OE 31003
Bulletin 1963, No. 23

UNIT PLANNING AND TEACHING IN ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES

by WILHELMINA HILL
Specialist for Social Science

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
ANTHONY J. CELEBREZZE, *Secretary*

Office of Education
FRANCIS KEPPEL, *Commissioner*

Foreword

THIS BULLETIN has been prepared to assist teachers and persons serving on curriculum committees in improving the quality of unit teaching and planning for elementary schools. The suggestions and illustrations grow out of a study made by the author of over 500 social studies units which were published during the last few years. They also result from school visitation and consultation in many parts of the Nation.

New directions in unit planning and teaching are shown through the main context of the bulletin with many examples of forward-looking practices and trends. Weaknesses in unit planning, and ways of developing resource units of increased quality and excellence are indicated both directly and indirectly through the various illustrations.

Appreciation is extended to the many persons who have made this publication possible. School systems from whose curriculum publications examples of good practices and quotations were selected, and whose permission to cite these items has been given, are listed at the end of Chapter 1.

Office of Education staff members who contributed to the publication as members of an advisory group are J. Dan Hull, Director, Instructional Programs Branch, Helen K. Mackintosh, Chief, Elementary Schools Section, Ovid F. Parody, Chief, Secondary Schools Section, William C. Gescheider, Program Review Officer, and Howard H. Cummings, Specialist for Social Science and Geography. Marjory D. Bianchi, Research Aide, carried out a significant part of the bibliographical research.

ERIC R. BABER
Assistant Commissioner
Division of Elementary and
Secondary Education

J. DAN HULL
Director, Instructional
Programs Branch

Contents

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION TO UNIT PLANNING AND TEACHING

CHILDREN GROWING UP in the second half of the twentieth century have remarkable opportunities for living and learning in a period of rapid change marked by an explosion of knowledge. They find themselves in an aerospace age when technological and scientific wonders are constantly emerging, when mobility, travel, and communication possibilities are greatly advanced and increasingly available. They also find themselves in a world beset by many problems and tensions as man seeks to control the scientific weapons and tools he has developed.

The child's own environment is greatly broadened because of his access to television, many publications, and other mass media; and due to his greater mobility and increased opportunities to travel by land, sea, and air. Many thousands of elementary age children from kindergarten through sixth-grade levels were with Astronaut Alan Shepard on his momentous trip into space in the spring of 1961, and with Astronaut John Glenn as he orbited the earth on February 20, 1962, as they watched, heard, and saw the events by means of television.

The vast explosion of knowledge and man's other space-age achievements present a tremendous challenge to elementary teachers, principals, and supervisors to select and organize the learning experiences of children in such a way as to be adequate and effective for living in these times and the years ahead. Unit planning and teaching is one of the best ways to provide for learning experiences on a sufficiently broad base for the requirements of living in today's world.

The *unit* [1] has been defined as—

> An organization of various activities, experiences, and types of learning around a central problem, or purpose, developed cooperatively by a group of pupils under teacher leadership; involves planning, execution of plans, and evaluation of results.

Through unit planning and teaching, the social studies and other learning experiences of the children can be kept up-to-date, vitalized, and brimming with challenge. Such units can be large

[1] Carter V. Good, *ed. Dictionary of Education*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1959. p. 587.

enough in scope to hold values and interests for every child in a group; they can provide for sufficient depth in study to satisfy the most earnest student.

The unit method is based upon a Gestalt or organismic type of psychology, in which figure–field relationships are important. Such relationships mean the relation of one element or item with all of the other elements in its field or area. Insight is a significant element in such learning. The learner explores a new area or unit to discover what it is all about. As he gains information and understanding, insight develops.

Problem solving, research activities, and action characterize much of the pupils' learning efforts in a unit experience. Often direct learning experiences have a major role in the development of the unit, rather than vicarious experiences only. Communication skills and many sharing activities are requisites of good unit experiences. When pupils and teacher have attained their objectives for the unit, it is brought to a close by various evaluational, sharing, and concluding activities. These experiences bring the large learning aspects of a

Public Schools, New York City.

Dealing with new subject matter.

unit to a close and provide some means of continuing activities and some leads to ever higher quality of learning achievement in the future. Hence the psychological principle of *closure* is observed as a unit is rounded out and completed, while further goals and achievements are coming into view.

There are many advantages of unit teaching over more formalized, book-centered methods. Increased opportunities are possible for using a wide variety of instructional materials, for capturing the interest of pupils and considering their special needs and concerns, for dealing with new subject matter (such as space developments, and progress of newly independent nations), before it can appear in textbooks, encyclopedias, or other volumes. These and other advantages, aspects, and problems of planning and teaching units are discussed throughout the following chapters.

New directions and improvements in unit planning and instruction in various parts of the country are described in this publication and often recommended. Included are illustrations of good practices in advancing the quality of social studies unit planning and teaching from many places. Among those school systems from whose curriculum materials or teaching practices examples have been used are:

Albuquerque (N. Mex.) Public Schools
Davidson County (Tenn.) Public Schools
Denver (Colo.) Public Schools
District of Columbia Public Schools
East Baton Rouge Parish (La.) Public Schools
Englewood (Colo.) Public Schools
Evansville (Ind.) Public Schools
Grosse Point (Mich.) Public Schools
Indianapolis (Ind.) Public Schools
Louisville (Ky.) Public Schools
Minneapolis (Minn.) Public Schools
Montgomery County (Md.) Public Schools
Nashville (Tenn.) Public Schools
New York City (N.Y.) Public Schools
Orlando (Fla.) Public Schools
Philadelphia (Pa.) Public Schools
Pittsburgh (Pa.) Public Schools
Providence (R.I.) Public Schools
Sacramento (Calif.) Public Schools
San Francisco (Calif.) Public Schools
Virginia State Department of Education
Wichita (Kan.) Public Schools
Wilmette (Ill.) Public Schools

Chapter 2

VARIETIES OF UNIT PLANS AND INSTRUCTION

MANY KINDS and varieties of unit plans and unit teaching can be found in American elementary schools. These variations are due to differences in the children, teachers, educational philosophy, curriculum, community, cultural environment, and part of the country in which the schools involved are located. Some of the major types of units will be identified and described in this chapter in ways that may assist teachers and others in planning and teaching units of quality in our elementary schools.

Types of Unit Plans

Resource units are planned for use with any group of children of appropriate age and grade levels. They usually contain a wealth of material, ideas, and suggestions from which a teacher may select when working with a given group of pupils. Some units may be prepared by a teacher or a committee. They may become part of a course of study, or be published or used separately as a piece of curriculum material. They may be used by one teacher or by many teachers. Resource units are usually prepared before a unit is taught.

Teaching units are planned for use with a specific group of children in mind. The objectives, content, activities, and materials included are intended to meet the special concerns, interests, and abilities of these pupils. Sufficient flexibility is provided to permit opportunities for pupil participation in the planning, development, and the evaluation of a unit experience. A teaching unit is usually prepared by one teacher prior to introducing the unit with a class. He must be willing to make changes in this unit plan as the unit progresses, as new and challenging aspects emerge during the course of the unit.

Daily unit plans are prepared by most teachers during the various phases of unit development. They must be flexible, allowing for pupil-teacher planning and encouraging creativity. But they should indicate the kind of learning experience, objectives, content, activities, materials, to be carried on for a given day. Weekly unit plans are also valuable in attaining continuity and direction in the development of a unit.

Descriptive units are often written by teachers to share the unit experiences of one teacher and class with other teachers and supervisors. Photographs of pupil activities may be taken during various phases of the unit. Descriptive units can be written only when the children and teacher have completed the unit experience. Many times these descriptive units are published or mimeographed so that other educators may learn about the outcomes and possibilities of the unit.

Kinds of Subject Matter Treatment

In American elementary schools, where the unit method is widely used, there is a strong trend toward integration of subject matter, in varying degrees. Most units cut across social studies, science, language arts, fine arts, and other areas. But the main difference lies in how the unit is centered. Its main objectives and emphases are usually in some one subject field. Then other subjects are included as appropriate. For example, in any social studies or science centered unit, there is a good deal of language arts (reading, discussion, written expression) and often of fine arts (music, art, drama, dance). Brief accounts of how subject matter is included in some of the major types of curriculum units follow:

Integrated Units. In some schools an integrated type of unit teaching is favored. Appropriate learnings from several subject fields, such as social studies, science, language arts, health, and fine arts are included. Sometimes the units are social studies based, as with units on community life, the Westward movement, or Brazil. They are often science centered as with units on astronomy or wildlife. Again they may focus on both social studies and science which is true with units on conservation, aviation, or communication. Occasionally integrated units may have a language arts or fine arts center of interest, as happens in units about children's writers or music and musicians.

Public Schools, Long Beach, Calif.

Integrated unit includes several subject fields.

Usually where integrated units occupy a central position in the curriculum and in the daily learning experiences of the children, special time is allocated for the unit in the daily schedule. Often two hours or so are indicated for the *unit*, and on the daily schedule the subjects involved are identified specifically. Often part of the unit block of time is divided into two sections, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The unit might appear on the daily schedule as:

Unit (*social studies*, *science*, *language arts*, *fine arts*). Then at other times during the day, time may be scheduled for developmental work in such subjects as mathematics, music, spelling, and reading, as needed. In other words, not everything in a school day must relate to the integrated unit. Some of the work-type reading will be done in the unit experience. Other reading skills and appreciations must be provided for at another time. The same may be said for other subjects of the elementary curriculum.

Social Studies Units. The majority of elementary social studies courses and guides contain units or recommend unit planning and teaching. Possibly the most widely taught units in elementary schools are those which are social studies centered. This is because so much of the elementary curriculum revolves around social education

n its various aspects. While social studies units deal with some area of social studies such as "Homes Here and Around the World," [2] or "Living in South America in an Air Age," [3] still they draw content, skills, and activities from other curriculum fields, including language arts, science, music, and art. These units are usually broad in scope; sometimes they involve study in depth. From 4 to 6 weeks is usually required for their development and a depth study may take longer.

Social studies units are usually characterized by problem solving and research reading and study. Emphasis is placed upon the development of concepts, map and study skills, and socializing experiences through which the child may develop cooperation, acceptance of responsibility, and consideration of the rights of others as a way of life. Preparation for citizenship, as a child and in future years, and an understanding of his world—local, state, national, international—are significant purposes and outcomes of social studies unit experiences for children in elementary schools.

Science Units. When planning or teaching elementary science units both long and short-term studies may be included, depending upon whether large or smaller study areas are selected for units. Often these units are taught parallel to social studies units. At times, when the subject matter overlaps, as with conservation or aviation units, science and social studies may be taught as one unit.

Science units place considerable emphasis upon content, processes, observation, and experimentation. The development of concepts and skills is basic to the unit experiences. Continuity from unit to unit and year to year is important, so that significant understandings and skills become part of each young American's background for living now and in the years ahead.

Language Arts Units. Although language arts has an important place in integrated, social studies, and science units, the curriculum of language arts as a subject is often organized in units. These units may be primarily concerned with some aspect of usage or a communication skill; they may be concerned with some aspect or type of children's literature, such as travel, adventure, or poets and poetry; or they may parallel a social studies or science unit.

Fine Arts Units. Occasionally the arts are at the heart and core of a unit. Units have been taught about music and musicians, about art and artists. Such units are planned and carried out much as other units, drawing from social studies, language arts, and science

---

[2] *Teaching Guide, Social Studies, Grades I, II, and III.* Providence (R.I.) Public Schools. Providence: The Public Schools, 1957. pp. 36–45.

[3] *Living in South America in an Air Age.* California School Supervisors' Association. San Francisco: The Association (193 Sutter Street), 1958. 95 pp.

as needed for carrying out the study and activities. Naturally the subject matter and activities are primarily concerned with cultural values and means of expression. Of course there is a great deal of the fine arts in the units of other subjects, especially with social studies units, in which the arts contribute to an understanding of the culture of a region, country, or people. At the same time the arts provide the children themselves with added means of communication.

Health and Safety Units. The curriculum of many health and safety programs is organized in units. These are developed much as other units and focus attention on selected aspects of safe and healthful living. Inasmuch as these matters involve living at school as well as at home and in the community, the unit activities may be carried out in any part of or throughout the school day.

Units in Other Subjects. Since the unit method of organizing subject matter and learning experiences has been found effective and is widely used in elementary schools, certain aspects of other subjects are often organized in more or less similar manner. Among these are mathematics, spelling, and reading.

How Units Are Developed

Units may be experience, activity, or subject-matter centered depending upon the needs of the children and their community, and upon the philosophy of learning held by the teachers and supervisors. There are many variations and shades of difference between an experience unit and a subject matter unit. Some of these will be indicated in this section.

Experience Units. When a unit of study is developed around some broad area of living of the children, about which they are aware, interested, and concerned, it may be described as an *experience unit.* It grows out of the children's many experiences and is developed through direct as well as vicarious experiences. The unit usually involves problem solving, the problems being actual concerns of the children themselves who not only study about the problems but take steps toward their solution. They work toward goals that are real and meaningful to them. Such units may be about problems related to their clothing, communication, safety, or conservation of natural resources in their own vicinity or region.

Activity Units. Some units involve a variety of learning activities during the course of their development, yet the topic for study may be further removed from the felt concerns of the children than is true of an experience unit. For convenience, such units may be called activity units. They may be about such topics as Brazil, Japan, the Congo, or pioneer life. The children will learn about the subject through wide reading, map and globe study, interviewing people, trips to museums, viewing films, correspondence, construction work, using art and music media, or other learning activities appropriate to each unit.

Subject Matter Units. Some unit plans and teaching concentrate on the acquisition of subject matter to a greater degree than others. Most of the learning activities tend to be verbal, with reading, discussion, writing, and testing comprising the main means of learning. There is seldom time or provision for direct learning experiences, such as planting trees and shrubs, meeting someone from another country, or solving a safety problem. Often the subject matter unit is textbook centered, though this is not necessarily so. Many units of the subject matter type follow the organization of a single textbook which has been adopted for a school or school system. There is great variation in such units concerning the degree of wide reading and use of audiovisual aids included in the plans and the teaching and learning.

Unit Studies in Depth. One of the promising new developments in unit planning and teaching is the occasional development of a unit study in depth. Rather than skimming over the surface of a large area, such as a continent, throughout a series of units undertaken or planned for a year, time is taken occasionally to study a country or a topic more thoroughly and deeply than when wider coverage is attempted. While depth studies cannot be made of every country or every topic in such fields as social studies and science, still pupils can attain considerable insight about certain unit topics chosen because of their significance. Such study will enrich and give a degree of depth to their learning and understanding not attainable by other means. One example of what is meant was observed in Wilmette, Illinois, where pupils of a class were studying about Africa and its many nations. First they studied the continent as a whole and its various regions. Then the pupils chose four different countries for study in depth and divided into four groups for this concentrated study. Later the four groups shared their learning with each other. It would have been impossible to have studied each of the more than forty nations of Africa in depth. Through careful selection, such study was made possible for four of the African nations which pupils

and teacher found most significant. Though the overall unit was about Africa, four parts of it were developed in depth.

Sometimes a class, school, or school system will undertake a depth study of a single country or topic which has special value to its children. On one occasion, 28 San Francisco schools chose to make a depth study of Pakistan which was related to sending a child ambassador to that country. The study was organized as units and resulted in greatly enriched learning on the part of the children.

Contemporary Event Units. At times, classes may develop an on-the-spot unit because of some significant happening in the world which holds special interest for them. Such units are usually selected and planned through pupils and teacher working together and they deal with problems and questions related to some outstanding contemporary happening such as:

Presidential election
Glenn's orbiting of the earth
Coronation of a queen or king
International conference

Chapter 3

PLACE OF UNITS IN THE CURRICULUM

THE UNIT OF STUDY usually holds a central and strategic position in the curriculum plans and the daily activities of a group of children. If the unit is large enough in scope, many of the day's learning experiences will center around or relate to it.

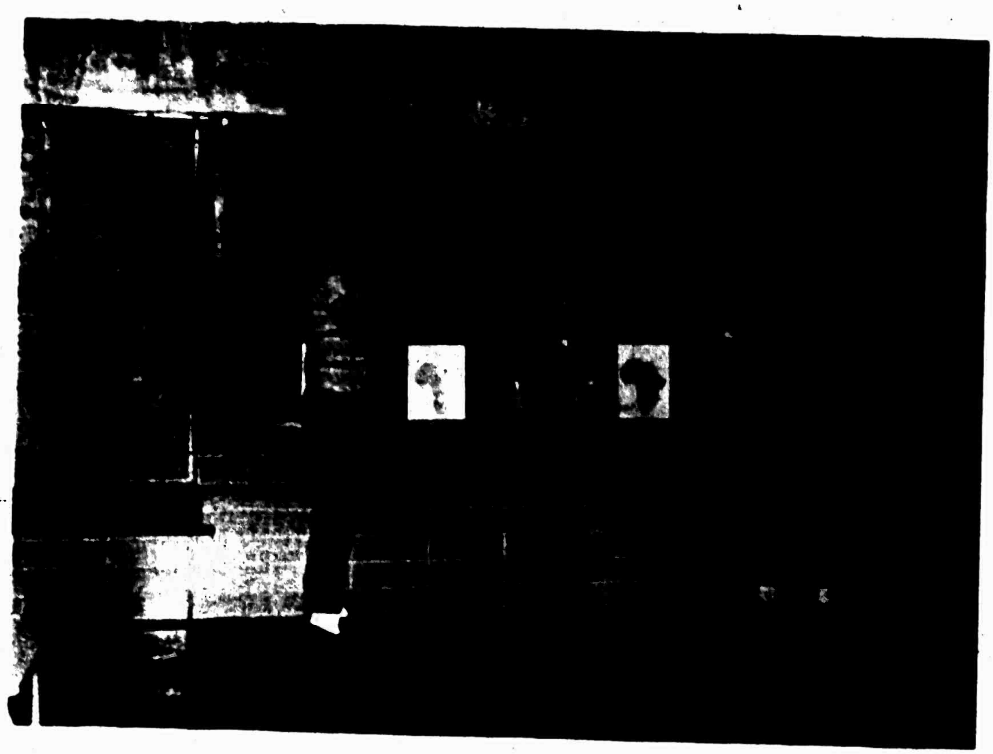
Illustrative of this central or core quality of a unit are the experiences of a group of Denver children who were studying about railroads. Although the unit was social studies centered, the children were gaining and putting to good use skills in work-type reading as they learned about various aspects of railroading. The reading was wide and varied, with each child reading from a different book as he searched for information about the major topics, which had been agreed upon by the class. The children were learning and using other language arts skills such as writing, spelling, and discussion, as they carried on their unit activities. A number of communication skills were involved when the children wrote to a local railroad and a small freight train on a spur track stopped near the school, so the children could question the engineer and observe and study the safety devices on his locomotive. Considerable science and safety education were included as related to steam and diesel locomotives and their safety devices. Construction and art skills were learned as the children built different kinds of railroad cars for their dramatic activities, and painted a long railroad mural for their room.

While the children were studying the railroad unit, many of their learnings in social science and other fields were included in the unit experience. At other times in the school day, there was time for developmental learning in such fundamental fields as reading, arithmetic, and spelling. And there was provision for physical education, music, and art activities that were not specifically related to the unit.

It is quite conceivable that an entire day's school activities may be part of or related to a unit. This may be true when a field trip or an open house for visitors is scheduled. But usually 1 or 2 hours

677406 O—63——2

for unit study and activities are scheduled for the school day. Other subjects, such as reading, arithmetic, and music are given a regular time on the schedule. Occasionally what is done at these times and in these subjects relates to the unit. Again it does not. In general, teachers have found that many children tire of studying about airplanes, or Indians, or Mexico, all day long, week after week, as interesting as the subjects may be. In other words, not everything done in a school day must relate to the unit, though there are times when this may be appropriate. Flexibility is characteristic of most unit planning and teaching.



Public Schools, Austin, Tex.

Studying an extensive social studies unit about Africa.

When a large and comprehensive unit is being carried on, one or more units of lesser duration and scope may be studied by a class at the same time. For example, a class might be studying a rather extensive social studies-centered unit about some of the newly independent countries of Africa. At the same time they might be carrying out a science-centered unit about minerals and rocks at another time of day. Or they might be enjoying a poetry unit in their language arts program. These different units would occasionally converge or be related, but essentially they would be carried on as parallel learning experiences.

Schoolwide units or enterprises are sometimes planned and carried out in an elementary school. Examples of this procedure are the conservation and school beautification units developed by some schools. With this kind of unit technique each class tends to select a different and appropriate aspect of conservation for study and different responsibilities and projects to work out as its part of the overall enterprise. Such units or enterprises have been observed in Florida and Maryland. People of other nations, the United Nations, safety, and patriotism and loyalty to America are other unit topics that are sometimes developed on a schoolwide basis.

Public Schools, Stanislaus County, Calif.

Learning about rocks and minerals in a science unit.

The unit method of teaching is especially valuable for small rural schools where there may be only one or two teachers. Here such unit topics as transportation, shelter, pioneers, weather, or Mexico may be taught with children from several grade levels participating. Reading material on the subject suitable for the various ability levels is secured. Each child or group goes as far into the study of the topic as his maturity and ability make possible.

Taking a unit on weather as an example, the beginners are concerned with day and night, wind and precipitation, and seasonal changes. The next age level can grasp these ideas and also something about *globality* as related to the earth, moon, sun, universe, and orbits of man-made satellites. Eight- and 9-year-olds are ready to study weather stations and weather predicting. Nine- and 10-year olds begin to learn about climate, including types of climates in various parts of the world. Ten- and 11-year-olds are interested in climate and weather patterns, conditions, and effects in the United States, while 11- and 12-year-olds may be ready to consider climate as an aspect of conditions in any country of the world and as related to world events such as space flights, food shortages, or scientific expeditions.

This illustration, shows that children of various ages and grade levels can work together on the same unit. Of course those of different ability and maturity levels would study varying aspects of the unit. And they would carry out activities according to their interests, comprehension level, and skills. By this technique of including children of different grade levels in the same unit, the number of separate classes a teacher would have to schedule daily in a small rural school could be greatly reduced without lessening the quality of the learning. Actually the quality of instruction and outcome is likely to be enhanced by such a procedure.

* * *

In conclusion, it may be said that the unit of study occupies the central position in the curriculum patterns of a large number of elementary schools. These units may be social studies, science, language arts, or fine arts oriented, or they may include several subject areas in an integrated manner. Other parts of the curriculum are related to the major unit of study as appropriate.

Chapter 4

SELECTION OF UNITS

IN PRACTICE, units are selected in many different ways. They may be selected or suggested by curriculum committees and often they are selected by teachers within certain broad areas. Many times some of the units to be studied by a class are selected through pupils and teacher working together while keeping the curriculum scope or theme for the year in mind. It can be said that flexibility in the selection of units within certain limitations has come into rather wide practice.

Committee Selection

Curriculum committees have a great deal to do with the selection of units. Most states and cities have developed curriculum guides through the work of committees which present the overall framework of the curriculum for elementary pupils. Often this framework is set forth in terms of *scope* and *sequence*. Appropriate units for the various grade levels and including the different aspects of the scope, such as areas of living or basic concepts, may or may not be suggested. Often the responsibility for unit selection is left to local teacher committees or individual teachers.

Where responsibility for unit selection is given to committees there is a strong trend toward much flexibility, thus providing for different interests and concerns of children in various kinds of groups, backgrounds, and environments. Most of the newer state curriculum guides for social studies, which include units or lists of units, recommend or suggest the units rather than require that they be taught.

In the Denver Public Schools, two or three social studies units are required at each elementary grade level to give a core of uniformity and make certain the inclusion of basic social studies areas in the programs of all pupils. Other units for each class are selected through pupil-teacher effort and based upon pupil concerns, developments in the world, and curriculum objectives.

Another method of providing opportunity for teacher or pupil-teacher choices of units is employed by the East Baton Rouge Parish Public Schools. Their social studies guides for each grade contain 12 units from which about 6 may be chosen.

Regardless of the way in which committee-made curriculum guides and materials indicate suggested units for each grade, most school systems permit or encourage teachers to make selections or changes believed necessary to improve the program for a given group of children.

Teacher Selection

Where state guides or local courses of study do not suggest units for the various grades, the major responsibility for selection of units often falls upon the teacher. In areas where there are no or few supervisory services, this same situation often persists.

Sometimes teachers, finding themselves in the above situations, resort to the method of following the sequence of units in a given textbook. To the degree that the textbook meets the needs of the pupils and the area concerned this may be satisfactory. Usually, however, good practice consists in selecting the units by other means, and then using the textbooks to carry on and enrich the unit study and activities as appropriate.

Well-supervised school systems also may rely on teacher responsibility for unit selection. The supervisors and principals assist the teachers in becoming effective in this work. With this kind of plan the selection of units can become an excellent means of adapting the learning experiences to the special needs of the children and the environment concerned.

Pupil-Teacher Selection

There are times when it is desirable for pupils and teachers to select one or more of their units cooperatively. The selection may grow naturally out of some experience or it may be accomplished by group study and discussion techniques.

Cooperative selection of a unit by pupils and teacher helps the pupils grow in the ability to analyze their needs and abilities and to make decisions about the direction and nature of their learning experiences. When children participate in setting their own goals, they tend to try harder to achieve them.

Children are creative. They like to explore, to find out about their world. To the degree to which children participate in unit selection will a degree of refreshment and excitement about learning develop among them concerning their unit. This can provide and stimulate a most favorable climate for beginning and carrying out a unit experience.

Methods for Pupil-Teacher Selection

There are times when a unit may well be selected through pupil-teacher cooperation. No one way of carrying out this process is generally better than others. Each teacher with a group of children may approach this activity in ways most appropriate for each situation.

Regardless of how the teacher plans and organizes for pupil-teacher selection of a unit, he should make every effort that the choice be in keeping with (1) the scope and sequence pattern of the curriculum, and (2) the age and ability levels of the children. He will need to keep the interests and concerns of the children in mind throughout the process.

The teacher may sharpen his knowledge of the interests and concerns of his pupils by—

- Observing their activities and behavior in school, on the playgrounds, in the community
- Listening to what the children say at school and in the neighborhood
- Noting what the children read
- Observing what children bring from home to share with their classmates
- Analyzing the creative expression of pupils—drawings, writing, dramatic play, drama
- Giving an informal interest inventory
- Discussing with pupils their hobbies, vacation interests, favorite TV programs, best radio news programs, best-liked movies, and their newspaper reading

A list of possible units may be developed by the teacher and the pupils working together. A set of criteria for selecting the unit may also be made cooperatively. Which of the two lists is developed first would depend upon the teacher's judgment and preference.

The list of criteria should be brief, to the point, and in the children's own language. It might consist of such questions as:

- Is the subject interesting?
- Why do we need to know about this topic?
- In what way will studying the unit help us?

Is the unit important for understanding social studies or science?

Is the unit too hard? Too easy? Just right for us?

Will we be able to find plenty of information and other study materials about the subject?

After the various suggestions for units have been discussed, the selection may be completed by reaching a general agreement or by taking a vote. Some teachers prefer to secure a secret vote, when the wishes of the group are not clear. In this way children are not influenced by others, but indicate which unit is really preferred. Such a vote can be accomplished through writing the preferred unit topics on slips of paper, which are then counted. Or the children may shut their eyes, put their heads on their desks, and raise their hands to be counted as the teacher reads the titles of the units. Probably the method of general agreement is most desirable.

With such procedures, the teacher is sometimes faced with a problem if no large majority chooses one of the units. This impasse may be resolved through discussion. A compromise may be made by studying the unit which has the most advocates, first. The unit which has the second number of votes could be scheduled for later attention.

Such selection techniques as the above when carried out with interest and enthusiasm can provide powerful motivation for learning. Since the children have a part in choosing the unit, they will usually be anxious to carry out the study activities of the unit with interest and diligence.

Guidelines for Selection of Units

The following guidelines for the selection of units are presented for the assistance of teachers and committees:

1. The unit chosen should have value and significance (1) for the children, (2) to society, and (3) in the subject field of which it is a part.
2. Selectivity in unit selection is essential because the tremendous amount of knowledge generally and the explosion of knowledge in our times make it impossible for the learner to go into all aspects of a subject with equal thoroughness.
3. The unit area selected should be broad enough in scope to contain elements that will challenge the interest of every child in the group concerned.
4. The unit should be related to the scope and sequence which has been designated for the curriculum of the level or grade.
5. The unit should be appropriate for the age and ability levels of the children and suited to their interest and needs.

Chapter 5

PREPARATION OF RESOURCE UNITS

IT IS GENERALLY agreed that resource units are a valuable curriculum aid for teachers. Upon these units teachers may draw for ideas and direction when they are planning and teaching units with children. In this chapter are suggestions to help committees, teachers, or students, who are planning to teach, develop resource units of good quality.

While many of the suggestions and recommendations grow out of practical experience and nationwide observation of unit teaching and planning, others result from a study of over 500 social studies resource units. This study of units was carried out as an Office of Education project, part of which (400 units) was done for the National Council for the Social Studies and reported or published by that council.[1]

In general it was found that resource units in the social studies for elementary schools provide excellent curriculum aids for the teacher. On the other hand, it was evident that considerable improvement could be attained in matters of design and format. Some suggestions for such improvement will appear at appropriate points in this chapter.

Nature and Use

Basically a resource unit presents curriculum materials which provide a teacher with many ideas about significant learnings, appropriate pupil activities, and instructional materials. Invariably resource units include many more suggestions for approaches, activities, and materials than a teacher would use with one class. Rather, he draws upon the unit as a source of ideas, information, and materials,

[1] Hill, Wilhelmina., *ed. Selected Resource Units: Elementary Social Studies (K–6).* Washington: National Council for the Social Studies, National Education Association, 1960. 91 pp. Also found in Michaelis, John U., *ed. Social Studies in Elementary Schools.* Washington: National Council for the Social Studies, National Education Association, 1962. P. 262–270.

as needed and selects those he finds helpful. To these he adds his own ideas at a given time, those of his pupils, and those from other available resources. In other words, the resource unit is just what its name implies—a *resource*. It is not something that must be followed in detail. The teacher derives help and direction from it in planning and teaching a unit with children. The teacher draws upon it as a resource when he prepares his daily lesson plans for the unit, and in preparation for cooperative planning and the development of unit activities with the children.

A good definition of a resource unit and suggestions on its use is contained in the *Social Studies Guide* [2] for Wichita Public Schools.

> A resource unit has been described as a "teaching file" containing materials, ideas and suggestions from which a teacher may prepare a unit for classroom purposes. Resource units are not designed to be taught as developed, but rather to serve as "resources." It is assumed that the teaching unit can be planned only by an individual teacher with reference to his own experience and personality and to his students and their abilities. The units and courses (presented herein) are, therefore, considered as guides and "starting places" for the teacher.

Ingredients of a Resource Unit

Overview. The introductory section of a resource unit is usually considered or labeled the *overview*. In one or more paragraphs the scope, emphasis, and possibilities of the unit are indicated. The significance of the unit for children, and for society, is pointed out as well as its place in the structure of the subject fields involved.

An illustration of the overview is the following from a first grade unit on "Family Life," [3] used in Grosse Pointe, Michigan.

> While the family group is the first social institution with which children have any direct connection, the knowledge about this institution is still limited to their own immediate family and is, as yet, unorganized. By making a study of home and family life a group project, each child can be led to the organizing of and generalizing about his own personal experiences, to learn and appreciate the benefits he receives as a family member and to recognize his responsibility for participation in the group. Through this experience, he may be helped to develop a basic concept of the cooperative nature of good citizenship and to learn democratic behavior through practice.

---

[2] *Social Studies Guide.* Grade 6. Wichita (Kans.) Public Schools. Wichita: The Public Schools, 1960. p. I.

[3] *Units of Work in the Core Curriculum Program.* Grades 1–2. Grosse Pointe (Mich.) Public School System. Grosse Pointe: The Public Schools, 1961.

Objectives. Most resource units include objectives for the unit. These objectives should relate to the specific unit being planned and not to the whole range of objectives for the subject field or fields involved. Usually a few of the most significant objectives for a given unit are adequate and much more effective and usable in carrying out a unit than a long list of objectives. The comprehensive lists of objectives should appear in the overall curriculum guide for a subject or level of education. These need not be repeated in each of the units which make up this same curriculum.

Public Schools, Philadelphia, Pa.

Fifth graders study units about the United States.

Examples of well-stated unit objectives are the following from two fourth-grade units used in Albuquerque. The first group of objectives is for a unit on "Geography and Map Reading."[4]

[4] *A Guide to Teaching the Social Studies in Grades 4–9.* Albuquerque (N. Mex.) Public Schools. Albuquerque: The Public Schools, 1960. p. 3.

A. To appreciate how living things adjust to their environment.
B. To learn to respect and appreciate other peoples.
C. To understand the interdependence of people in relation to global living.
D. To learn to read maps and globes in order to interpret information.
E. To realize that understanding is the foundation for peace.

The second list is for a unit on "Mexico." [5]

A. To gain a knowledge of the history of Mexico in order to understand the customs and traditions.
B. To aid in understanding how location and altitude affect people's way of living.
C. To become familiar with the customs, homelife, occupations, and sports of Mexico.
D. To appreciate Mexican arts and crafts.
E. To develop goodwill toward our southern neighbor.
F. To develop an attitude of respect for people whose modes of living are different from ours.
G. To understand the similarities between different countries.
H. To encourage the desire to learn Spanish.
I. To learn how Spanish and Indian cultures are mixed.
J. To understand why Mexico is a land of contrasts.

Content. The content of a given unit may be indicated in a number of ways. Often it is presented through a series of "Problems for Developing the Unit." If these problems are carefully formulated and take into account the structure of the subject matter they can be most effective. This method of indicating the content of a unit provides good leads toward the use of problem solving methods and experiences in the classroom.

Illustrative of the use of "Problems for Developing the Unit" are the three basic study problems from a Nashville unit study of "Hawaii" for the fifth grade: [6]

1. How do the people live in Hawaii?
2. What is the story of Hawaii?
3. What are the advantages and problems relating to Hawaii's Statehood? How are some of the problems being solved?

Accompanying each of these basic problems are several suggestions about activities and points of emphasis.

A fourth-grade unit on the "Pacific Islands," used in Grosse Pointe,[7] indicates the subject matter scope with problems accompanied by details in outline form:

---

[5] Ibid. p. 12.
[6] *Introducing Our New States Alaska and Hawaii.* A Resource Unit for the Social Studies. Nashville (Tenn.) City Schools. Nashville: The City Schools, 1960. pp. 42–44.
[7] Grosse Pointe, op. cit. Grade 4. p. 2.

1. What natural factors are characteristic of islands?
   - a. Land forms
   - b. Reefs
   - c. Lagoons
   - d. Rainfall
   - e. Temperature
   - f. Soil
   - g. Ocean

2. How have the island people adjusted to their environment?
   - a. Food
     - (1) Bananas
     - (2) Coconuts
     - (3) Copra
     - (4) Fish
     - (5) Breadfruit
     - (6) Taro
     - (7) Meat and fowl
   - b. Transportation
   - c. Types of homes
   - d. Education
     - (1) Formal schooling
     - (2) Observation
     - (3) Home teaching
   - e. Clothing

3. What kinds of plants and animals do the islands have?
   - a. Coconut-palm trees
   - b. Breadfruit trees
   - c. Taro plants
   - d. Fruit
   - e. Flowers
   - f. Birds
   - g. Wild pigs

4. How is copra important to these island people?
   - a. How copra is made
   - b. Copra sent to the United States

5. How do the islanders earn a living?
   - a. Agriculture
   - b. Fishing
   - c. Weaving
   - d. Trading

6. How do island people build their homes?
   - a. Materials used
   - b. Slanting roofs
   - c. Sides which open
   - d. Very little furniture

7. How do the island people build their boats?
   - a. Materials used
   - b. Tying the canoe
   - c. Making the sail

8. How do the islanders have a feast?
   - a. Preparing food
   - b. Getting dressed
   - c. Having fun
     - (1) Stories
     - (2) Talking
     - (3) Playing

9. How are all islands alike?
   - a. Surrounded by water
   - b. Travel by water, air, or across bridges to reach them.

Ways that questions may be used for organizing the content of a unit are indicated in this section of a fifth-grade unit on "Farming in the United States." [8]

> The following are illustrative of the questions which the teacher and children might develop cooperatively. Questions like these might then form the basis for the content and activities that follow. The teacher should help the children organize these questions.
>
> 1. What different kinds of farming are there in our country? (wheat, dairy, truck, cotton, fruit)
> 2. Where are these farming regions located?
> 3. How do farmers help you? What can you do to help them?
> 4. What is life like on a farm? How is it different from living in Philadelphia?
> 5. What problems do farmers have? How do they solve them?

With the current interest in the structure of a subject field as an important element in curriculum planning,[9] it is becoming increasingly helpful to teachers when subject content outlines as well as problems are included in a unit plan. The format used in the New York City social studies bulletin for grades 5 and 6,[10] includes such outlines which are believed to be helpful to the teachers. Problems and questions for use in developing the unit are also included.

Major concepts which should be developed through the unit should usually be indicated. Sometimes one or a few of the most significant concepts may be indicated in the overview, the objectives, the content, or a separate section of the unit. Such generalized knowledge is extremely important to the learner, for it gives him abilities to understand relationships and to use his knowledge both in the present and in the future. The teacher should have clearly in mind which concepts can be initiated or further developed during the course of a unit. It must be remembered that the development of the basic concepts of a given subject field usually requires many learning experiences, often over a period of years. This fact makes it important to know what these concepts are and which are most appropriate to a given unit plan.

An illustration of how concepts may be listed is presented from a New York City unit on "Living in the United States Today" which indicates the following concepts for development:

---

[8] *Social Studies in the Elementary Schools.* Philadelphia (Pa.) Public Schools. Philadelphia: The Public Schools, 1956. p. 164.

[9] Bruner, Jerome S. *The Process of Education.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961. pp. 17–32.

[10] *Social Studies, Grades 5–6.* New York: City Board of Education, 1962. 122 pp.

[11] Ibid. pp. 115–116.

1. People are more likely to gain just and equal rights under rules made democratically.
2. Through democracy, men acquire some commonly accepted social rights, such as the right to help make the laws under which we live.
3. People have obligations as well as rights under a democratic form of government.
4. People have improved their ways of living through many inventions and discoveries.
5. People establish governments and make laws and contributions to gain freedom and justice.
6. People strive to improve working conditions and to make life safer and more healthful for everyone.

Another unit from the same city on "How We Work With Other Countries" [12] presents the following concepts:

1. The way that people live depends to a large extent on their natural environment.
2. All people have certain basic needs, regardless of where they live on the earth.
3. People are much alike in feelings and needs, although they often differ in appearance, ideas, and customs.
4. The type of food, clothing and shelter that people need is often conditioned by the environment in which they live.
5. Many of the things we use in daily life come from distant lands.
6. People all over the world are becoming constantly more dependent upon each other.
7. Events that occur in far off places affect us because of improved means of transportation and communication.
8. International problems are often caused by geographic conditions.
9. People of all races and religions have contributed to civilization.

Activities. Suggested activities are an important element of a resource unit. Many and varied kinds of activities should be included. Above all, the planners should be certain that a balance is attained in the kind of activities suggested. Among those listed should be approach or exploratory, informational, expressional, and evaluational experiences.

Among the informational activities should be several ways of discovering information and understanding. These may include reading, interviewing, taking trips, experimenting, observing, discussing, viewing films and television, and problem solving.

Expressional activities should have a good balance between the written and oral. They should frequently include drama, rhythms, construction, art, or music. Throughout these expressional activities, creativity should be encouraged.

[12] Ibid. p. 102.

Many resource units suggest ways in which a unit may be rounded out or completed. Such activities are labeled "culminating" or "concluding" activities. Not every unit must close with such events. Nevertheless, these activities provide excellent means for reviewing, evaluating, and summarizing what has been accomplished through the unit experience and serve as a basis for determining next steps.

A list from a fourth-grade unit on "Life in Japan" for use in East Baton Rouge schools [13] suggests an excellent variety of activities for use in carrying out the unit.

1. Locate maps and pictures of Japan
2. Collect books and bulletins about Japan and have a bookshelf on Japan in the classroom
3. Make a bibliography of readings on Japan
4. Examine Japanese dishes, toys, fans, prints, works of art
5. Invite a Japanese or American who has lived in Japan to speak to the class and to answer questions
6. See a film about Japan and its children
7. Make a wall map of Japan for the classroom
8. Visit an art gallery to see the Japanese art
9. Exchange letters, photographs, stamps, artwork, or albums with Japanese children
10. Draw or paint pictures showing how Japanese children live at home, at school, or play
11. Construct a small Japanese house with sliding screens, alcove, and *tatami* (straw mats) on the floor
12. Enact through rhythms and pantomime some of the legends of the Japanese people
13. Learn Japanese song and dance combinations using fans or parasols
14. Learn to write some Japanese characters with a brush
15. Learn to write your name in Japanese, with the help of Japanese visitors or Japanese-American neighbors who might know how to write in Japanese
16. Arrange flowers and leaves for the classroom in the Japanese manner
17. Cut and fold paper objects as Japanese children do
18. Have boys fly paper fish and girls show doll collections on Children's Day, which is held on May 5 in Japan
19. Construct miniature Japanese gardens in dishes
20. Make a hanging scroll, called a *kakemono*, for the classroom
21. Prepare a meal of rice and eat with chopsticks

[13] *For All Children World Understanding.* Social Studies Resource Units for the Fourth Grade. East Baton Rouge Parish (La.) Public Schools. Baton Rouge: The Public Schools, 1960. pp. 86–87.

22. Learn a few words of Japanese:
    a. *Ohayō gozaimasu*—Good morning
    b. *Kon-nichi-wa*—Hello
    c. *Ikaga desu ka*—How do you do?
    d. *Dō-zo*—Please
    e. *Arigatō*—Thank you
    f. *Sayonara*—Goodby
    g. *Dōitashi-mashite*—You are welcome
23. Give group reports based on reading by means of exhibits, discussions, puppets, dramatizations and other means.
24. Have a tea party using Japanese type decorations, such as paper lanterns, fans, and cherry blossoms.
25. Invite parents and let them see and hear some of the work about Japan.

California State Department of Education.

Visiting teacher from Japan helps children learn to write in Japanese.

Evaluation. Every resource unit should indicate ways of evaluating the outcomes. These suggestions may appear in the section on activities or may be presented as a separate item. They should recommend a variety of evaluational measures in keeping with the objectives. They may include testing, analysis of written and oral expression, analysis of art work, or observation of behavior in various situations.

677406 O—63——3

A brief, yet useful, statement concerning means of evaluating a neighborhood unit for Philadelphia [14] second-graders suggests that—

> The teacher may use tests, checklists, his own observations, and discussions with the children to determine the extent to which the objectives of the unit have been realized.

More detailed suggestions are provided for evaluating a sixth-grade unit on "How Is the United States Helping to Make a Better World?" [15]

> Many of the reference books suggested for this unit include a variety of tests to measure the pupils' growth in the acquisition of functional information, their increasing control over needed skills, and their grasp of general understandings. The children will enjoy making and conducting quiz programs, "true or false" reviews, and multiple-choice, matching, completion, and other types of tests.
>
> Some of the tests prepared by the teacher or teacher and pupils cooperatively may be planned to measure the ability to—
>
> Organize and classify reference materials
>
> Read various types of graphs
>
> Identify important leaders of the various nations
>
> Locate cities and regions on world maps
>
> Discriminate between opinion and fact.

In addition, a survey of the learning activities and experiences suggested in this unit reveals many opportunities, both incidental and planned, for the attainment of its overall objectives. The following list includes some of the possible evidences of growth for which the teacher should look as the unit is carried on.

A. In developing a more intelligent understanding of different ways of living among their world neighbors, children are showing evidence of:

1. Wider tastes in leisure time reading
2. Interest in nations of the world
3. Learning that people of other countries enjoy many of the same things Americans do

B. In appreciating the efforts of the United States in working together with other nations to attain a peaceful world, children are:

1. Relating scientific advances in the United States to need for cooperation among nations if better life is to be achieved by all
2. Recognizing importance of rules and standards when people live and work together
3. Preparing current events reports dealing with the United Nations

[14] Philadelphia, op. cit. p. 82.
[15] Ibid. p. 188.

4. Learning to participate in group planning and evaluating
5. Taking part in projects of aid to people in need around the world
6. Becoming acquainted with the organization and functions of of the United Nations
7. Appreciating the ideals of Americans for a better and more secure world

An excellent checklist for the teacher to use in evaluating a fourth-grade unit on "Discovery and Exploration" is included in an Albuquerque unit.[16]

A. Is there an awareness of the reasons and effects of the explorations made by Spain, England, and France?

B. Is there evidence of map study skills?
   1. In ability to locate cities, routes, countries, oceans
   2. In use of latitude and longitude
   3. In recognition of land and water forms
   4. In reading political maps
   5. In understanding time zones and date lines

C. Is there ability to interpret the growth of the new world through maps and oral expression?

D. Is there an interest in historical and present-day scientific achievement?

E. Do children evidence an interest in historical figures through observation of TV programs, collections of clippings and library books?

F. Are the children aware of possibilities for exploration in their own lives and world?

Suggested Materials. It is customary and helpful to include lists of materials and necessary equipment in most resource units. Here may be listed textbooks, supplementary books (fiction, biography, nonfiction, folklore), reference books, poetry, songs, recordings, reproductions of art, films, filmstrips, references for the teacher, and other materials and sources of materials for the unit.

The outline for materials used in the "Primary Units" of the Evansville, Indiana, schools[17] includes the following categories:

Books	Songs
Articles	Records
Films	Poems
Filmstrips	Community resources

Another outline of varied materials is from a fifth-grade unit on "America, Land That I Love."[18]

[16] Albuquerque, op. cit. p. 27.

[17] *Guide for Social Studies in the Elementary School.* Grades Kindergarten, One, Two, Three. Evansville (Ind.) School Corporation. Evansville: The School Corporation, 1961. pp. 139–142.

[18] East Baton Rouge Parish. Op. cit. Fifth Grade. pp 14–18.

A. Teacher's Materials
   1. Books
   2. Periodicals

B. Students' Materials
   1. Books
   2. Periodicals
   3. Poems
   4. Ditto sheets
   5. Songs

C. Sensory Aids
   1. Films
   2. Filmstrips
   3. Flat pictures, posters, maps and charts

Public Schools, Altoona, Pa.

Using filmstrips, maps, and other visual aids.

Criteria for Resource Units

Some school systems have delevoped criteria to serve as guides to teachers and others who engage in unit planning. A helpful list of criteria of this type appears in the *Teaching Guide* for social studies of the Providence Public Schools.[19] These criteria provide

[19] Providence, op. cit. p. xi.

excellent guidelines for any teacher or group of teachers who seek guidance and direction in developing a resource unit.

Criteria of a Good Unit:

In constructing their own units, teachers should keep in mind the following criteria of a good unit:

A good unit will contribute to the growth of the child socially, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually.

A good unit will challenge the child's interests.

A good unit will continue the learning process, and through use of past experiences lead to broader interests.

A good unit will be adapted to the abilities of the child; it will meet individual needs and differences through the use of activities, materials, and oral and written expression.

A good unit will provide opportunities for research, working together, teacher-pupil planning, both group and individual creative expression, and reinforcing basic skills to higher levels.

Design and Format

The design and format of a resource unit should be clear-cut, easy to grasp, readily usable, streamlined, and simple. No one design can be said to be the best. The format used should meet the requirements of the teacher or teachers who will use the unit.

Columns. Some of the newer volumes of resource units are using a simple, streamlined single-column format. Among these are social studies units of New York City, East Baton Rouge Parish, and Washington, D.C. In these unit plans, the content appears in one or more sections, the activities in one, and the materials in another, usually at the end.

With the single-column format, the teacher is free to use as many of the unit activities as he feels are appropriate for developing each concept or understanding. And he may be developing one or more of the concepts through each activity.

Where double, triple, or quadruple columns are used in unit design, there appears to be too much matching of each item of learning with an activity. In actual practice each concept or objective can usually be developed through quite a range of the activities, and each activity can often contribute to a number of concepts, skills, understandings.

From a practical point of view, it must be said that there is a great deal of waste space where multi-columns are used. Frequently there is much repetition from column to column. For instance, almost the same things are restated in *Objectives* and in *Outcomes* columns. Also these two columns may be again repeated to a degree in the *Content* column.

In several volumes of resource units having multi-columns, it is found that usually one or two references are given for each content item or problem of the unit. Pages are specified.

Where wide reading and study is encouraged, various children of a class use many references during a unit and may find several dealing with a unit topic or problem. It would seem desirable to encourage such wide reading and searching for knowledge by listing varied materials at the close of the resource unit. Then the pupils, under the guidance of the teacher, can learn to locate information by means of index and table of contents, rather than by having pages specified in one or two references.

Pattern of Unit Organization

Most curriculum committees agree upon a more or less uniform outline or pattern for the units being developed at a given time. In general these outlines determine the organization of the resource units and they contain the following items:

Overview

Objectives

Content

- Problems and questions
- Subject matter outlines
- Concepts

Activities

- Approach
- Informational
- Expressional
- Evaluational
- Culmination or Concluding
- Continuing

Instructional Materials

Variations of the above outline of basic ingredients of a resource unit are used by different school systems. Illustrations of some of these follow:

New York City Public Schools [20]

1. Overview
2. Content Outline
3. Concepts
4. Suggested Questions
5. Suggested Activities
6. Suggested Books and Filmstrips

Louisville Public Schools [21]

I. Introduction

- A. General Statement
- B. Objectives
- C. Overview
- D. Suggested Approaches
- E. Teacher-Pupil Planning

II. Developing the Unit
Problems, Understandings, Experiences

III. Closing the Unit

IV. Evaluating the Unit

V. Teaching Aids

- Teacher References
- Pupil References
- Motion Pictures
- Filmstrips
- Recordings

Wichita Public Schools [22]

Title

I. Statement of significance

II. Specific unit objectives

- A. Understandings
- B. Attitudes
- C. Skills

III. Scope of the unit—this is presented in the form of a content outline suggesting major points of emphasis in topical or question style

IV. Unit activities

- A. Introductory
- B. Developmental
- C. Culminating

V. Resource materials

- A. Reading materials
- B. Audiovisual aids
- C. Community resources
- D. Music (Songs)

---

[20] New York City, op. cit.

[21] *A Curriculum Guide for Elementary Social Studies.* (Partial.) The Neighbors Who Protect Us. Louisville (Ky.) Public Schools. Louisville: The Public Schools, 1957. 81 pp.

[22] Wichita, op. cit. p. ii.

After studying approximately 500 social studies resource units the conclusion was reached that many of them needed to be streamlined, tightened up, relieved of clutter (nonessentials), and given better organization. Many of the *Materials* sections, especially the bibliographies should be more carefully prepared with complete listings. Too often authors' first names, publishers, or dates of publication are missing.

Guidelines for Improving the Design of Resource Units

A few suggestions on the design of units are presented here for consideration by those responsible for the development of resource units.[23]

1. Attain a logical, streamlined organization for the structure of the unit design. This is the outline or backbone of the unit on which the various parts will be developed.
2. Avoid a piecemeal approach which can result from too many columns and too much segmentation of items and materials. Keep in mind the interlocking nature of the various elements or sections of the unit design.
3. Point up the significant and reduce the nonessentials and "clutter."
4. Tighten the design so that it has a readily discernible form and structure and does not wander off in all directions.
5. Keep in mind and indicate relationships throughout the unit. As an example, the suggestions for evaluation should be in terms of the objectives.
6. Avoid undue duplication. Examples of such duplication are lists or columns of *Outcomes* which repeat and are merely rewordings of what is already presented under *Content*, *Concepts*, or *Understandings*.
7. Develop the design of a unit so that it will result in good teaching and learning. Illustrative of this technique is the presentation of the content of a unit in the form of *Problems and Questions for Developing the Unit* rather than by a topical subject matter outline only. The opportunities are better for attaining problem solving and critical thinking experiences for children in the classroom where "Problems and Questions" are suggested in the resource unit.

[23] Also found on pages 269–270 of Michaelis, John U. Op. cit.

8. Work toward achieving *balance* throughout the design of a unit. This is especially important in the *Activities* section. Here it is important to secure a good balance between and among the oral and written, reading and listening, dramatic and construction, arts and crafts, music and rhythmic, and many other forms of expression. Balance is needed between informational and expressional activities. Objectives should be balanced by evaluation. And balance is needed in the section on content, in the actual subject matter itself. Balance between the present and the past and especially the future is essential. Balance should be attained among the various social sciences as items are selected for consideration in a social studies unit. *Relevancy* and *appropriateness* are guides to balance that should be used throughout unit planning.

9. Creativity is important in developing a unit design and in following through with suggested learning experiences for children. Considerable originality and flair can be used by the planner which will lead toward a more creative, imaginative way of developing the unit with children.

10. Clear-cut readability enhances the value of a resource unit for those who may use it. Good paragraphing and sentence style are important. Center and side headings, italics, and underlining help the reader locate readily the various sections and the relationships of the unit.

11. Specificity can do a great deal for unit design. There is a great deal of difference in listing, as an activity, "Take a field trip" and "Visit the airport to learn about traffic control and the weather station."

12. For units of any length, a table of contents, with paging, is helpful to the user. Names of authors or committee members, place of publication, and the date especially should appear on the title page or cover.

Sources of Assistance

When committees and teachers are preparing units, there are usually a number of excellent resource people and other resources available to them. Increasingly, curriculum studies and projects are including scholars from appropriate academic fields as staff or committee members. Also such people are being invited to participate as

consultants or readers of manuscripts. With regard to units, it would seem desirable to use similar assistance from academic sources.

If there are university or other people in the area who have special competencies regarding a unit topic, they may be invited to assist. They may be asked what they consider the most important concepts and emphases for the unit. Again they may be asked to read and criticize a unit after it has been written. This is especially helpful in attaining accuracy and in making sure that fundamental understandings are included.

An example of assistance from scholars and other available sources is a unit on the U.S.S.R.[24] which was developed by a committee of teachers working with supervisors in the District of Columbia Public Schools. Professors and specialists read and criticized the manuscript. Two Government officials who had been to the U.S.S.R., not only checked the unit for accuracy and direction, but also provided consultative services as the unit was being developed.

Another type of resource for committees and teachers developing units is people from other countries. When a unit deals wholly or in part with another country or other countries, a great deal of information may be secured from visiting educators, students, or people of other walks of life. One good source may be the cultural or informational attaché of an embassy or an information official of a consulate. Materials may be secured and questions may be asked of such people for the purpose of enriching and improving a unit plan.

Illustrative of this sort of assistance was the help acquired by one person who was developing a unit on Japan. In addition to much reading and study and the experience of having lived in Japan, she interviewed the Cultural Attaché of the Embassy of Japan and wrote to the Japanese Ministry of Education in Tokyo to ascertain what these sources believed important for teaching about their country. Also American educators who have lived in Japan, but who now teach or supervise schools in this country, were similarly contacted. Much interesting and up-to-date information was gained about modern Japan as well as ideas secured for pupil activities and instructional materials.

Most amazing and illuminating was the first response of the Embassy official when asked what he would most like to have taught about Japan. He replied, "Do teach the children that we have electric lights. We have more inquiries about this than almost any other topic." To one who comes from the largest city in the world, noted

[24] *The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.* District of Columbia Public Schools. Washington: The Public Schools, 1961. 29 pp.

for its nightly blaze of neon and other electric lights and its fine electric trains, these queries must have been quite a shock. It is this kind of insight a curriculum worker developing resource units can secure from people of other countries.

In this aerospace age, when foreign travel is much more possible for teachers, a study tour or residence in a country by one or more teachers of a committee working on a research unit might well be considered. Should 15 or 20 teachers be working on a unit about some country or region, the possibility of one or more visiting the country might well be explored. Scholarships for foreign study, teaching jobs overseas, and vacation travel of teachers all open up greater possibilities for improving and enriching units about these countries, people, and cultures, if directed toward contributions to resource unit planning.

There are many more obvious sources of assistance which alert teachers and committees will find for their unit planning activities. The three above are especially indicated for their special relevance to the improvement of unit planning; namely, scholars and specialists, people of other countries, and travel.

Chapter 6

DEVELOPING A UNIT WITH CHILDREN

THERE IS NO ONE BEST WAY to develop a unit experience with children, for each unit should be carried out in ways appropriate to the subject involved and the interests and abilities of a specific group of children. Creativity and variety, with occasional experimentation, are highly desirable in unit planning and teaching rather than falling into routine patterns of procedure. A creative thoughtful teacher is not likely to teach the same unit twice in exactly the same way with different groups of children.

Much pupil participation in the planning and in decision making leads toward creativity and a higher degree of interest on the part of the children in the unit. For children are creative!

Preparing for a Unit

A teacher should prepare carefully for a unit which is to be studied by his class. He becomes as well informed as he can about the subject by collecting resource materials, background reading, and developing or studying a resource unit. He may sometimes take a special course or attend an institute concerned with the subject. This is often done in connection with aviation, conservation, Latin American or Asian studies. Again a teacher may combine study or vacation travel with collecting information, gaining understanding, and finding materials related to one or more units he is likely to teach.

The teacher should think through possibilities for kinds of experiences and materials his pupils may require during the unit. He should clarify his own thinking about the structure of the content, the most significant concepts to be developed, and the special concerns and abilities of his pupils.

As the teacher begins to make specific plans for daily activities for initiating and developing the unit, he writes them into his lesson

plans. These he keeps very flexible to allow for much pupil participation in the planning and development of the unit. These plans for teaching a unit with a group of children from day to day and week to week may be considered a *teaching* unit as contrasted with a *resource* unit which is generally prepared in advance. The plans which comprise this *teaching* unit may be kept with the rest of the teacher's lesson plans or they may be assembled together in a folder or notebook throughout the unit and saved for future reference.

Minneapolis Public Schools[1] have published the following suggestions for their teachers on preplanning for a social studies unit:

> The teacher builds a background of ideas to help pupils in initiating and developing the unit. The teacher, as a guide, will—
>
> Identify the curriculum for the grade level, keeping in mind that—
>
> It may be desirable, at times, to include content beyond that which is suggested
>
> It is not necessary to give equal emphasis to all content areas
>
> The sequence of content in the guide does not necessarily determine the sequence of units for the year
>
> Study the interest, abilities, and needs typical of the age group
>
> Familiarize himself with the significant needs, characteristics, abilities, and past experiences of the group he is teaching
>
> Identify tentatively the content or problem area for the unit
>
> Consider how the unit may contribute to achieving the objectives of the social studies
>
> Estimate the probable duration of the unit
>
> Become familiar with the available resources
>
> Regard the preliminary plans as being tentative and flexible
>
> Plan activities that will arouse interest in a new unit of study.

Teacher preparation is emphasized in unit teaching in the East Baton Rouge Parish Schools. The following illustration indicates some of the things teachers do in preparation for a unit such as one on "Scandinavian Europe."[2]

> A. Become familiar with the textbooks and other related materials of instruction.
>
> B. Make a trip to the library to secure suitable materials.
>
> C. Select materials to meet the maturity level of individual pupils.

---

[1] *Social Studies.* Kindergarten—Grade 7. Minneapolis (Minn.) Public Schools. Minneapolis: The Public Schools, 1957. p. 19.

[2] East Baton Rouge, op. cit. Sixth Grade. p. 86.

D. Make an outline of the basic content of material to be covered.

E. Collect free materials such as pictures, pamphlets, maps and charts.

F. Plan a good approach to the unit—one that will motivate the children into putting forth their best efforts.

Setting the Stage

Usually teachers set the stage for a new unit by arranging their classrooms in such a way as to arouse the interest of the children and provide a challenge for learning. A committee or group of children may assist with this preparatory work.

Most of the pupils' work from the previous unit is taken home by the owners. Some may be kept at school for a special purpose, such as exhibits or a materials file. Many of the charts, books, records, and other study materials of the earlier unit are stored, returned to libraries, or taken home.

Bulletin boards are arranged with maps, posters, pictures, and charts relating to the new unit. A few books and pamphlets are placed on reading table or shelves. Realia such as crafts work, miniatures, or products are placed where the children may examine them. An appropriate recording may be available for providing a musical atmosphere when suitable.

Methods of setting the stage for a new unit may be varied by sometimes using the bare stage technique. When the unit is initiated there are no new materials in the room. The children and teacher collect and arrange materials appropriate for the unit as a learning project. The experience of seeing a rather bare classroom develop into a colorful, well-arranged environment for studying a unit topic can be challenging and satisfying to the learners.

The prearranged environment can be equally exciting and stimulating for the children. A fourth-grade class studied a unit about Mexico for a month or more and completed the unit. The materials and work of the pupils were stored and taken home at the end of one week. On Monday morning the children arrived to find many colorful posters, maps, and publications about Japan in their classroom. A high degree of interest in the new country developed almost spontaneously.

Approaches

Almost as many ways of initiating or approaching a unit are possible as there are unit topics. However, some types of learning activities tend to be more effective in the early stages of a unit than others. Among these are planning, securing and organizing materials, using audiovisual aids, interviewing people, and taking exploratory trips. This introductory phase of a unit experience usually occupies from one to two weeks of the time allocated to the unit.

Pupil-Teacher Planning. As a new unit experience gets under way, pupils and teacher plan together to determine how they will organize and carry out the unit. Usually the teacher leads the planning discussions. He or a pupil list the ideas on chalkboard or chart paper. Possibly another child may write the plans on paper at his desk for a permanent record.

Kinds of questions a teacher may raise to give direction to the planning are:

What do we want to find out in this unit?

What are some of the things we could do?

Where can we find information and other assistance for carrying out our unit?

During the discussion of each of these questions, the teacher helps the children organize their thinking, and he contributes his own ideas to the plans as a member of the group. Where there are omissions in the children's plans or where they do not understand the possibilities within the content structure of the unit, the teacher makes significant contributions.

With some classes and some age groups, an entire discussion period may be required for each of the three questions mentioned above, or other questions the teacher may raise. With other groups or with units of relatively limited scope two or three such questions may be used during one discussion session.

One fourth-grade class that was planning a unit spent 30 or 40 minutes listing books, stories, encyclopaedia references, people, and community resources which could be used in the study of a new unit which they were beginning. Volunteers assumed responsibilities for locating or securing some of the materials.

The "things to find out" may be listed as problems, questions, or topics. After the list has been organized and completed, it is posted on chart or chalkboard and becomes the basic outline of study for the unit.

California State Department of Education.

Individual study from bibliography made by class.

Securing and Organizing Materials. Children and teacher work together to collect and arrange suitable materials for their unit study. They bring in various materials from libraries, homes, and other community sources. They find references in textbooks, supplementary books, encyclopedias, weekly and daily papers, pamphlets and magazines. Also they locate maps, globes, pictures, posters, realia, slides, films, and recordings. Such a search for pertinent materials provides early experiences in research-type learning.

As materials are assembled for the unit study, bibliographies with page references are often made by the pupils. All may help with this step or a committee may undertake the task. The bibliographies are then placed near the shelves or tables where the materials are kept to assist the children in locating their study materials readily. Middle and upper grade children may list the references by author and title with the pages that relate to the unit. Is is often helpful if they list references for each problem, question, or topic of the unit. Such bibliographical work can be done satisfactorily by the children with the guidance of the teacher.

Using Audiovisual Aids. Often children of elementary school years learn most effectively when new materials are introduced concretely first and more abstractly later. Real objects or a real experience, if not too complex, may often be used first. Next pictures of all kinds (photographs, illustrations, slides, films) are introduced and studied. Then maps or charts can well be used. By this time a good deal has been learned about the subject and the children have considerable readiness for reading the symbols of the printed page.

The above sequence in the presentation of instructional materials may often be used in approaching the study of a unit. This constitutes moving from the concrete toward the more abstract representation of information and ideas through written symbols. As an example, children might be learning about another country, such as France. At first they might examine art work, fashions, clothing, perfume, and other objects from France. A person who has lived in or visited France might talk to them.

Then the children could look at all the pictures they can find in books and on display in their classroom to see how much they can find out about this country. They can be helped to gain skills in reading and interpreting pictures. At this point they may also wish to see a film or slides about France.

Next the pupils study wall maps, globe, and maps in textbooks to find out all they can about this country. They note that France has coastlines on various oceans, bays, and seas with harbor cities. They see that the capital city, Paris, is in the central part of the country and that the major rivers, roads, and railroads tend to fan out from this central area somewhat like the spokes of a wheel. They learn where the population centers are, what the climate and rainfall are, about major products and industries, and many things more.

After a study of maps, pupils are now prepared to read about France in textbooks and other volumes. The same would be true with the study of other countries. From the basis of vocabulary and concepts gained through the more concrete materials, they have now a better chance to gain meaning and understanding from their reading experiences.

Interviewing People. Early in a unit, it is often effective for children to interview or listen to someone who can give them information about their topic. This person may be someone in the community who works in the area being studied. He might be someone in the field of transportation, communication, recreation, or safety. In the case of units about other countries, Americans who have traveled or lived in the country or a visitor from the country can provide much information and develop considerable interest.

677406 O—63——4

The children may go on a trip to visit the grocer, farmer, or librarian to be interviewed. Or they may invite a resource person—policeman, postman, weatherman—to the classroom. Whichever plan is used, careful planning for the interview is important, so that the pupils have thought through what they wish to ask and have decided how the questioning is to be managed. Also the teacher may well help the resource person to understand the grade level, ages, interests, and vocabulary levels of the children.

As an illustration, in Sacramento schools,[3] the following kinds of people are often interviewed by the children in connection with their unit studies:

> A visitor from a foreign country, a traffic officer, a pilot, an air line hostess, a mayor, an early settler, an engineer, a bus driver or an author.

Taking Exploratory Trips. Trips to get an introductory acquaintance with a unit topic can be very effective in the early stages of a unit. Through this means the children may see many real things, people, places, and processes before they move deeper into the study aspects of their unit. Vocabulary is developed, understandings are begun, an overall view of the unit topic is gained, interest and a desire for further learning are aroused.

Usually such trips near the beginning of a unit are fairly simple in nature. Primary children may walk around the block, visit a grocery market, or ride on a train or bus. Older children may visit a museum, see and hike through a watershed, or go to an historic site.

Kinds of approach activities used in Indianapolis schools[4] are found in this example for beginning a unit about *How Indians and Pioneers Met Their Basic Needs.*

> Look at pictures of Indians and pioneers.
>
> Listen to and read stories about Indians and pioneers.
>
> Plan an exhibit of Indian and pioneer articles.
>
> Take a trip to the Art Museum or Children's Museum to see Indian and pioneer exhibits.
>
> View appropriate films or slides.
>
> Plan with the teacher the study of how Indians and pioneers met their basic needs.

---

[3] *Social Studies.* A Third Grade Guide. Sacramento (Cal.) City Unified School District. Sacramento: The Public Schools, 1956. p. 11.

[4] *Social Studies.* A Tentative Guide for Teachers, Primary Grades, Indianapolis (Ind.) Public Schools. Indianapolis: The Public Schools, 1961. p. 112.

In Davidson County, Tennessee,[6] teachers initiate units about "Living in the Farming Regions of the World," by such means as:

A. Using a filmstrip.

B. Asking children to tell any experience they have had in visiting a farm. Encourage them to emphasize the work of the farmer and the way he lives.

C. Make a bulletin board display of farm living. Allow the children to study the pictures and formulate questions which interest them. Guide them in looking in encyclopedias and other reference books for answers to their questions.

D. Read the story, *Little Pear*, by E. Lattimore, to group. Follow with a discussion on his way of life and how it compares with that of a child in our farming regions.

E. Ask the children to write a short paragraph on what they know about the life of a farmer. Read these to the group and record what ideas produce further questions. Also investigate conflicts in various descriptions.

F. Visit a farm with specific understandings in mind to observe.

Developing the Unit

After the introductory or initiating phases of a unit, the children should be prepared and interested in going ahead with the more intensive aspects of the study. This developmental phase of a unit involves both informational and expressional types of activities. It may continue from 2 to 4 weeks, depending on the nature of the unit, the abilities of the children, and the way the study is being organized and carried out.

Informational Activities. During this phase of a unit, the children may carry on various activities to discover and learn about their topic. They locate information, read books and other materials, take notes, study globes and maps, develop their vocabularies, see and listen to audiovisual aids, question people, write letters of inquiry, make trips of discovery, carry out experiments, record their learnings, take stock of their achievements.

The children need considerable guidance for these study activities. The teacher acts as leader and guide so that their study may be well organized and effective. He gives both group and individual guidance.

---

[6] *Resource Guide in Social Studies, Grades 4–5–6.* Davidson County (Tenn.) Schools. Nashville: The County Schools, 1954. p. 40.

A chart of problems, questions, or topics for developing the unit may well be kept in view during the study phase. The learning activities should be organized according to the agreed-upon structure of the chart and directed toward gaining the indicated knowledge, information, and skills.

For many units it is desirable for children to work in fairly small groups or committees. These may sometimes be *interest* groups, one for each topic or problem. Again they may be *ability* groups in which the children work with others of similar ability in learning social studies. This may or may not coincide with reading ability. Sometimes children who are retarded in reading or other linguistic abilities show surprising abilities to gain social studies or science understandings. Sometimes all the children of a class will do some reading on every unit question or topic. Then they may carry out some of the other activities in small groups or committees.

However the class may be organized for reading and study of a unit, it is essential that a good record be kept of each child's progress at all times. There are many ways of doing this. One teacher sometimes keeps a reading and study chart near the reading corner or shelves for a unit. On one side of the chart are the names of the pupils and across the top are the unit topics or problems. Space is arranged for three or four columns of checks under each topic. As a child reads a reference on each topic, a check is placed by his name in the proper column. When he has completed the agreed-upon number of references on each topic some means of evaluation is used and recorded on the chart. The evaluation may be carried out by asking the child to report significant things he has learned about the topic to his group or he may answer a half dozen questions from a card supplied by the teacher. Again he may write a page or make a drawing for a class book about the unit.

With another unit, each child might read independently for 3 or 4 days, following the charted outlines and the unit bibliography. Then a discussion period might be held to see how much had been learned about the various topics and where the study emphasis should be the following week.

Throughout a unit, *vocabulary* development is important. The most effective, meaningful vocabularies grow out of the pupils' experiences rather than from a list prepared by teacher or textbook writer in advance. One teacher especially skillful in unit teaching places a blank chart on the wall at the beginning of the unit. As the children become familiar with and begin to use words peculiar to the unit, these words are placed on the vocabulary chart. This not only helps the children to know and use the words but also helps them

learn to spell the words since they are on view if the pupils need to check on the spelling during their written work.

Also the chart can form the basis for word drill through games that can be played from the chart, thus providing an interest-motivated kind of drill. Such charts for fifth or sixth grades have been known to contain a good many words not usually expected in students' vocabularies before ninth- or tenth-grade levels. Since the word understandings grew out of the pupils' own experiences they did not present undue difficulty for them.

It should be kept in mind that special kinds of reading skills are needed by the pupils for the effective use of science, social studies, and other kinds of reading matter. As contrasted with the materials in readers, the textbooks and other publications in these subject fields tend to be nonfiction and to require specific skills, such as finding answers to questions, solutions to problems, and specialized vocabulary understandings and recognition. The reading of maps, pictures, and charts is also important. In general this specialized kind of work-type reading should be taught mainly in connection with the subject field or unit involved, at the same time the children are using reading materials of this type.

Other ways of gaining information, not depending upon reading, such as questioning people, taking field trips, and using audio-visual aids require careful teacher guidance and direction so that the objectives for the unit be attained. The teacher will be more successful in these undertakings if he uses pupil participation in the planning and management of these learning experiences.

The following example of informational activities carried out by sixth grade California children studying "South America in the World Community"[6] indicates a wide variety of such learning experiences:

Finding out what goods are exchanged.

Seeing film describing arts and crafts products of South America.

Looking up ways South American products are used by us.

Making a collection and exhibit of products we use made from carnauba wax, rubber, aluminum, and other imports to the United States.

Making a graph to show values of chief imports and exports.

Looking up figures on air and sea travel to South America.

Discussing the effects of increased airplane transportation on the world community.

Reading about the Pan American Highway.

Reading about the Agency for International Development. Presenting its program in a symposium.

[6] California School Supervisors' Association Bulletin. Op cit. pp. 74–77.

Reading about the men and women of South America and the United States who have helped to promote friendly relations, such as Simon Bolivar, Heitor Villa Lobos, Gabriela Mistral, and Domingo Sarmiento.

Finding and bringing clippings from newspapers and magazines about musicians, artists, actors, speakers, governmental representatives, and other persons who have brought understanding between the continents. Making a scrapbook or bulletin board.

Studying and comparing the exploration and settlement of the two continents.

Comparing the independence movements in the two continents.

Comparing and contrasting the people of the two continents.

Obtaining Pan American Union materials on the Organization of American States. Finding out how the O.A.S. operates and what projects it is carrying on. Planning and representing a symposium on its work and history.

Finding out how the O.A.S. is related to the United Nations.

Reading about the United Nations. Becoming familiar with the organizations which are subsidiaries of the United Nations, especially UNESCO, UNICEF, FAO, and WHO.

Clipping news items about South America from newspapers and magazines. Making and keeping up a bulletin board on news about South America. Making a scrapbook for the library table.

Expressional Activities. As the children gain information about the questions, problems, or topics of a unit, they begin to share and discuss their learnings and discoveries. While most of the expressional activities should and do somewhat follow many of the informational activities, they then continue throughout the units' duration. There is considerable merit in encouraging the pupils to find out all they can about a topic or question before they try to write a report, paint a picture, or create a puppet play about it. Sometimes art and construction work in a unit has been done before the reading and study experiences were under way. The drawings and construction were based on misinformation, wrong concepts, and sterotypes which could easily have been avoided if some study had preceded or accompanied the expressional work. Creative writing when using science or social science materials must be based on fact and on truth, as is true with other subjects.

Expressional activities can do much to enrich and make unit studies meaningful. As was mentioned before, a good balance between such aspects as oral and written, quiet and active, reporting and dramatic should be attained.

Usually about mid-point or thereabouts during the course of a unit, the children begin to develop a big project or activity about which many of their learning experiences cluster. This project might

involve developing a conservation trail, constructing a large three-dimensional map of the community, making a model of the solar system, creating a shadow-puppet play, planning a party or picnic.

Kinds of *expressional* activities that California children carry out in relation to the *informational* activities indicated in the previous section on South American units [7] (see pp. 77–79) follow:

Making a pictorial map showing the exchange of products.

Making a world map to show trade with all countries.

Making a transportation map showing principal air and sea routes.

Writing about an imaginary trip down the Pan American Highway. Giving it as a mock radio program.

Discussing the ways travelers can build or break down friendships between countries. Dramatizing good etiquette for a traveler in another country.

Making a book of biographies for the room library: *Good Neighors.*

Starting a mural showing the story of "Good Neighbor" activities between the continents. Adding to it during this study.

Making a poster showing the flags of the member nations of O.A.S.

Writing and producing a pageant of international activities in South America.

Planning and preparing a program on South America for parents, community, or another class. Reviewing and evaluating what the class has learned, selecting the most important points for sharing with others. A television or radio program may be a possibility, and this reaches a large number of people. If timely, preparing the program for Pan American Day, April 14.

Culminating or Concluding Activities

After most of the learning objectives of a unit have been attained and pupils and teacher feel that it should be brought to a close, certain types of *culminating* or *concluding* activities are appropriate. They are usually summarizing and evaluative in nature. They give the children opportunities for sharing the outcomes of their unit learnings with other pupils, teachers, principal, supervisors, or parents.

This *concluding* activity is usually presented during the final week of a unit experience. It may be very simple or more extensive in character. Often it consists of a program, an exhibit, or a fête of some sort, depending on the nature of the unit and the planning of pupils and teacher. The "big project" of the unit may or may not have a central place in the *concluding* event. Usually it is focal,

[7] Ibid. pp. 74–77.

especially if it is a play, an exhibit, or something that has been constructed. Sometimes the *culmination* may consist of an informal program in which the pupils present "what we have learned and done" in the unit to another class or to parents. Creative ways to express their ideas and share their accomplishments should be encouraged.

As the children present their achievements and review their progress through the culminating activities, much evaluation takes place. This consists of ascertaining how well the learning objectives have been reached and how well the children can present their ideas and information to others.

An illustration of some kinds of activities frequently used in concluding units on "Communication" in the Englewood, Colorado Schools [8] follows:

A. Making an exhibit which includes:
   1. Pictures and stories of ways we send messages
   2. Songs and poems about messages
   3. Envelopes and postmarks
   4. Books, magazines and newspapers
   5. Telegrams written by children
   6. Code messages
   7. Toy telephones, portable radios and record players
   8. Records
   9. Snapshots
   10. Pictures and stories written and illustrated by children

B. Presenting a pageant on the development of communication
   1. Each child is costumed as a worker who helps us send and receive messages
   2. Each child briefly describes how he helps send and receive messages

C. Making a classroom "movie" about messages

D. Making a special field trip to visit one of the agencies of communication

E. Putting on a television show

F. Having a Valentine party (the postman delivers the valentines)

Continuing Activities

When the study of a unit has been completed, it is highly desirable and natural that some of the pupils' interests and experiences related to the unit subject continue. Pupils should be encouraged to continue their reading, collecting, corresponding, and various other activities to a degree.

[8] *Messages.* Englewood (Colo.) Public Schools. Englewood: The Public Schools, 1959. p. 12.

An illustration of kinds of continuing activities encouraged in the East Baton Rouge Parish Schools is the following used with a unit on the United Nations.[9]

A. Set up and maintain a reference library of books and pamphlets about the United Nations.

B. Continue to learn and sing songs, games and dances of the United Nations member countries.

C. Maintain a time-line bulletin board of important news about United Nations activities.

D. Continue correspondence with pen pals in other countries.

E. Continue collection of foreign stamps and coins.

F. Maintain class scrapbook of items of interest about United Nations and member nations.

Evaluation in the Unit

Evaluation is a continuous process throughout the various stages of a unit. The objectives for the unit should be kept in mind as this appraisal takes place.

Appropriate kinds of evaluation in unit teaching and learning take place in many ways and on a daily and weekly basis, as well as at the conclusion of the unit. Daily evaluation may involve taking stock of what has been accomplished on the unit in a study, activity, or discussion period.

After an activity period with a unit on transportation, a teacher was heard to raise these evaluative questions:

What has each group accomplished today?

What do you plan to do tomorrow?

Will you need additional tools or materials?

Did any group bother another during the period?

How can we have a better work period tomorrow?

Weekly types of evaluation may have to do with assessing exactly where the pupils are with regard to their reading and study work and how projects are moving. Such evaluation should be in the light of unit objectives and the content outline for the unit, be it topics, questions, or problems. It may be carried on through tests, discussions, reports, and the like. It provides a logical foundation for planning for the next week's activities and emphases.

At the close of the unit a number of evaluational experiences may well be carried out. Essay and objective types of tests may be

[9] East Baton Rouge, op. cit. Sixth Grade. p. 24.

given. Reports, creative writing, exhibits of pupils' work, and the culminating activities may be studied and analyzed by the teacher and in certain ways by the pupils. A discussion may be held about:

What are the best things we accomplished in this unit?

What were our problems?

How can we make our next unit experience better?

Schools in East Baton Rouge Parish include evaluation by the students, the teacher, and by parents as part of many of their social studies units. The following[10] is illustrative of this procedure:

A. Teacher's evaluation of pupil (continuous)

1. Is the pupil learning to cooperate with others?
2. Is the pupil able to help plan?
3. Are the experiences meaningful to the pupil?
4. Is the pupil having a wide variety of experiences?
5. Is the pupil developing satisfactory work habits?
6. Is the pupil interested and happy with his work?
7. Is the pupil able to read maps, charts, tables, graphs, pictures, and to use tables of contents and index, to locate, select and organize material?

B. Children

1. Have a discussion to determine new things pupils have learned about life in Cold Lands and what they enjoyed most in the unit.
2. Self-evaluation
   a. What was the purpose of every activity I have done?
   b. How well did I carry on each activity?
   c. What have I contributed to the class?
3. Check to see if objectives cooperatively outlined by pupils have been accomplished.

C. Parent

1. Have the work habits of the child become better at home?
2. Has the child brought any of the experiences home that he has obtained from school?
3. Does the child say he enjoys school and does he seem happy?
4. Parents may evaluate the children's work by attending the program the children have invited them to, and by taking an interest in the children's pen pals, scrapbooks, and reading books.

In Indianapolis,[11] "The evaluation of a social studies unit is made in terms of the constructive changes in the knowledges, attitudes, and understandings reflected in the behavior of pupils." Such questions as the following based upon the objectives sought will help the teacher evaluate the unit:

[10] East Baton Rouge, op. cit. Fourth Grade. p. 13.
[11] Indianapolis, op. cit. p. 12.

1. Has the pupil acquired the factual knowledge pertinent to this unit?
2. Has the pupil increased his ability to use certain skills, such as—
   a. Finding and organizing research material?
   b. Planning and presenting oral and written reports?
   c. Reading and thinking critically?
   d. Using new vocabulary effectively?
3. Does the pupil show increased ability in thinking through a problem or situation?
4. Has the pupil developed an inquiring or investigating attitude?
5. Does the pupil show a greater ability to act wisely and cooperate in a social situation?
6. Does the pupil show a willingness to share ideas and materials with others in the group?
7. Was the pupil challenged by the activities of the unit?
8. Has the pupil developed an interest that will prompt him to carry on voluntary activities both inside and outside of the classroom?
9. Has the pupil increased his understanding and appreciation of what it means to be a citizen of the United States and the world?
10. Has the pupil increased his ability willingly to accept responsibility to the group and to himself?

Many evaluating devices may be used by the teacher such as teacher-made oral or written tests, standardized tests, observation of pupils in dramatic interpretations, and pupil growth in desirable habits, attitudes, and behavior as exemplified both in the class and in extra-class activities. Each pupil should be encouraged to evaluate his own progress and achievement in relation to the goals established during the pupil-teacher planning period. He should demonstrate an ever-increasing willingness and ability to accept and carry out responsibilities both individually and cooperatively. Evaluation should be made in terms of increased knowledge and improved habits, attitudes, behavior, and skills commensurate with the ability of each individual to achieve.

Different Ability Levels

Unit teaching and learning, when the potentialities of the method are fully realized, offer excellent means for developing learn-

ing experiences for children of differing abilities. The very process of grouping, both by abilities and by interests, so characteristic of unit teaching, makes it possible to help children of gifted, retarded, or average abilities work in accordance with their capacities.

There can be challenge for every child in unit experiences. Not only do they work in compatible groups, but there is also considerable opportunity for independent study and progress. A child is not held back by uniform lessons for the entire class or by uniform materials. There is much opportunity for specialization and for differentiation, for wide reading of varied materials, for different kinds of learning activities for children of varying interests, backgrounds, and abilities. It is up to the teacher using the unit method to see that a challenge and a satisfying educational experience is possible for each child participating in a unit study.

Minneapolis Public Schools [12] provide an example of recognizing the opportunities for taking care of individual differences through unit teaching. Suggestions provided teachers in that school system follow:

Differences, once recognized and identified, may be utilized to great advantage to enrich the scope of a unit when—

A resourceful and understanding teacher makes use of varied activities and materials in terms of individual capabilities

Pupils are motivated to develop their potentialities to the fullest

Adequate instructional materials and equipment are available

In Developing a Unit the Teacher Will Guide

The Less Capable Learners	The More Capable Learners
By creating a wholesome emotional climate in the classroom where pupils—	
are free to express their ideas	
feel assured of the teacher's interest, confidence, and friendship	
sense that the teacher is fair and consistent, informed and resourceful, helpful and understanding	
receive friendly encouragement and recognition for work done well, according to their respective abilities	
are not all expected to learn at the same rate	
are not all expected to attain the same level of achievement	

[12] Minneapolis, op. cit. pp. 23–24.

By planning learning experiences cooperatively with pupils

By recognizing and identifying the differences in needs, characteristics, abilities, and past experiences which exist in the group

By gathering a wide variety of instructional aids

By gathering printed material to meet a wide range of reading abilities

By providing opportunities for pupils to develop their abilities and talents to the fullest

By respecting the contributions of each pupil

The Less Capable Learners	The More Capable Learners
By helping them to establish and accept goals which they can realistically achieve	By helping them to see the broader aspects of the problem to be studied
By helping them to understand their responsibilities clearly and specifically	By providing them with opportunities to undertake the more comprehensive responsibilities of the unit
By helping them to carry out their specific responsibilities e.g., by planning daily assignments for their part of the unit, by giving them page references in text and supplementary books, by preparing work sheets written in simple vocabulary	By encouraging them to be selective in the use of materials and to make use of books on advanced levels
By constantly clarifying new concepts and meanings	By encouraging wide reading to become acquainted with different points of view
By affording opportunities for success— Providing reading material simple in vocabulary and sentence structure	By suggesting independent excursions to the facilities of the community, participation in civic programs, and attendance at lectures
Providing media, other than reading, for getting information	By encouraging them to enrich the study through creative effort
Providing opportunity for carrying on concrete, simple activities, e.g., making scrapbooks, copying charts and graphs, performing class services, collecting materials	By appreciating and recognizing their creative efforts, e.g., by providing opportunity for sharing results of their work with others
By making frequent appraisals of their progress and counseling individually with them about their progress	By making use of their creative and abstract thinking to expand the ideas presented by others
By encouraging and keeping them conscious of their progress	By providing opportunities for them to organize and summarize the work of the group

The Less Capable Learners	The More Capable Learners
By making use of their more concrete and specific contributions as a basis for introducing the discussion	By challenging them to improve over and above their previous achievements
By providing diagnostic and remedial measures to aid in the improvement of skills	By guiding them to develop ways of evaluating the outcomes of the study

Chapter 7

ENVIRONMENT AND MATERIALS

SURROUNDINGS AND MATERIALS which facilitate the initiating and development of a unit with children should be arranged as effectively as possible. Most units require considerable space and need flexibility in the use of space and equipment as well as a wide variety of materials for maximum accomplishments on the part of the pupils. The learning equipment should provide a stimulating atmosphere that will lead toward exploration, study, and the development of understandings, attitudes, and skills.

Room and School Environment

Granted that the classroom environment for carrying out a unit experience should be flexible, challenging, and supplied with rich and varied materials, how are such surroundings arranged?

Room Arrangement. Suitable arrangements for unit experiences can be attained with movable chairs and tables or seats for the children. When the class is working together as a whole, their seating arrangement may be in the form of a fan, semicircular rows, or on a diagonal. Such arrangements may be effective if the teacher, a pupil, a group of pupils, or a resource person is speaking to the group. Should a class discussion be going on, the chairs should be moved so that pupils may see each others' faces as much as possible. Usually circular or semicircular arrangements are suitable for this purpose. When space is needed for some big activity or program, it may be obtained by placing chairs and tables in a double wedge or a square around the room.

During periods when the children are engaged in small group study or expressional activities, their seats and tables may be suitably arranged in small groupings. These may be circular or rectangular in general form.

In conclusion, it may be said that there are innumerable ways in which a classroom may be arranged during the course of a unit. As far as possible this arrangement should be flexible and functional, in accordance with the activities of the pupils. Adequate space for movement should not be overlooked, for unit activities often involve motion and action.

Public Schools, Fallsington, Pa.

Center of interest for a unit about Alaska.

Interest and Activity Centers. As a unit develops, pupils and teacher find it advantageous to arrange centers of interest where pictures, maps, exhibits, and reading materials are on display and available for use. Chalkboard, shelves, and tables are helpful equipment for displaying such items. Arrangements should be attractive and should stimulate interest. Appropriate captions and labels might be made by the children. An example of interest centers might be as children are studying a unit on transportation they set up centers on water, air, and land transportation.

Activity centers may be arranged in the room for special activities such as construction, painting, making a class booklet, reading,

raising plants, or carrying out a science experiment. Some of these centers are primarily for study activities and others for various types of creative expression. Pupil committees may have the responsibility for keeping these centers well supplied and in good order.

Storage and Display Space. Whenever possible plenty of space and equipment should be available for storing supplies, arranging a variety of study materials, and keeping results of the children's work during the unit. Such storage provisions as shelves for chart and art paper and files for pictures and other resource materials related to the units are most helpful. Accessibility of reading and expressional materials for the children is important for the success of the unit.

Atmosphere. Pervading the entire classroom environment for a unit experience, there should be a stimulating atmosphere which excites the children intellectually and causes them to pursue the unit studies and activities with a strong interest drive. There should be much color and life through the posters, maps, pictures, and realia surrounding them.

School Environment. The school environment as a whole as well as the classroom setting can foster successful unit learning. Readily available facilities such as multipurpose rooms, auditoriums, and libraries facilitate certain types of unit activities.

School grounds are important, too. Many learning experiences relating to conservation, weather, geographic features, seasons, science, and safety can well be carried on outdoors. Accessibility of the grounds from the classroom can make this kind of learning experience more readily available for the children. Many of the newer types of elementary schools are constructed with such availability of the out-of-doors in mind.

Unit Materials

A widespread characteristic of unit teaching and learning is the use of varied instead of restricted materials. This does not mean that a wealth of expensive materials is essential. It does mean, however, that reliance is not placed entirely on a single textbook, but on several kinds of materials. It is helpful if most of these rich and varied materials be supplied by the school. Whether or not this is possible, teachers and pupils should explore many sources of appropriate materials and assume some responsibility for locating and obtaining them.

677406 O—63——5

Publications

Various types of books are useful during the development of a unit. Among the most useful are textbooks, supplementary books, sets of reference books, collections of stories or poems, songbooks, magazines, newspapers, news weeklies, and references for the use of the teacher. Pupils and teacher work together to collect and assemble as many reading materials as possible on their unit topic. Libraries are searched, homes are surveyed, and letters are written to sources of free and inexpensive materials.

Audiovisual Materials

Many kinds of audiovisual materials can enhance the learnings of children during a unit of study. Films, filmstrips, and slides help the children gain information and concepts as well as gain visual images of what is being studied. Photographs, posters, and other pictures are valuable study aids through which social studies and science learnings may be gained.

Television brings a whole new exciting media of learning to children of this decade. Not only do many children receive some of their lessons through educational television, but they gain much knowledge and information from other types of television programs. For instance, many children throughout elementary grades have had the wonderfully thrilling and meaningful experiences of following Alan Shepard's flight into space and John Glenn's orbits of the earth, and hearing their voices on TV at the very time the events were taking place. The potential use of television for bringing distant people, places, and happenings into the classroom as appropriate to unit study has barely begun. Such possibilities may be increasingly anticipated for the future.

Radio also has value as a means of securing information during unit studies. Children can watch weekly and monthly schedules to find suitable programs, as when children studying Latin America locate a program of Latin American music for school listening.

Recordings are also a fine resource for unit studies. Historical, biographical, dramatic, science, and musical recordings can prove valuable as unit materials. It is difficult to think of a social studies or literature unit that music would not enrich. Also the recordings are often used to accompany the rhythms and dances of the children where these activities are included in the unit.

Realia—real objects—and collections or exhibits of objects have special significance as unit materials. The children can see the real objects and sometimes touch or handle them. Some exhibits show objects, crafts, and art work from other countries. Others show various stages of a process.

Maps and Globes

Among the most valuable aids to geographic learnings in a classroom are maps and globes.[1] Our space-age children need to gain as much spatial orientation as possible between themselves and various points on the earth's surface as well as in the dimensions of altitude, air, and space. These maps and globes are essential for both social studies [2] and, in many instances, science units.

Public Schools, Austin, Tex.

Using a globe and other study materials.

A trend in primary levels today is to have a simple, cradle-type globe available for use of the children in many of the rooms. Also wall maps are appearing increasingly in classrooms of these grades.

---

[1] *Using Maps and Globes.* Grades One through Seven. Virginia State Department of Education. Richmond: The Department, 1961. 23 pp.

[2] McAulay, J. D. "Maps and Globes in the Elementary School Program." *Journal of Geography,* 59: 431–433. December 1960.

Such provisions for early map and globe study can make possible much more significant social studies and geographic learnings as children engage in unit activities.

Appropriate maps and globes are a necessity for social studies units in intermediate and upper elementary grades. They should be selected in keeping with the subject content of the units likely to be studied. Increasingly as the geography of space becomes more and more significant, three dimensional maps and aviation or space charts will be valuable for all aerospace units.[3]

Scientific Equipment and Supplies

With the increasing emphasis upon science in the elementary curriculum, more kinds of instructional equipment are needed for science centered or science related units. Many varieties of these materials are useful in teaching and learning science units. Some of those most commonly found in elementary classrooms are:

Magnifying glasses, weather instruments, glass containers, rock collection, rulers and scales, animal cages, aquarium, compass, and magnets.

Art Materials

As children study social studies or literature units, creative art has a significant place. Reproductions of art and real crafts objects are extremely important when children are learning about the culture of another country or another era.

As the children carry out creative art work of their own during a unit of any kind, they need many kinds of art materials. The wider the variety of art material and tools they have available for their creative expression the better. Paint, clay, scissors and paste, wood, metal, newsprint, and cardboard are some of the most frequently used art supplies.

Community Resources

In almost every community, there are many kinds of resources available for different kinds of units. These are usually places to visit, people to interview, or areas to explore. In some school systems, memoranda, or bulletins are distributed which list some of the available or recommended places for field trips. In other systems, appro-

[3] Anderson, Mamie L. "Geographic Concepts in the Space Age." *Journal of Geography*, 60: 32–35. January 1961.

priate places to visit and other community resources are listed in the curriculum units.

Some of the types of community resources used for unit study in Indianapolis follow:

Recreation at Home and School [4]

Neighborhood parks, playground, community center
Branch or school library
Recreation workers
School or home radio and TV

Clothing [5]

Department store
Shoe store
Shoe repair shops
Millinery shop
Infant's shop
Laundry or laundromat
Dress shops
Children's Museum

Japan [6]

Children's Museum
John Herron Art Museum
People who have visited Japan
Local residents of Japanese origin

Community resources recommended for studying a unit on *Africa* in the Evansville, Indiana, Schools [7] are:

Many World War II veterans in the school district would be happy to talk to classes on Northern Africa and the Mediterranean Sea. Many have pictures to share of the people, their houses and cities.

Evansville Museum—specimens of various weapons used by African people, tribal headbands and pottery displays.

Mesker Zoo—children can see firsthand—camels, hippopotamuses, snakes, and other animals of African origin.

Evansville College—lists people who will speak about their tours. Some have been to Africa and have slides they will show.

For a "Shelter" unit, Evansville [8] children may use the following community resources as indicated:

If construction projects are going on near school or near a child's home, pupils watch the work and keep records of what they are observing each day.

If a building is being torn down, this would be a good time and experience to see how the framework of an old house was constructed.

Take a trip to Willard Library to examine books on shelter.

Observe different kinds of houses while going to and from school.

---

[4] Indianapolis, op. cit. p. 41.
[5] Ibid. p. 107.
[6] Ibid. Intermediate. p. 237.
[7] Evansville, op. cit. Grades Four, Five, Six. pp. 53–54.
[8] Ibid. Grades Kindergarten, One, Two, Three. p. 96.

Have types of workers on homes visit school to explain their work.

Visit some kinds of shelter near the school.

Airport	Houses
Apartment	Library
Barber Shop	Museum
Church	Office Building
Drugstore	Railroad Station
Furniture Store	Stores
Garage	Trailer

Public Schools, Dallas, Tex.

Pupils interview a community leader.

Sources of Materials

Materials for use with a given unit may be located from various sources. Teachers, parents, pupils, and supervisors have a part in locating and making these materials readily available for unit study.

Teachers and pupils use the card catalogs of libraries to which they have access to locate publications related to their unit. While the school library is one of the best sources, frequently additional publications can be borrowed from a city or State library, the materials center of the public schools central office, or the library and cur-

riculum laboratory of a nearby university. Many times pupils and teachers bring materials from their homes.

Public Schools, Altoona, Pa.

Children visit milk plant in their city.

Before the unit is undertaken the teacher may write to a number of sources of free and inexpensive materials. He can collect posters, maps, and realia during his travels. He can locate resource materials in his own community. If he is interested in photography, he may take pictures of places and things that will be helpful in teaching the unit. The camera is especially helpful where processes are concerned. Various aspects of the production of dairy products, citrus fruits, bananas, lumber, rubber, or coffee have been photographed by teachers, writers, and filmmakers to help children gain understandings of the processes involved.

When writing for materials it is most important that teachers and pupils know where to write for the needed items. Much time can be lost by writing to the wrong places. Some of the readily obtainable guides to these kinds of free and inexpensive materials follow:

Civic Leader, October 22, 1962 (new list yearly.) Civic Education Service, Inc., 1733 K Street NW., Washington 6, D.C.

Elementary Teachers Guide to Free Curriculum Materials. (Revised each August.) Educators Progress Service, Randolph, Wisconsin.

Free and Inexpensive Learning Materials. 1962 edition. Division of Surveys and Field Services, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn.

Grade Teacher Magazine. (Contains checklist.) Darien, Connecticut.

Instructor Magazine. (Contains listings and coupons.) F. A. Owen Publishing Co., Dansville, N.Y.

Scholastic Teacher. (Contains comprehensive listings yearly in an early fall edition.) Scholastic Magazines, Inc., 33 West 42d Street, New York 36, N.Y.

Young Citizen, Teacher's Edition. (Lists sources weekly.) Civic Education Service, 1733 K Street NW., Washington 6, D.C.

Chapter 8

WRITING A DESCRIPTIVE UNIT

DESCRIPTIVE UNITS are often written after a unit has been taught. They are usually drafted by a teacher who has developed a unit with a group of children. While the unit is going on, the teacher keeps notes or a log of what is happening. He records many of the events and activities of the unit. He keeps lists of the most useful materials. Sometimes the children assist in keeping the unit records and reports.

On completion of the unit, a teacher may write a descriptive account of the development of the unit with his pupils. The style in which the unit is written will depend upon its purpose and its probable readers. Usually the teacher writes the descriptive unit in order to share it with other persons. It may be for publication in magazines or journals widely read by teachers. It may be intended for a curriculum guide or course of study.

Some teachers may wish to use written descriptions of units they have taught as aids to evaluation. These records can become the basis for self-evaluation by the teacher or for evaluating the unit teaching and learning with supervisor or principal. Sometimes brief reports of units are sent to parents to keep them informed of the program of units and help them know what their children are studying at school. Descriptive units can be filed and used as resource material for the teacher in planning units on similar topics in other years.

When writing a descriptive unit for publication, a teacher should write in a lively, sometimes dramatic manner. He may well include some of the things the children said and samples of their questions, creative writing, maps and charts, or creative art and music. He may follow something of a unit outline format, a narrative paragraph style, or a combination of the two, like the sample descriptive unit at the close of this chapter.

Photography can serve a useful purpose in keeping an account of unit activities and in illustrating a descriptive unit. Pictures showing the children engaged in informal activities are usually better than posed photographs.

In addition to the narrative, dramatic, and illustrative parts of a descriptive unit, the writer should be sure to indicate the nature of the objectives and the significant concepts that were developed. He should explain some of the means of evaluation and indicate some of the outcomes. Wherever feasible the materials used should be mentioned or listed with such specificity that other teachers could obtain them when needed.

Often when a teacher tries out a new unit and finds it worthwhile and successful, he should be encouraged to write it up as a descriptive unit. Or when a teacher uses a new approach to a commonly taught unit, he might well write a written description to share with others.

The following descriptive unit from a Pittsburgh curriculum guide [1] indicates how one third-grade teacher developed a unit about his community with his pupils. It appears in the curriculum guide as an aid for other teachers.

Unit on Pittsburgh

I. How a unit on Pittsburgh *may* begin.

Through interest in

1. Where we get our food
2. How we travel
3. The workers around us
4. The city parks, conservatory, zoo
5. The tall buildings
6. The three rivers.

II. How our unit began.

The story "Lost and Found" in *Streets and Roads* led to a discussion of our department stores, tall buildings, and downtown Pittsburgh. I felt this was a good lead into a survey of our city. I encouraged further discussion by asking if any of the children's fathers worked downtown and, if not, where they did work. Through this, they learned of many kinds of work in Pittsburgh. I showed some slides I had taken of the city and started a picture display. Interest soon was very high and the unit had begun.

III. Need for the study of Pittsburgh.

It is desirable that everyone should know his city, what it offers, and that he should feel proud to be a good citizen of it. This understanding and appreciation should begin early in life and develop more fully later

[1] *The Social Studies Program.* Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2, 3. Pittsburgh (Pa.) Public Schools. Pittsburgh: The Public Schools, 1953. pp. 77–83.

on. It is good for children to know the buildings, workers, parks, ways of travel, and where to have fun in their own city. They should know the names of important streets, boulevards, rivers, and the general shape of the Golden Triangle. The interest of the third-grade child is in the expanding community; therefore, he should learn something about his city, what activities are going on in it daily, how it depends on other cities for certain items, and what Pittsburgh contributes toward living in other cities.

IV. Opportunity for growth.

A. Through social studies

1. The children learned of many workers in Pittsburgh by each telling the work his father did. They realized how we all depend on a person who delivers milk, one who works in a bakery, one who drives a truck for a department store, and all the others.
2. They became interested in the many ways of travel in Pittsburgh, including the inclines. They found that many of our streets paralleled the river valleys or went over hills and through tunnels.
3. The children discovered many places of interest where they could go with their families to have fun. They began to be proud of the city parks and to appreciate the many things they could see in them.
4. They found that Pittsburgh was well known for many things, such as the food companies, steel corporations, the Cathedral of Learning, the Phipps Conservatory, etc.
5. There were discussions of the many kinds of homes which they had seen when trips were taken through the city.
6. The children learned to recognize some of the important buildings of Pittsburgh.
7. The direction of the Golden Triangle in relation to our school community was understood.

B. Through other subjects

1. Reading.
   a. Stories about city life were read from basic readers.
   b. Books about city workers from our room library were studied.
   c. Articles and pictures about Pittsburgh were collected from the city papers.
   d. Charts about Pittsburgh were read many times.
2. Other language arts.
   a. As a group the children made many charts—recording information. These charts were organized into big books. The titles of the books were:

Workers in Pittsburgh

Travel in Pittsburgh

Fun in Pittsburgh

Homes in Pittsburgh

A Trip to Pittsburgh

A Trip to the Flower Show and Civic Center.

b. Individually they wrote letters and stories for booklets.

c. The class planned and discussed trips to take.

d. They decided what they wanted to find out and recorded the questions. The answers were charted during later discussions.

e. Brief talks were given about ways of travel, city parks and kinds of work.

f. Other talks were planned for an original movie called "Fun in Pittsburgh."

g. Poems were created about travel, work, and safety.

h. Invitations were written to mothers and to other classes to come and visit.

3. Construction and art.

Children chose to work in groups as follows:

a. Workers in Pittsburgh.

Drew pictures of fathers at work.
Modeled workers from clay.

b. City plan (Beginning map concept).

Constructed a large model of Pittsburgh including the rivers and bridges, a few important streets and buildings.

c. Movie.

Made a movie to show the parks and other places for fun in Pittsburgh.

d. Mural.

Painted a mural of a busy city street.

4. Music.

a. Learned many songs of travel and activity in a city.

b. Created tunes for poems of city sounds from *I Go A-Traveling.*

c. Created words and music about work in a city.

5. Science.

a. Discussed the reservoir nearest the community and learned there were others at different places in the city.

b. Watched a jar of muddy water settle and become clear.

c. Became more aware of the many hills and valleys in Pittsburgh.

d. Learned that the rain finally helped to make the rivers.

e. Appreciated the time and effort put forth to keep grass and flowers, trees and shrubs beautiful in our parks.

6. Excursions.

a. We took a bus trip through the Civic Center and saw its many important buildings, then went into Schenley Park and visited the flower show at Phipps Conservatory.

b. We took a bus trip down Bigelow Boulevard along the Allegheny River. We saw a food company across the river, the railroad tracks and the station, the Gulf Building, Grant Building, and others. We stopped for a short talk by the curator at the Block House. We crossed the Monongahela River at the Point Bridge, traveled up Mount Washington Roadway to the look-out. There we saw the rivers and the Golden Triangle. From the look-out we took the incline down and met the bus. We went back through the city and home.

7. Training in citizenship.

a. Developed a pride in our city—buildings, parks, products, etc.

b. Learned that we are all interdependent.

c. Learned that we need laws and must observe them to keep people safe.

d. Learned that we are each responsible for the care and protection of property.

e. While working in groups the children learned to—

Share	Be neater
Help each other	Be more careful of property
Work together	Appreciate the ability of others.

V. Aids to learning (Trips and Resource People)

Incline Trip

Food Store

Bakery

Bus Driver

Mailman

VI. Bibliography

A. *Children's*

HANNA, PAUL, GENEVIEVE A. HOYT and CLYDE F. KOHN. *In City, Town, and Country.* Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1959.

HUGLEY, LAURA M. and RALPH W. CORDIER. *Friendly Neighbors.* Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1950.

JUDSON, CLARA. *People Who Work in the City.* Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1943.

MCINTIRE, ALTA and WILHELMINA HILL. *Working Together.* Chicago: Follett Publishing Co., 1959.

MOORE, CLYDE B., HELEN M. CARPENTER, GERTRUDE M. LEWIS, and FRED B. PAINTER. *Building Our Town*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1957.

PIERCE, MARY LUSK and EUPHROSYNE GEORGAS. *The Community Where You Live*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Inc., 1959.

SMITH, NILA BANTON. *The World Around Us*. Morristown: Silver Burdett Co., 1938.

THOMAS, ELEANOR, ERNEST W. TIEGS, and FAY ADAMS. *Your Town and Mine*. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1960.

MCSWIGAN, MARIE. *Pittsburgh*. Dutton, 1946.

PRICE, OLIVE. *Pittsburgh*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1948.

TIPPETT, JAMES S. *I Go A-Traveling*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1929.

B. *Teacher's*

Contact Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce for booklets.

1. Geography of Pittsburgh. M. Graham Netting
2. Facts About Pittsburgh.
3. Pa Pitt Welcomes You.
4. Pittsburgh.

Sample Charts

Sample Charts selected from the unit are shown on the following pages.

WE WANT TO KNOW

1. How many people live in Pittsburgh?
2. Why do people live here?
3. Why are buildings so tall?
4. Why are colleges and important buildings in Oakland?
5. How many kinds of flowers are in the conservatory?
6. How big is the Block House?
7. How big is an incline car?
8. How many buildings are in the Golden Triangle?
9. Which river is the widest?

A TRIP TO THE CITY

We are going to see the Block House. Mrs. Parkus will talk to us there.

Then we are going to Mount Washington. We will see the three rivers, bridges, boats, and the way the streets go.

We will see the skyscrapers. Some of the highest buildings are—

1. Gulf Building
2. Grant Building
3. Koppers Building
4. U.S. Steel Building
5. Aluminum Building

TRAVEL IN PITTSBURGH

Inclines

Inclines are electric cars that carry autos, packages, and people up and down hills.

There are three inclines in Pittsburgh. If there were no inclines, people would have to go many miles around the hills.

Some of us went on an incline with our families. It was fun; it was like being in a plane. We could see the Golden Triangle.

FUN IN PITTSBURGH

One park is Highland Park. There you can—

1. Visit the zoo
2. Go swimming
3. Have a picnic
4. Go fishing
5. Take a hike
6. Relax and sleep
7. Ride ponies
8. Go to the playground
9. Play ball
10. See the flowers and trees.

Chapter 9

ILLUSTRATIVE RESOURCE UNIT

TO ASSIST TEACHERS and curriculum committees in developing resource units of good quality, an illustrative unit is included here. It must be understood that no single unit can be said to be entirely perfect in its form and content. This unit was selected for presentation here because of several outstanding characteristics. Probably no one will wish to use its style and planning techniques completely. On the other hand, most unit planners will find through examining it fresh ideas for developing resource units of good quality.

The unit deals with a subject that is significant for all American children and for the Nation as a whole. It develops basic subject matter and at the same time deals with current developments in its scope.

The format is streamlined and easy for the reader to follow. From the varied suggestions and materials, teachers using such a unit may readily plan the day-to-day learning experiences of their pupils, using pupil-teacher planning when appropriate.

The structure of the unit content is made clear through a brief outline for the *Development of the Unit.* A variety of activities are suggested for grasping the content and for reaching all of the objectives for the unit.

Especially appealing is the use of the term *Concluding Activities*, rather than the somewhat hackneyed and pedagogical term *Culminating.* This unit, on Asia, as well as others in the same social studies guide, is one of the few found which include *Continuing Activities.* Here is an aspect of unit planning that might well be given more attention by curriculum planners.

Finally it should be pointed out that the suggestions for evaluation in this unit have a broad base, including suggestions for the pupils, the teacher, and the parents. Suitable and varied ideas are given the individuals involved for evaluating the outcomes of the unit.

An illustrative resource unit on *Countries of Asia* for sixth graders follows:

Countries of Asia [1]

Eastern Nations Change Their Ways

I. Overview

This introductory unit on Asia provides many opportunities for children to gain some general concepts about the continent, where it is located, its countries and peoples, and something of the topography and climate of the various regions. Emphasis is on how "Eastern Nations Change Their Ways." Pupils are helped to understand the relations of the United States to many of these countries. After the unit has been developed with children, it should be followed by units on Japan, China, or India, carried out in an appropriate amount of depth.

II. Objectives

A. To understand how the pressure of population influences the behavior of these nations.

B. To understand that the future of these countries depends to a large extent upon the development of their natural resources and on the way they react to rapidly changing conditions.

C. To discover how the physical features of the countries affect the human activities of the area.

D. To develop an understanding that the industries of any country depend upon available raw materials, the climate, the power and the laws or regulations that encourage industrial growth.

E. To become acquainted with the historical background of the countries.

F. To realize that government of a country is an outgrowth of the kinds of leadership it has had in power for a long period of time.

G. To understand that each country has a culture and customs that are peculiar to that country.

III. Activities

A. Initiatory or exploratory activities

1. Utilize current newspaper and magazine articles on the Asian countries to stimulate interest.
2. Show one of the films and/or filmstrips to introduce the unit.
3. Make a bulletin board display.
4. Arrange an environment with realia; models, coins, stamps, photographs.

---

[1] East Baton Rouge Parish (La.) Public Schools. Op. cit. Sixth Grade. 1960. pp. 122–128.

5. Take a trip to an Oriental restaurant or shop.
6. Have an Asian person speak to the class.
7. Have some person who has visited or lived in Asia speak to the class.
8. Listen to Asian music from recordings.

B. Informational activities

1. Locate Asian countries on a large map.
2. Write names of Asian countries on a desk map.
3. Locate on map the chief rivers, plains, and mountains.
4. Discuss influence of mountain barriers.
5. Contrast extremes of climate.
6. Make a population map for bulletin board.
7. Read about and discuss monsoons.
8. Read to find out about the kind of government of each country.
9. Make lists of industries and products found in each country.
10. List large cities and capitals on a blank map.
11. Find as much current material as possible on education for each country.
12. Collect pictures showing every day modern activities.
13. Talk about why there are so many languages, kinds of dress, and religions in the Orient.
14. Discuss the resources, government, and other important factors in each country.
15. Show how the men from Korea carried learning from China to Japan.
16. Compare the types of government found in the Orient.

C. Assimilating or developmental activities

1. Write for copies of a daily Oriental newspaper.
2. See films and filmstrips about Asian countries at appropriate times.
3. Construct a mural showing activities of people of Asia earning a living.
4. Develop a vocabulary list as new words are acquired.
5. Divide the class into committees to collect information from available sources.
6. Construct a relief map of Asia.
7. Develop an Asian scrapbook.
8. Exchange letters, stamps, and art work with children of Asian countries.
9. Write and present an Oriental play.
10. Exchange information through reports, class discussion, and panels.

D. Concluding activities

1. Plan and present a radio or TV type skit to be presented to parents or another class.
2. Exhibit a product map of the Asian countries made by the children.
3. Display projects which have been constructed as the unit progressed.
4. Make an import-export chart and explain it to visitors.

E. Continuing activities

1. Use resource speakers when available to effect a continuing interest in the Orient.
2. Encourage continued reading by inviting reports on developments in Asia.
3. Keep a space available for bulletin board display of Asian clippings, maps, and pictures.
4. Continue exchanging letters and art work with children of Asian countries.
5. Keep adding to scrapbook on the Orient.

Public Schools, Austin, Tex.

Teacher from Asia helps children learn about her country.

IV. Development of the Unit

A. Present location of countries, topography and climate
B. Present geographical arrangement of each country
C. Industries of each country
D. Why centers of population are located where they are
E. Historical background
F. Education in each country
G. Contributions of great people

1. Artists
2. Inventors.
3. Musicians
4. Scientists

H. Changes coming about in Asian countries

I. Problems of Asian countries and people

J. Relations of the United States with countries and peoples of Asia

V. Evaluation

A. Self-evaluation by pupils

1. Do the pupils feel they spent their time wisely?
2. Does each pupil feel that he had an important role in several of the many activities provided in the unit?
3. In what ways do the pupils feel the unit could be improved?

B. Evaluation by the teacher

1. Considers evaluation a continuing process, not confined to a single technique at the close of the unit.
2. Observes extent of involvement of class members as individuals and as members of groups.
3. Observes the daily, varied activities as the unit progresses.
4. Gives an objective-type examination.

C. Evaluation by parents

1. By parent-teacher conferences, regularly scheduled.
2. The parent may wish to talk with the teacher after a classroom visitation to observe some phase of the unit in progress.
3. Parent's impressions given to the teacher after observing a culmination of a unit.
4. Discussion of the unit during home visitation by the teacher.
5. Through contacts with parents at service clubs, business and professional organizations, or even during chance meetings on the street or in the store, when such discussion seems appropriate.

VI. Sources of Information [2]

A. Bibliography for Teachers

B. Bibliography for Children

C. Reference Books

D. Sensory Aids

E. Community Resources

---

[2] In this section of the original unit, many references and other sources of information are listed under the headings herein given.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BRISTOW, WILLIAM H. and DOROTHY FURMAN. *The Unit in Curriculum Development and Instruction.* New York: Board of Education, 1956. 32 pp.

BRUNER, JEROME S. *The Process of Education.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960. pp. 21–23, 49–53, 66–68.

HANNA, LAVONE A., GLADYS L. POTTER, and NEVA HAGAMAN. *Unit Teaching in the Elementary School.* New York: Rinehart & Co., Inc., 1955. 592 pp.

HILL, WILHELMINA, *ed. Selected Resource Units: Elementary Social Studies.* Washington: National Council for the Social Studies, National Education Association, 1961. 91 pp.

———. *Social Studies in the Elementary School Program.* Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960. pp. 49–54. (Bulletin 1960, No. 5, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, OE–31000.)

HUNNICUTT, C. W., *ed. Social Studies for the Middle Grades.* Washington: National Council for the Social Studies, National Education Association, 1960. Ch. 6.

IMHOFF, MYRTLE M. *Early Elementary Education.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1959. Ch. 9.

JAROLIMEK, JOHN. *Social Studies in Elementary Education.* New York: The Macmillan Co., 1959. Ch. 5.

LEE, J. MURRAY and DORRIS MAY LEE. *The Child and His Curriculum.* New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1960. Ch. 7.

LOGAN, LILLIAN M. *Teaching the Young Child.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1960. Ch. 8.

——— and VIRGIL G. LOGAN. *Teaching the Elementary School Child.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961. pp. 167–183.

MERRITT, EDITH. *Working With Children in Social Studies.* San Francisco: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1961. Ch. 4.

MICHAELIS, JOHN. *Social Studies for Children in a Democracy.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1956. Chs. 2 and 5.

———, *ed. Social Studies in Elementary Schools.* Washington: National Council for the Social Studies, National Education Association, 1962. Ch. 8.

MIEL, ALICE and PEGGY BROGAN. *More Than Social Studies.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957. pp. 106–120.

PRESTON, RALPH C. *Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary School.* New York: Rinehart and Co., 1958. Chs. 5–9.

RESNICK, ABRAHAM. *350 Ideas for Teachers.* Darien, Conn.: Educational Publishing Corp., 1961. 48 pp.

Social Studies, Grades 7, 8, 9. A Guide for Teachers. New York: Board of Education, 1959. Ch. 3.

Strengthening Democracy. New York: Board of Education, Vol. 9, No. 3, January–February 1957, 8 pp.

THRALLS, ZOE A. *The Teaching of Geography.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1958. Ch. 9.

TIEGS, ERNEST W. and FAY ADAMS. *Teaching the Social Studies, A Guide to Better Citizenship.* Boston: Ginn & Co., 1959. Chs. 5–6.

The Unit of Learning in the Chicago Public Schools. Chicago: The Public Schools, 1954. 57 pp.

WESLEY, EDGAR BRUCE and MARY A. ADAMS. *Teaching Social Studies in Elementary Schools.* Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1952. Chs. 3–4.

WILLCOCKSON, MARY and OTHERS. *Social Education of Young Children.* Washington: National Council for the Social Studies, National Education Association, 1956. Ch. 7.

WOOD, HUGH B. *Foundations of Curriculum Planning and Development.* Seattle: Cascade-Pacific Books, 1960. Chs. 11–12.

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1963 O—677408