Public elementary teachers represent one of the Nation's largest employee groups.—There are at present more than 600,000 teachers, principals, and supervisors in elementary schools. This may well be one of our largest single employee groups. It is certainly one of the largest professional groups with common interests and common purposes. The present total National Education Association membership is around 200,000. The American Legion in February of this year had a membership of approximately 750,000. The Y. W. C. A. had something over 600,000. There were approximately 300,000 trained nurses, 150,000 physicians. In other words, in comparison with these groups, public elementary school teachers represent a very large, a very useful, and potentially a very influential group. Sixty percent of all American teachers are in public elementary schools.

The elementary school is working toward higher standards of training for its teachers.—By no means all teachers in elementary schools have the equivalent of graduation from a 2-year normal school. In fact the proportion of teachers having 2 years of college ranges from 38 percent in the 1- and 2-teacher schools in open country to 91 percent in cities of 100,000 population. Some States (Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, and Rhode Island) now require 4 years of college as a minimum for certification for elementary school teaching, but there is a long way to go before elementary school teachers will all be college graduates.

Salaries have much to do with this situation, both as cause and effect. It is not reasonable for the public to expect to buy much education for 40 children for \$882 a year, the average annual salary of elementary school teachers in 1936. On the other hand, it is not reasonable to expect that a school district will pay generously for the services of a teacher who has little more than high-school training as professional preparation.

Elementary education is changing in its philosophy and its practices along fairly definite, consistent, and generally accepted lines.—This characteristic is the least statistical of all, unless it be in an enumeration of satisfied customers. Testimony of parents

and teachers that children enjoy school is plentiful, but it is hard to tabulate. However, the changes taking place in elementary schools are without doubt in the direction of more meaningful, more valuable experiences for boys and girls.

It is not unusual for onlookers to be misled by the confusion of sounds, the imposing vocabulary, the apparent conflicts in fundamental philosophy enveloping elementary education like a fog. But behind the fog things are going on—maybe not so fast as we should like, not so universally as we could wish, not always so wisely as might be. But no more can the dictum of a former university president be true that elementary schools “very properly devote themselves largely to enabling children to acquire tools of knowledge.” Elementary schools are planning their programs close to the needs, the interests, and the potentialities of their clientele.

Current Problems in Elementary Education

These characteristics enumerated in the foregoing section make a sort of backdrop against which some of the pressing problems of elementary education at the present time may be examined.

1. **Developing a profession of elementary school teaching.**—There are many evidences that we do not yet have such a profession. The statement, “I am only a grade teacher” reflects a feeling of inferiority, an assumption of an inferior social and economic status. So long as that exists, it is difficult to build professional spirit.

Not long ago at the convention of one of the State teachers' associations, a speaker addressed two sections—the primary teachers and the intermediate-grade teachers. The intermediate-grade teachers totaled fewer than 15; the primary teachers were several hundred in number. These two meetings took place on the same day. They represent a fairly common situation. There is a *profession* of teaching in the primary grades which has been built up over many years by supervisors of primary grades and by persons in teacher-training institutions who have devoted their lives to preparing teachers for the primary school. Primary teachers have had excellent training; they have frequently received higher salaries than teachers in other grades; they have fairly permanent tenure; they stay on the job. Teachers in intermediate and upper grades do not have these advantages. In teachers' meetings they wander from one section to another; on the job they wander more frequently from one grade to another and from one school to another. They hope to get into an upper grade or into high school where conditions are better.

Other difficulties in the way of creating a profession of elementary school teaching include the youthfulness of teachers, their mobility, and the relative isolation and loneliness of their jobs. The high

schools have needed more and more teachers and have been in a position to pay for them. Consequently, though the elementary schools have served a useful purpose as a training ground for high-school teachers, they have suffered in the process. It may be that more systematic follow-up of graduates by teacher-training institutions, and the establishment of a new organization for intermediate and upper-grade teachers or the stimulation of an existing one in the State teachers' associations would provide a greater sense of professional unity.

2. Facilitating adjustments in elementary schools made necessary by changing enrollments and changing standards.—What do the decreasing enrollments in elementary schools suggest? For one thing, smaller groups, fortunately; for another, more adequate space for the activity programs which have been so handicapped in crowded quarters; for another, more equipment than when the available funds had to be spread over continually increasing numbers. These things are much needed.

In addition adjustments in the lower grades of the elementary school are taking place. Probably everyone agrees that the kindergarten type of training is desirable for all children. Recent emphasis on reading readiness and readiness for other educational activities has shown the importance of the kindergarten type of initial school experience. But 80 years of trying to make the kindergarten an adjunct to the school and comparative failure (in terms of the proportions served) in securing that objective should lead elementary school officials to be realistic about the situation. It is not wise longer to permit most of the beginning first-grade children to miss kindergarten training. A promising development of recent years is a reorganization in the beginning classes of the elementary school—a sort of primary school which incorporates the kindergarten type of training as the first year or first grade for every child. In that way the kindergarten then becomes the *first year* in name and the first year becomes *kindergarten* in type.

Adjustments at the upper end of the elementary school are also taking place. We have seen that most of the seventh and eighth grades are still in the elementary school. However, although not all of their programs have been changed in line with recommendations for junior high-school programs, in some schools they have. Exploratory courses in science, in industrial arts, and in social studies open up new and meaningful worlds to the young student, at the same time providing opportunity for continued practice of fundamental reading, language, and mathematical skills. For the elementary schools, including these upper elementary grades, fundamental studies are much needed to give some dependable bases for deciding what is a good life for children at different stages of development; what are the educa-

tional vitamins essential for a good fare. Any adult who has worked with children could list dozens, if not hundreds of topics—units of work—which are of interest to children and which have a measure of desirable content. Which of all of these to select is the difficult problem.

The question is no more important for children in the upper elementary school than it is for others, including high-school students. It is only heightened by the present indecision as to what to do about these seventh and eighth grades. Since the depression delayed school-building programs and the top floors of many elementary schools are empty, because of the declining enrollments, superintendents and the public have been asking, "Why move the seventh and eighth grades to high-school buildings that are already crowded?" In some cities there is now a definite plan to keep seventh- and eighth-grade children in the elementary school. There can be no harm to them in this if their programs are well thought out. The harm comes if they are to remain in or to return to the traditional programs of former years. Curriculum adjustments are therefore much needed.

3. Instituting an in-service training program.—To supervisors of elementary schools this frequently seems the most important problem of all. The inadequate training or unevenness of training of teachers, the rapid turn-over in the teaching staff, and the remoteness of many elementary school positions, point emphatically to the importance of in-service training programs. Other things heighten this impression. The typically large classes, the frequently inadequate equipment, and the present-day conflicts in philosophy which cannot help but concern teachers, all show the need for wise, constructive, thoughtful plans for helping teachers on the job.

The problem is to develop useful techniques of in-service training. State supervisors of elementary education have developed some which seem particularly useful. In Tennessee, for example, the State supervisor holds a 3-day conference of county elementary supervisors and visiting teachers on the assembly ground at Monteagle, Tenn., at which time supervisors make plans for their year's programs. In New Hampshire, the State supervisor has a series of regional conferences with local supervisors. The practice of organizing State-wide committees for curriculum development has proven to be one of the most useful means of in-service training. The State supervisors in Alabama, Kansas, Virginia, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, and probably a number of other States have sent some of their leaders to summer workshops for curriculum planning. This procedure seems to be growing in favor.

Publications from State departments of education are increasing in number and value. The Michigan State department has issued a

series of publications which are useful for study groups of teachers and local supervisors; a recent volume describes superior practices in the elementary schools of the State. The California State department, under the leadership of the chief of the division of elementary education, issues the *Journal of Elementary Education*, which reports the outstanding activities of the whole State. Many State departments have increased their efforts during recent years to secure county supervisors. Tennessee, Alabama, Virginia, California, New Jersey have made encouraging gains in this respect even in these difficult years.

4. **The formulation of a unified program of elementary education.**—This means only that all the persons in State or local departments of education who have something to contribute to or any responsibility for elementary schools should be able in some way to plan together. In some school systems there is a division of elementary education and a division of secondary education. Other systems are organized on a different axis, having a division of administration and a division of instruction. Each type of organization has its advantages, which need not be analyzed here. But in addition to the major divisions, there are supervisors of special fields, such as art, music, school libraries, health and physical education, school buildings, special classes, all of which have something to do with elementary schools. The need for machinery to synthesize the activities of all of these persons is obvious, if children's programs likewise are to have some unity.

Another problem has to do with working out agreements with the many agencies which have plans for elementary schools. For example, there are at present 16 State departments of health which have health supervisors doing some work in the schools. There are also State conservation departments with plans for conservation education and recreation for school children. There are State highway departments with a stake in safety-education programs for the schools. There are boys' and girls' clubs, and other agencies which assert that they have something to contribute to a well-rounded program for children. Patriotic societies, temperance societies, humane societies have programs and sometimes printed matter which they wish to have adopted in the schools.

The desirability of having one program for children rather than many is generally agreed upon. There is also little doubt as to the necessity of having all school activities under the direction of school authorities. The task appears to be that of working out agreements with these nonschool agencies. In doing so three questions come up for consideration: Do these other programs have something valu-

able for children? Is it something the schools cannot do? How can it be brought in as a part of and under the supervision of schools?

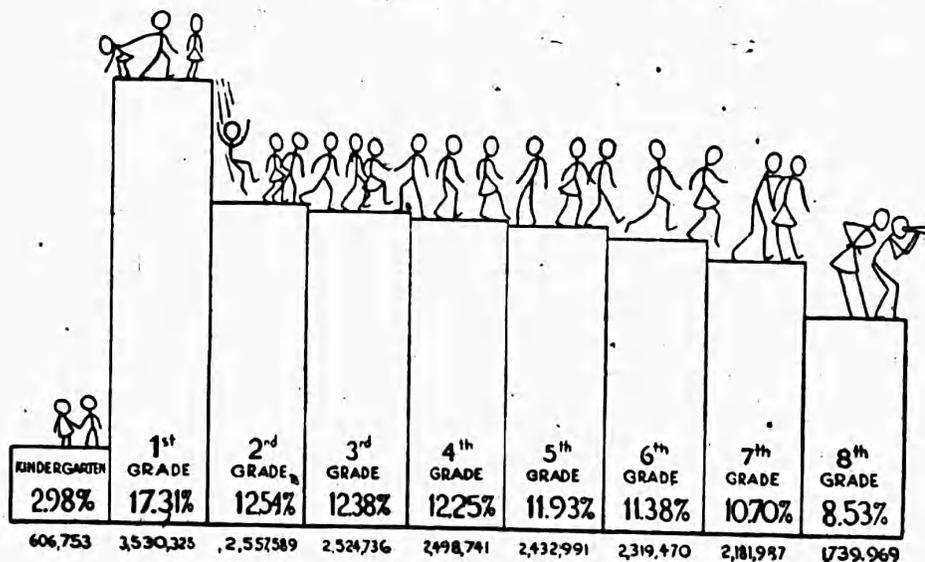
5. **Securing proper attention to elementary education problems.**—The present public attitude is that since enrollments are decreasing most of the problems of elementary schools will soon be solved. Secondary schools have been spectacular in their growth and important in their demands. The recent popularity of youth and their problems is shown by a report of approximately 400 different national organizations that have programs for youth. But it is still true that the elementary school furnishes the basic education for practically all children; that their attitudes toward learning, their intellectual interests, and their habits of thinking and working are begun in the elementary school. The quality of its services should be commensurate with its responsibilities. Consequently, one of the most important responsibilities of workers in elementary education is to continue to call attention to the magnitude and the basic importance of elementary education.

Some Statistics of Elementary Education

Children in the Elementary School

1. How many children are attending elementary schools?

In 1936 there were 22,749,351 children attending elementary schools, including the elementary grades in junior high schools. This includes all children in public schools, private schools, residential schools for exceptional children, and practice or demonstration schools in connection with teacher-training programs. Of the total, 11,639,079 were boys and 11,110,272 were girls.



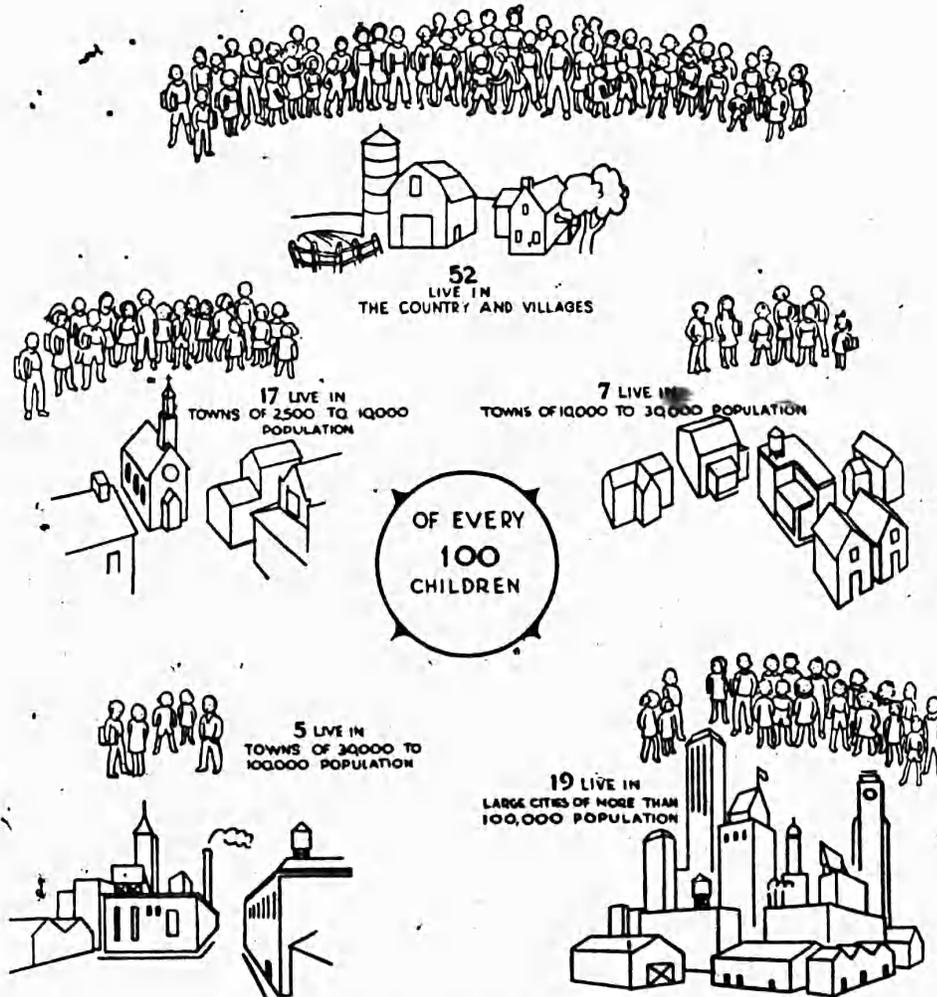
Enrollments in public elementary schools.

2. How many public elementary schools are there?

In 1936, there were 232,174 organized elementary schools reported. This number decreased from 245,091 in 1926 to 238,306 in 1930 and to 236,236 in 1934. Elimination of small schools through consolidation has been partially responsible for this decline.

3. Where do the elementary school children live and attend school?

Of every 100 children in public elementary schools, 52 live in the country or in villages and towns of less than 2,500 population; 17 live in towns of 2,500 to 10,000 population; 7 live in cities of 10,000 to 30,000 population; 5 live in cities of 30,000 to 100,000; and 19 are in large cities of more than 100,000 population.



Where elementary school children live.

4. From what nationality backgrounds do elementary school children come?

According to the 1930 census, there were 297,215 foreign-born white children 14 years of age or under. Of these, 95,800 were from Canada; 40,372 from Italy; 29,847 from Germany; 20,131 from Scotland; 18,715 from England.

Of the 36,056,876 children 14 years of age or under, 7,641,267 were foreign-born or of foreign or mixed parentage—21 percent Italian, 14 percent Polish, 9 percent Russian, 8 percent Canadian, and 7 percent German. From five other countries came more than 2 percent each: Czechoslovakia, England, Irish Free State, Austria, and Sweden.

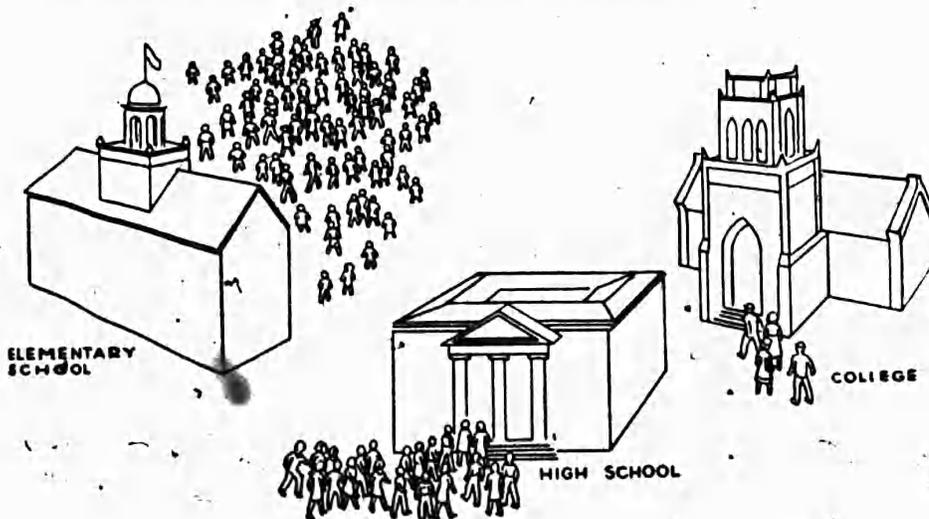
Altogether this means that one child in every five who are 14 years of age or under is either foreign-born or of foreign or mixed parentage.



One elementary school child in five has a foreign background.

5. How does the number of children in elementary schools compare with the numbers of enrollees in other schools?

When there were 22,749,351 children in elementary schools, there were 6,432,014 in secondary schools and 1,208,227 in colleges. In other words, of every 100 students, 75 were going to elementary school, 21 to high school, and 4 to college.



Of every 100 students, 75 are attending elementary school, 21 high school, and 4 college.

6. What part of the total population of this country is represented by the children in the elementary schools?

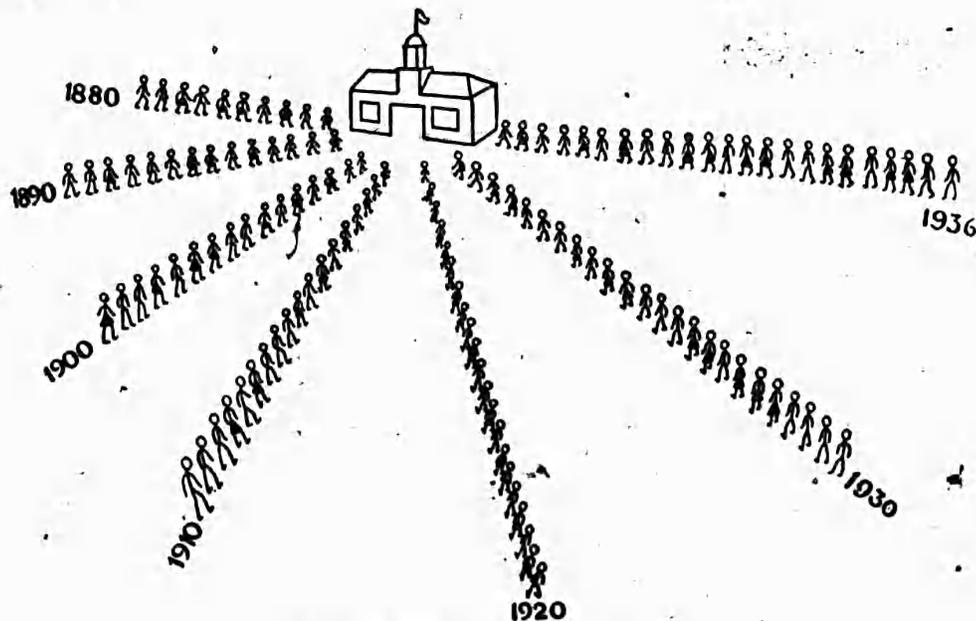
In 1936 the $22\frac{3}{4}$ million children in elementary schools represented 18 percent of the total population.

7. How does the elementary school's present relation to the Nation's total population compare with that of former years?

The elementary school's population is now a smaller proportion of the total population than it used to be. From 1880 to 1936 the total population increased from 50 million to 128 million, or 156 percent. The elementary school enrollments increased from $10\frac{1}{4}$ million to $22\frac{3}{4}$ million, or 122 percent. In 1880 elementary school enrollments were 20 percent of the total population; in 1936 they were only 18 percent of the total population.

8. How does the number of children now attending elementary schools compare with that of former years?

The number of children attending elementary schools in 1936 was more than twice as great as that in 1880. Over the period of 50 years from 1880 to 1930 it increased 130 percent. Between 1930 and 1936 it decreased 3.6 percent.



Elementary school enrollments.

Each figure represents a million children.

9. How is the declining birth rate affecting enrollments in the elementary school?

Elementary school enrollments started to decrease in 1932 and they now continue a fairly regular decline. Up to that time, enrollments had continued to increase, in spite of declining birth rates, until the schools had achieved nearly complete enrollment of all children of elementary school age. Now birth rate and elementary school enrollments are both declining.

Year	Birth rate per 1,000	Elementary school enrollment	Year	Birth rate per 1,000	Elementary school enrollment
1880	34.9	10,242,518	1930	18.9	23,588,479
1890	31.9	14,181,415	1932	17.4	23,566,653
1900	29.8	16,224,784	1934	17.1	23,262,371
1910	26.4	18,457,228	1936	16.7	22,749,351
1920	23.7	20,864,488			

10. How many Negro children attend separate elementary schools?

In 18 States which maintain separate schools for Negro and white children, there were 2,250,045 Negro children attending separate schools in 1936. This is approximately one-fourth of all the children attending public elementary schools in those States.

11. How are elementary school enrollments divided between public and private schools?

In 1936, 20,477,964 children attended public elementary schools, and 2,271,387 attended private elementary schools. That is, for every child enrolled in a private elementary school, 9 children were enrolled in public elementary schools.



Proportions of elementary school children in public and private elementary schools.

12. What kinds of private schools enroll large numbers of elementary school children?

About 97.5 percent of all children attending private elementary schools were in schools under denominational control in 1933. Ninety-two and one-half percent of the total number attending private elementary schools were in Catholic parochial schools; about 4 percent were in Lutheran schools. No other denomination enrolled as much as one-half of 1 percent of the total.

13. How does the proportion of children attending private elementary schools in 1936 compare with the proportion of enrollees in other private schools?

10 percent of all elementary school pupils were in private elementary schools.

6.5 percent of all secondary school pupils were in private secondary schools.

49 percent of all college students were in private colleges and universities.

14. How does the proportion of children attending private elementary schools vary from State to State?

In 4 States more than 20 percent of all elementary school children attend private schools; in 6 States from 15 to 20 percent are in private schools; in 8 States and the District of Columbia, from 10 to 15 percent; and in 13 States from 5 to 10 percent. In 17 States less than 5 percent of the elementary school children are in private schools.



Children in private elementary schools.

Each figure represents 2 percent of the total elementary school enrollment in private schools.

15. What grades make up the elementary school?

Some elementary schools have six grades, some seven, some eight, and a few have nine, besides the kindergarten. With the development of junior high schools, the elementary school organization has changed in those school systems which have junior high schools. However in 1934, 71.5 percent of seventh- and eighth-grade pupils were reported as belonging in elementary schools. In 1930, the percentage was 73.2.

The percentage of upper-grade pupils reported as belonging in elementary-school organizations varied greatly among the States. For example, in Louisiana 99.1 percent and in South Carolina 98.3 percent of the pupils in the two upper grades (grades 6 and 7) were in the elementary school, while in Rhode Island 35 percent of the pupils in the two upper grades (grades 7 and 8) were in the elementary school.

16. How are elementary school children distributed among the grades?

In 1936 the more than 20 million children attending public elementary schools were distributed as follows:

	<i>Number of children</i>
Kindergarten.....	606,753
First grade.....	3,530,325
Second grade.....	2,557,589
Third grade.....	2,524,736
Fourth grade.....	2,498,741
Fifth grade.....	2,432,991
Sixth grade.....	2,319,470
Seventh grade.....	2,181,987
Eighth grade.....	1,739,969
Training schools and schools for exceptional children.....	85,403
Total.....	20,477,964

17. What proportion of seventh- and eighth-grade children are attending reorganized secondary schools rather than elementary schools?

In 1934, 27 percent of seventh-grade children and 30 percent of eighth-grade children were in junior high schools or some form of reorganized secondary school, rather than in elementary schools.

18. How many elementary school buildings are there?

In 1936 there were 238,867 school buildings in use for public elementary and secondary schools. Of these 232,173 housed elementary schools. Approximately 132,813 had 1 room only; 81,340 had more than 1 room but housed only elementary grades; and 18,020 housed both elementary and secondary schools.

The School Program

1. How is the school day spent in the elementary school?

According to a report made in 1936,¹ in 63 cities scattered throughout the country, nearly half the time (48.7 percent) in eighth-grade elementary schools was spent on the 3R subjects—reading, writing, spelling, language, and arithmetic; 16.6 percent of the time was used for science and the social studies; and the rest (34.7 percent) was spent on art, music, physical education, and other so-called special subjects.

2. To what extent do State laws prescribe what subjects shall be taught in elementary schools?

State laws exercise considerable control over the elementary-school curriculum. For example, State laws in the several States require that the following subjects—usually elementary-school subjects—shall be taught:

	<i>Number of States</i>
Physiology and hygiene.....	40
United States history.....	35
Geography.....	29
Grammar.....	29
Arithmetic.....	28
Writing.....	28
Spelling.....	28
Reading.....	27

Other less-common requirements include safety in 20 States, drawing in 12 States, and music in 8 States.

Specific topics required include nature of alcoholic drinks in 48 States, Constitution of United States in 40 States, and humane treatment of animals in 16 States.

3. On what subjects or fields is most time spent?

It is more difficult to answer this question each time a study is made, because of the spread of the practice of integrating subject matter and thus of doing away with a required allotment of time to each individual subject. Even then, for any one subject the amount of time varies greatly from grade to grade. According to Kyte and Lewis, most time is spent on reading, social studies, arithmetic, and language.

¹ Kyte, George C., and Lewis, Robert H. Time tables. *The Nation's Schools*, 17: 23-24. January 1936.

4. How does the amount of time spent on various subjects compare with that given in former years?

The time allotments reported by Kyte and Lewis may be compared with those reported in a similar study² made in 1926:

	Percent in--	
	1926	1936
3R subjects	51.7	48.7
Content subjects	11.8	16.6
Special subjects	36.5	34.7

3R's



READING



WRITING



ARITHMETIC

ETC.

1926

1936

51.7%

48.7%

CONTENT SUBJECTS



GEOGRAPHY



HISTORY



SCIENCE ETC.

11.8%

16.6%

SPECIAL SUBJECTS



GAMES



MUSIC



ART



WORKSHOP ETC.

36.5%

34.7%

Proportion of school time spent on various subjects.

5. How commonly are music and art included in elementary school programs?

All the schools include music in the first six grades, according to the study of city school time allotments by Kyte and Lewis, and nearly all (98 percent) have it in the seventh and eighth grades. Art is included in grades 1-7 in nearly all (97 percent) of the cities, and in 88 percent of grades 8. The decreasing percentage in upper grades may be accounted for by an increasing percentage providing industrial arts.

² Mann, Carleton H. How schools use their time. 1928. Teachers College Contributions to Education, No. 333.

6. Is health instruction commonly included in the elementary school program?

Seventy-five percent of the cities included in Kyte and Lewis' study begin health instruction in first grade. A higher percentage include health instruction in intermediate grades.

7. In how many States is medical inspection required in the schools by State law?

In 26 States the schools are in 1939 required by State law to provide medical inspection for their pupils, and in 14 more States there are laws permitting such service.

8. How long is the school day in public elementary schools?

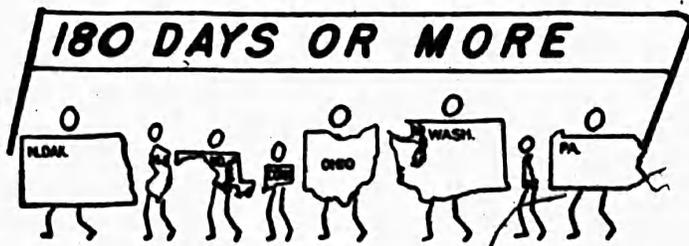
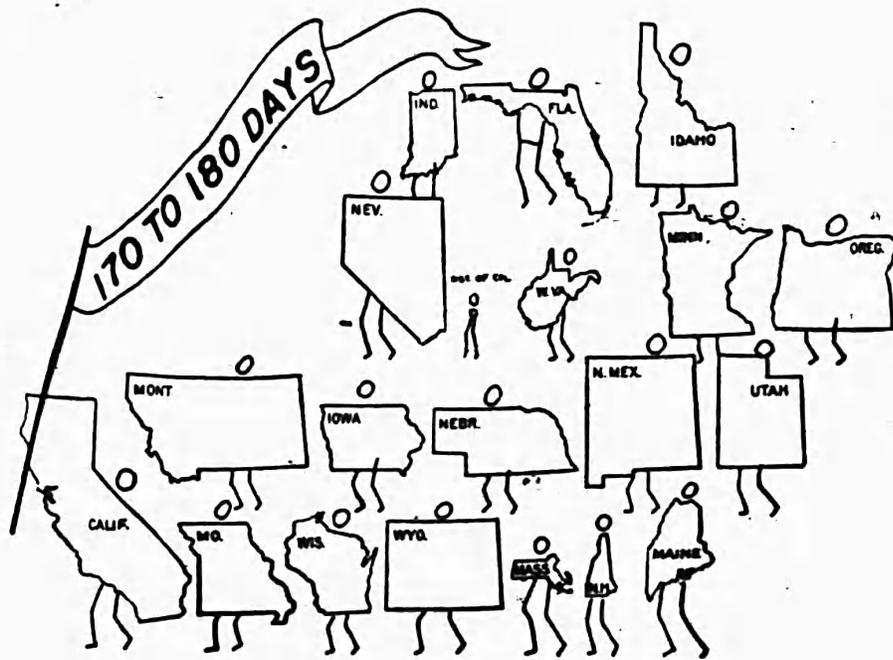
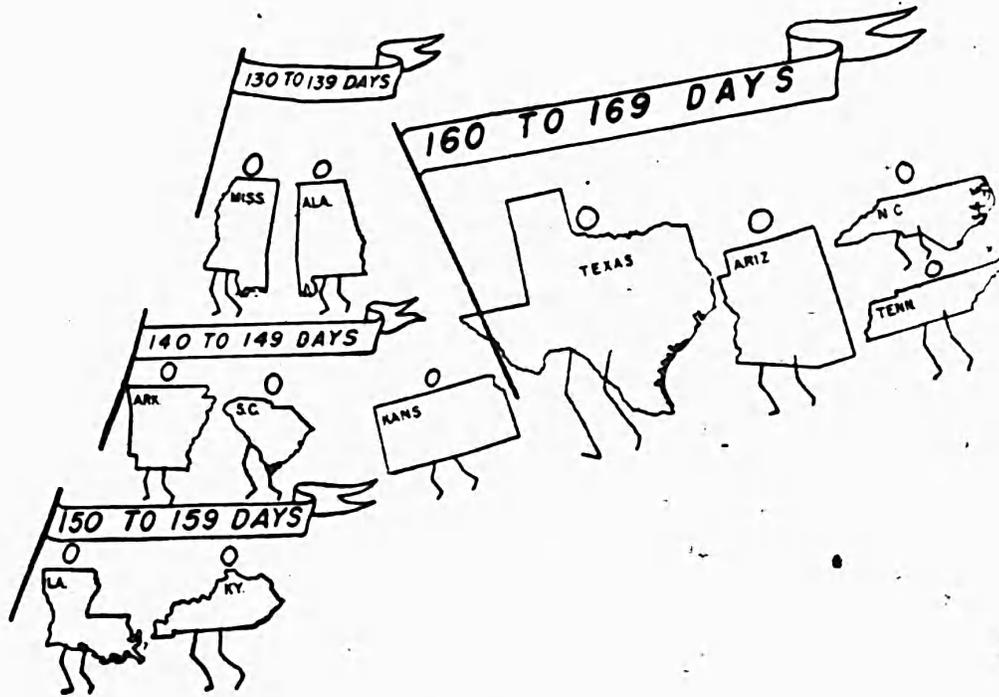
Five hours made up the school day for children in grades 3 to 6, and somewhat less than that for children in lower grades in cities of 30,000 and more in 1927, the latest date for which information is available.

9. How long is the school term in elementary schools?

The average school term in elementary schools was 169 days in 1936.

10. How does the average number of days schools are in session differ among the States?

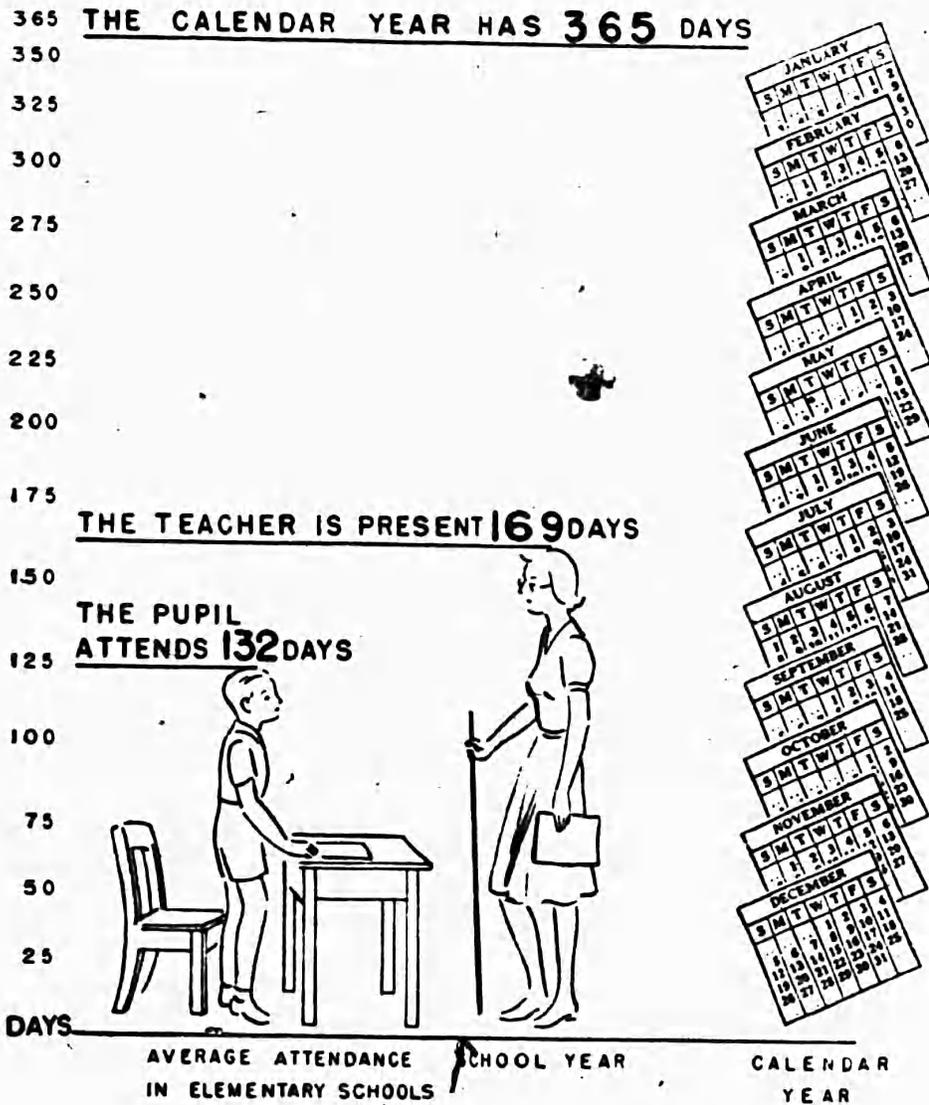
Eight States had an average term of 180 days or more in elementary schools in 1936; 19 States and the District of Columbia had 170 to 180 days; 5 States, 160 to 169 days; 2 States, 150 to 159 days; 2 States, 140 to 149 days; and 2 States, 130 to 139 days.



Length of the school term.

11. What is the average number of days each child in the public elementary schools attends school each year?

On the average, each child enrolled in a public elementary school in 1936 attended school 132 days. Presumably, however, the teacher is there and the school goes on 169 days.



Average attendance in elementary schools.

12. Do elementary schools have libraries?

50,904 elementary schools had library service in 1935. Of these, 18,537 had centralized libraries and 32,367 had classroom collections only.

2,473,566 children were enrolled in the 18,537 schools having centralized libraries; 8,972,250 volumes were estimated to be in those libraries.

These figures do not include elementary schools housed with high-school grades, many of which have centralized libraries.

13. What proportion of the children go to kindergarten?

Reports for 1936 show that 37,806 children attended private kindergartens and 606,753 children attended public kindergartens, making a total of 644,559 enrollees, not including those in residential schools for exceptional children. During that year the Census estimated that in this country there were 2,221,000 5-year-olds. It is not known how many kindergarten enrollees were 4, or 5, or 6 years of age; but if all the kindergarten children had been 5 years old, there could not have been more than about 29½ percent of all 5-year-olds attending kindergarten.

14. Do elementary schools have adequate buildings for enriched school programs?

In 1937 school superintendents in 506 cities of 10,000 population and over reported that 39.3 percent of all their buildings for both elementary and secondary schools were more than 30 years old. Most buildings erected for elementary schools more than 30 years ago did not provide for shops, auditoriums, gymnasiums, nor for especially equipped science and art rooms.

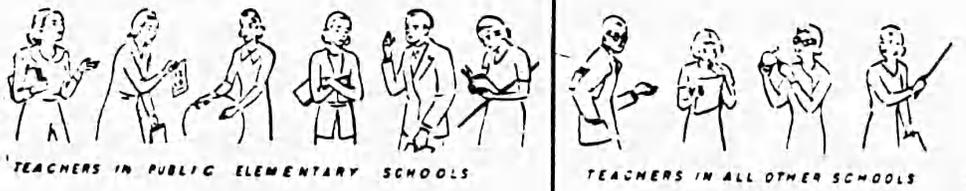


School buildings—old and modern.

The Teaching Staff

1. **How many of the Nation's teachers are teaching in public elementary schools?**

In 1936 there were 1,067,483 teachers in public and private schools and colleges in continental United States. Of these, 639,487 were teaching in public elementary schools, including kindergartens and grades 1 to 8 (or 1 to 7 in those schools which have 11 grades). In other words, 60 percent of the Nation's teachers are in public elementary schools.



Approximately six of every ten teachers are teaching in public elementary schools.

2. **How many teachers are there in private elementary schools?**

It is estimated that in 1936 there were 3,881 men and 62,373 women, or a total of 66,254 teachers in private elementary schools. This means that for every teacher in private elementary schools there are about 10 teachers in public elementary schools.

3. **What are the proportions of men and women teachers in public elementary schools?**

81,401 men and 558,086 women make up the total of 639,487 public elementary school teachers. These represent 12.7 percent and 87.3 percent, respectively. If only those teachers are counted who are in schools organized as elementary schools and in no cases in reorganized junior high schools, the proportions are 11.6 percent and 88.4 percent, respectively, of men and women teachers.

4. **Is the number of men teachers in the public elementary schools increasing?**

From 1890 to 1930 both the actual number and the proportion of men teachers in elementary schools decreased. However, since 1930 there has been a slight increase, from 10.7 percent in 1930

to 12.7 percent in 1936, in the proportion that men teachers are of the total number. This includes the teachers of grades 1 to 8, in both organized elementary schools and junior high schools.

5. How do the proportions of men and women teachers in elementary schools compare with those in secondary schools and colleges?

Of every 100 teachers employed in each type of school, the following numbers were men:

Year	In public elementary schools	In public secondary schools	In public and private colleges
1890	34	41	(1)
1900	29	50	78
1910	19	45	79
1920	11	32	72
1930	11	37	72
1936	13	42	74

No data.

6. What proportion of public elementary school teachers are single?

The National Survey of the Education of Teachers in 1931 showed that of a sampling of 234,000 elementary school teachers, 47.4 percent of the men and 77.3 percent of the women were single.

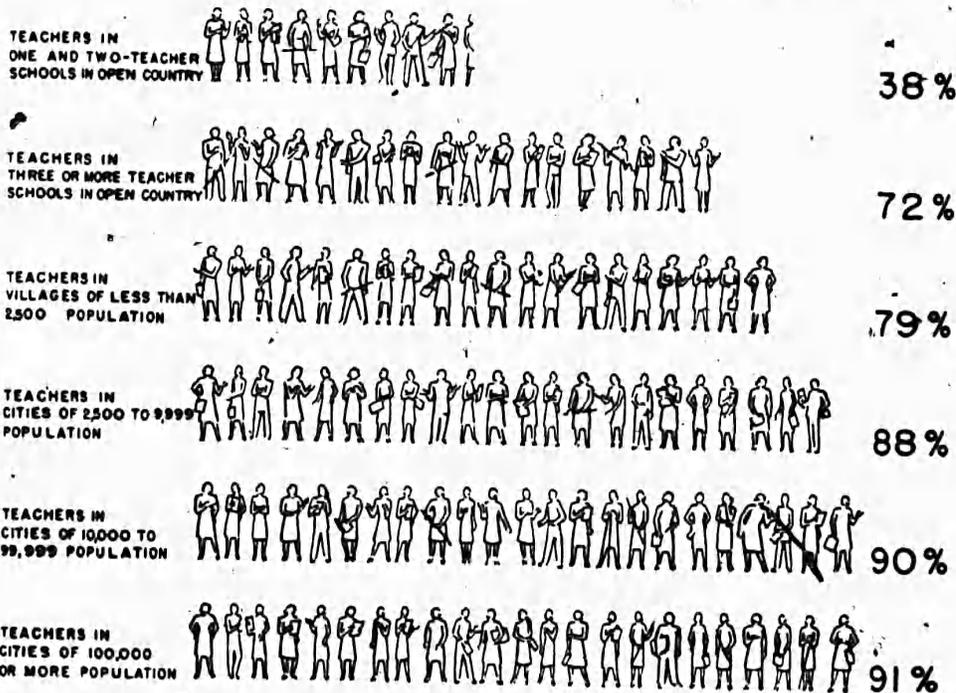
7. How much college training have public elementary school teachers had for their work?

In 1931 reports were received from approximately 250,000 public elementary school teachers on the number of years they had attended college. Half of these were teachers in rural or small village schools, and only a fifth of them in large cities of 100,000 population or more. Nearly three-quarters of them (74 percent) had had 2 years or more of college work; 12 percent had had 4 years or more; but 1 in 18 had had nothing more than a high-school education.

8. What proportion of the teachers have had 2 years or more of college education?

Of the 250,000 public elementary school teachers for whom records are available, the proportion that have 2 years or more at college differs as follows:

	<i>Percent</i>
In 1- and 2-teacher schools in open country.....	38
In 3- or more-teacher schools in open country.....	72
In villages of less than 2,500 population.....	79
In cities of 2,500 to 9,999 population.....	88
In cities of 10,000 to 99,999 population.....	90
In cities of 100,000 or more.....	91



Proportion of elementary school teachers who have 2 years or more of college education.

9. What salaries do public elementary school teachers receive?

The average salary of elementary school teachers, supervisors, and principals in public schools was \$1,005 in 1935-36, in the 24 States and the District of Columbia, which reported salaries for elementary and secondary schools separately. For teachers alone, in 29 States and the District of Columbia reporting, the average was \$882.

10. How do salaries of elementary school teachers vary among the States?

Twenty-four States and the District of Columbia reported average annual salaries of elementary school teachers, supervisors, and principals in 1935-36, ranging from \$431 in Arkansas to \$1,735 in New Jersey.

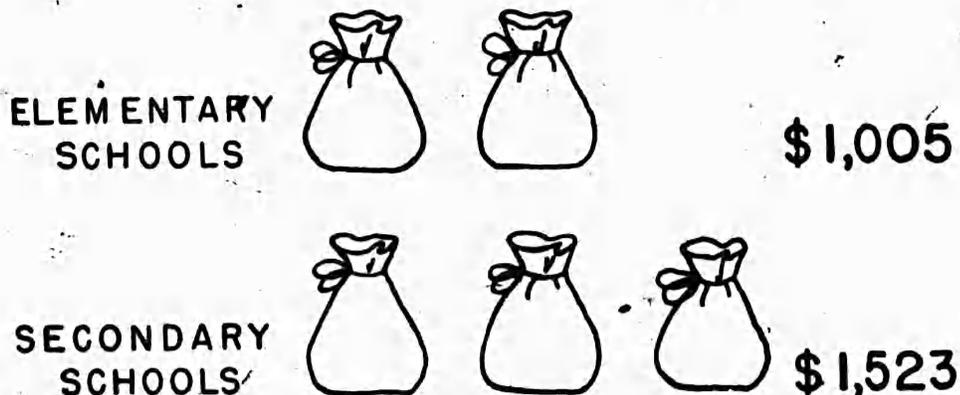
11. How do elementary school teachers' salaries compare with those of former years?

In fewer than half the States which report salaries in elementary and secondary schools separately, the average salaries of elementary school teachers, supervisors, and principals, decreased from their high point of 1930 as follows:

Year	Percent
1930	100
1932	99.4
1934	87.5
1936	91.3

12. How do salaries of elementary school teachers compare with those of secondary school teachers?

In 1936, when the average salary of teachers, supervisors, and principals in public elementary schools was \$1,005, the average for those in regular and vocational high schools was \$1,523, or .52 percent more than for the elementary.



Teachers' salaries.

13. What proportion of the principals in elementary schools are administrative and supervisory officials?

Information received in 1934 concerning more than 12,000 elementary school principals in city schools showed that 58 percent were teaching principals and 42 percent full-time principals of one or more schools.

Extent to Which the Elementary School Attracts and Holds Its Clientele

1. **What proportion of the children of elementary school age are in school?**

According to the 1930 census, 92 percent of the children of the ages 6 to 13 were attending school. Ninety-five percent of the 7- to 13-year-old children were attending.

2. **How does the proportion of children of elementary school age in school vary among the States?**

According to the 1930 census, in 12 States 98 percent or more of the children 7 to 13 years of age were attending school; in 19 more States and the District of Columbia the percentage was above 96; in 5 States, the percentage fell below 90.

3. **How does the proportion of children of elementary school age that are in school compare with the proportion of children of secondary school age that are in school?**

In 1930, 73 percent of the young people of the ages 14 to 17, inclusive, and 92 percent of those 6 to 13 years of age, were attending school.

4. **How does the proportion of elementary school age children in school compare with the comparable proportion for those of college age?**

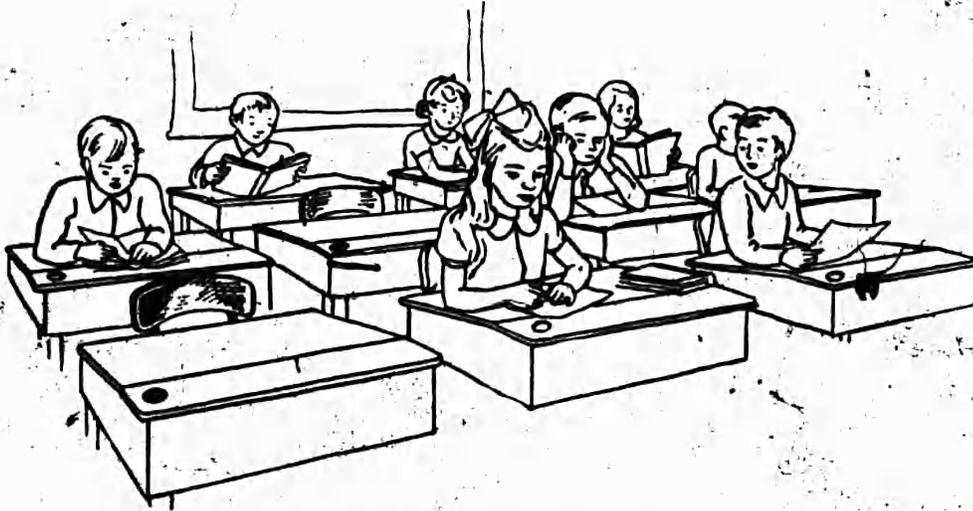
In 1930, when 92 percent of the 6- to 13-year-old group was in school, college enrollments were about 12 percent of the total number of young people 18 to 21 years of age. In 1936 enrollments were about 12.4 percent of the estimated population of that age group. Of course, many persons outside that age group were in college, thereby decreasing the proportion of what is commonly thought of as the college-age group that are in college. Even so, the proportion has increased steadily from 3 percent in 1890.

5. **How does the proportion of children of elementary school age in elementary school compare with that of former years?**

In 1920, the census reported 87 percent of the children 6 to 13 years of age attending school; 91 percent of those 7 to 13 were attending. The 1930 figures were 92 percent and 95 percent, respectively.

6. How regularly do elementary school children attend school?

Eight of every ten children enrolled in public elementary schools, attend school each day school is in session, according to the 41 States which made a report of elementary school attendance in 1936.



Regularity of school attendance.

7. How many children of elementary school age are out of school and employed?

According to the 1930 census, of nearly 10 million children who were 10 to 13 years of age, 235,328, or 2½ percent of them, were gainfully employed.

8. What are the compulsory school attendance laws which affect enrollments in the elementary school?

In 2 States attendance at full-time day school is compulsory at 6 years of age, in 33 States at 7 years of age, and in 13 States at 8 years of age.

The compulsory school attendance ages include not fewer than 7 years in any State, the one State which includes only 7 years being a State in which the elementary school is a 7-year school. In 21 States children are required to complete eighth grade before they may be excused from attending school for employment.

9. So far as the literacy figures show, what proportion of our total population has acquired the rudiments of an elementary education?

Literacy, as defined by the United States Census, means the ability to read and write, either in English or in some other

language. According to the last census (1930), 4.3 percent of the total population 10 years old and over was illiterate. In other words, 95.7 percent can read and write.

10. How does the percentage of illiteracy differ among the States?

The percentage of illiteracy ranged, according to the last census, from 0.8 in Iowa, to 14.9 in South Carolina. The five States with highest and the five with lowest percentages are as follows:

<i>Lowest</i>		<i>Highest</i>	
Iowa	0.8	South Carolina	14.9
Washington	1.0	Louisiana	13.5
Oregon	1.0	New Mexico	13.3
Idaho	1.1	Mississippi	13.1
Utah	1.2	Alabama	12.6

11. How does the proportion of literacy compare with that of former years?

The percentage of literacy has risen steadily in this country, as is shown by United States Census figures:

	<i>Percent literate</i>
1870	80.0
1890	86.7
1910	92.3
1920	94.0
1930	95.7

12. How does the proportion of illiteracy compare with that of certain foreign countries?

Definitions of literacy differ widely among the nations, but the following census reports and estimates as reported in the Department of Commerce Foreign Commerce Yearbook for 1936 show something of the great differences existing in the percentages of illiteracy.

Brazil: "Roughly estimated" around 70 percent."

Chile: "Estimated at about 25 percent in 1930."

Denmark: None.

France: 7 percent of those 5 years of age or over are unable to read or write (1931 census).

Italy: 21 percent of those 6 years and over are not able to read (1931 census).

Japan: "Approximately 10 percent, excluding children under 7."

Mexico: 59 percent in 1930; "estimated 1934 at 54 percent."

Netherlands: "Practically none."

Spain: 43 percent of population over 10 years of age unable to read or write (1930).

Sweden: "Practically no illiteracy."

United States: 4.3 per cent (1930).

13. What proportion of the children who attend elementary schools persist to the eighth grade?

In 1936 there were approximately 83 pupils in the eighth grade for every 100 who had enrolled in fifth grade.

14. How do the proportions of children who persist to the eighth grade compare with those of former years?

The proportion of pupils who reach the eighth grade has risen steadily in the last 10 years. The following figures show the numbers of children reaching eighth grade for every thousand who had enrolled in fifth grade:

	<i>Number of children</i>
1927.....	719
1929.....	745
1931.....	779
1933.....	825
1936.....	831

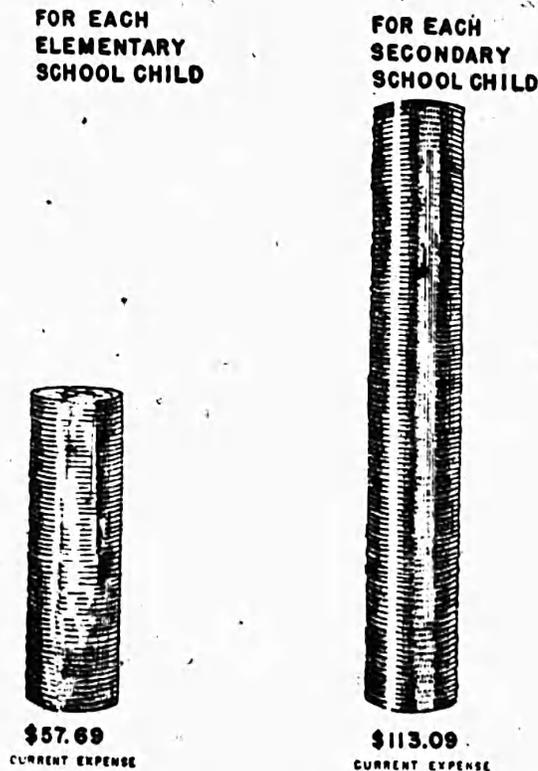
Counting the Cost

1. How much is spent per elementary school child for education?

In 22 States and the District of Columbia which reported such figures separately for elementary schools in 1936, an average of \$57.69 was spent for current expenses for each elementary school pupil in average daily attendance. If this average holds for the other States, we are spending approximately \$1,074,348,457 for current expense for elementary education in this country.

2. How does the amount spent per elementary child compare with that for secondary school pupils?

In that same year 19 of the same States and the District of Columbia spent an average of \$113.09 per pupil in average daily attendance in the regular and vocational high schools.



Average expenditures for elementary and secondary schools.

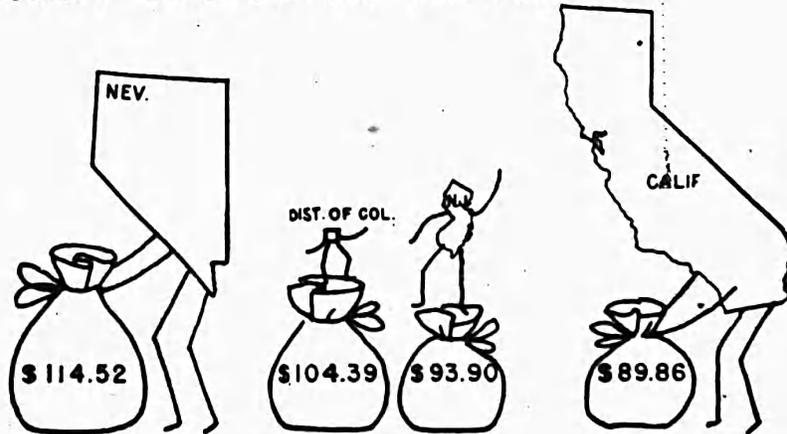
3. How does the amount spent per elementary child vary among the States?

The amount spent for each child by the District of Columbia and the 22 States which reported, ranged from \$18.76 for current expense in Arkansas to \$114.52 in Nevada.

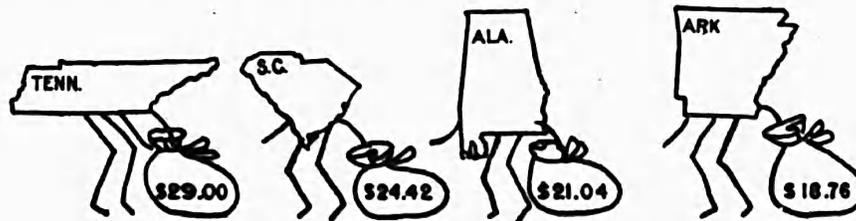
The four States reporting the lowest and the four the highest are as follows:

<i>Lowest</i>		<i>Highest</i>	
Arkansas	\$18.76	Nevada	\$114.52
Alabama	21.04	District of Columbia ..	104.39
South Carolina	24.42	New Jersey	93.90
Tennessee	29.00	California	89.86

HIGHEST EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL



LOWEST EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL



Range in expenditures for elementary schools.

