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**USE OF INFORMATION REGARDING COMMUNITY LIFE
IN TEACHER PLANNING**

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IN TEACHER PLANNING

By

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PREFACE

The writer wishes to acknowledge her sincere gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Millie Pearson, Head of the Department of Home Economics Education, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, for her personal inspiration, suggestions, and guidance which made this study possible.

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USE OF INFORMATION REGARDING COMMUNITY LIFE
IN TEACHER PLANNING

Throughout history the customs and beliefs of people of the various nations have determined the type of educational programs they maintained. The type of education offered was planned to meet the needs of the people dominating the group at that particular time. Changes in education came about slowly as the predominant groups changed and education was promoted in turn by the church people, the nobility, the scientists, and the business man. Now as of no previous period respect for individuals is greater. This is shown by our willingness to fight a war to protect and liberate mankind and by our willingness to help liberated peoples rebuild their homes and their industries. Similarly rationing during the war was accepted willingly by most people thus assuring a more nearly fair distribution of commodities. The buying of bonds both during the war and at the present time, indicates that American people desire to do their share in making the world a better place in which to live. Homes are being shared now by people who never before have done so not merely for financial gain but to provide living quarters for returning veterans and others caught in the housing shortage. Our respect for individuals is also shown in the protection of older people, the fact that we spend so much time and thought in caring for children, and by our encouragement and support of labor groups.

Education does not need to follow the dictates of the social order for it is a powerful influence in itself. Because its purpose is to help the individual reach his maximum development, it can and should provide learning experiences which point the direction for and tend to determine the kind of social order desired.

The strength of education was seen in pre-war Germany where all emphasis on individualism was eliminated and placed on the state. In one generation thinking was changed. If one nation can change the thinking of its people in so short a time even when that thinking is in violation of individual rights, surely then, a type of education which respects and fosters individual rights could bring about an increasingly more democratic social order.

It is therefore imperative that education in the world today recognize the importance of developing democratic individuality, of fostering optimum individual growth, and of providing for practice in collective thinking and action. Education must provide learning experiences through which students can develop to the fullest their abilities to meet their own needs. Education should help students solve problems with which they are faced on the assumption that such action will help them solve future problems.

Learning experiences cannot be planned without some information about the learner. Dr. Willis A. Sutton has said that one of the greatest needs of education is for

teachers to mix with other people. Teachers often associate almost exclusively with other teachers when they need to know other people too. Dr. Sutton believes teachers should know the parents of the children whom they teach and that they need to learn all that is possible about the child. According to Dr. Sutton, no teacher is a good teacher if she doesn't know her pupils.¹

Types of information which may be of help to the teacher include the location of the students' homes and their distances from school; the income of the family; the father's occupation; the occupations of other family members; what modern conveniences the home contains; the hobbies of the members of the family; what magazines, books, and newspapers are read by the students; the age of the student and whether or not there are older or younger brothers and sisters; the church preferences of the family; the home duties of the student; whether or not the student has an allowance, and if so, for what it is spent; how much of the family's food is raised at home; the amount and importance of participation in school and church activities; any special abilities the student may possess; his relationships with other people, and his attitude toward things in general. Information about the community in which students

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Lecture by Dr. Willis A. Sutton, former president of the National Education Association, delivered at the Second General Session, Northern Oklahoma Education Association, Enid, Oklahoma, November 2, 1945

live is also helpful in selecting and providing learning experiences. Such information as what kinds of people make up the community, what they believe in and what they like to do, what churches are in the community, some of the community's history, and the types of businesses in the town may help the teacher to understand pupils' problems and to plan class projects which will be an inspiration and a challenge.

A feasible plan for securing information should be made and certain kinds should be secured quickly. This is especially important if it is the first year the teacher has been in the community. Teaching should start where the students are because their interest will be greater and they will see how they can use the information that they are receiving. The more interested people are in something, the more they will get out of it. If information about the students is obtained as soon as possible, the teacher will be able to begin teaching where it will be interesting and beneficial to students.

Much information can be collected before the opening of school and during the teacher's first year in the community through home visits. Conferences with townspeople, other teachers, and supervisors of government agencies working in the community bring to light much information that is useful. By making a tour of the community, attending community activities, and reading the local newspaper a wealth of information also is acquired. Frequenting places where students gather offers opportunities to talk

with them and to become better acquainted. Questionnaires filled out by students provide a means of collecting in the shortest possible time a number of facts concerning their homes. Other knowledge of the students can be gained through individual conferences and through listening to their conversations and comments. If the teacher is genuinely friendly toward people and is interested in them, never holding herself aloof, much information is naturally obtained. At informal gatherings, reticence is broken down and students speak more freely of their likes and dislikes, their hopes and desires for the future. Picnics are one of the best means of bringing teachers and pupils closer together so that their association is pleasant and valuable to all concerned. A picnic at the beginning of the school year may be the very thing that will make students look on a teacher as a friend, and some one to go to when problems arise. When people have eaten together and played together, their working together is put on a friendlier basis.

Information gained by the new teacher at the beginning of the school year must be added to and revised continuously to keep it up-to-date and accurate. As students grow their interests change and class work must develop with the student's needs. Interests of sophomores are vastly different from those of freshmen. Juniors and seniors have a more adult viewpoint than younger students. Eighth grade girls are just coming into adolescence and their interests are unstable and varied. These different interests must be

considered when plans for the year's work are being made since subject matter that relates most directly to the needs of the students must be chosen.

The writer believes that:

1. Teaching should be based upon student needs and community situations
2. Teaching should begin where the pupils are
3. The more nearly needs are met, the more interested students are
4. One learns more through the solving of pertinent everyday problems than through memorizing bare facts
5. The school is obligated to provide learning experiences which give practice in democratic living.

The writer further believes that the needs of students cannot be met adequately unless the teacher thoroughly understands and appreciates the people in the community. She also believes that as more and more information is secured regarding students and their needs that changes will be made in the nature and kind of learning experiences planned, in the methods of teaching used, in the emphases and content of courses, and in the teacher's attitude toward students and toward the community.

At the time this problem was started, the writer was beginning her work as a teacher in a new situation. Because of these beliefs an effort was made to collect as much information as possible about the students and the community quickly, and to study its use in planning the first year's program. A tour was made of the town and the outlying community. Stores and business concerns were visited and

their employees interviewed. School records and census reports were studied and historical records regarding this section of the state reviewed. Key people in the community were interviewed and visits made to selected homes. Through these means much valuable information was secured. However, only a brief summary is included here since this thesis is concerned chiefly with that information secured from home-making students and their families.

This study was made in Newkirk, a town of approximately 2,200 population, in the north central part of Oklahoma. Ninety-two per cent of the population are native born whites, five per cent are Negroes, and the remaining three per cent are made up of other races and foreign born whites. Newkirk is the center of a rich agricultural district near the Arkansas River.

Business establishments include the usual ones found in western towns of this size. Because the town is located on main lines of a railroad and bus, the merchants are able to provide for all average consumer needs with the exception of clothing. A great many people in order to get variety and style go to nearby larger towns to purchase their clothing.

The recreation facilities of the community include a swimming pool, a public library, a skating rink, one movie, a bowling alley, a ball park, and a park which contains tennis courts, picnic tables, and ovens. All of these are patronized freely. The library is unusually good for a

small town and furnishes excellent reading and reference materials to persons of all age levels and interests. A country club is located a few miles out of town. Here fishing, swimming, boating, golf, tennis, and picnicing may be enjoyed. Low membership fees at the country club place it within reach of the majority of the families in town.

Since Newkirk is one of the oldest towns in the state, many of the buildings and houses are old. The majority of the business buildings and the post office are constructed of native stone. The larger per cent of the houses are in very good condition and show evidences of love and respect for home life. The people of Newkirk are lovers of flowers, this is shown by the fact that nearly every home is surrounded by a well kept lawn and beautiful flowers.

Organized groups play an important part in the life of the community. Churches in the community include the Catholic faith and the majority of the well known Protestant groups. The Rotary Club, Business and Professional Women's Club, Parent-Teacher Association, American Legion, the Auxiliary of the American Legion, and the Business Men's Association all take an active part in community affairs. The agencies particularly concerned with better living include the Farm Security Administration, the Extension Service, the Department of Public Welfare, the Department of Child Welfare, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, the Soil Conservation Service, and the County Health Unit.

The first year the writer was in Newkirk, the community was tensely waiting. The majority of the young men were in the armed forces, and every one was concerned about their safety. Large numbers of women and girls were doing Red Cross work. Amusements had to be provided in the community because of wartime restrictions on transportation. The high school boys were more interested than ever before in aviation and the high school curriculum included a course in pre-flight training. There was general unrest among students and adults and the majority were conscious of the war effort. A school wide scrap collection drive was an event of the fall semester. A number of the older boys quit school and enlisted in some branch of the service. School children felt they were not doing their share in the war and every effort had to be made to hold them in school.

Although this general information was helpful in locating student needs, it was not sufficiently detailed to enable the teacher to complete plans for the year's work. To secure the detailed information needed, student groups in homemaking classes were asked to answer a simple questionnaire.² This questionnaire was given the first year to all of the homemaking students at their beginning class period. Although student groups were contacted over a period of four years, only those who were new enrollees were asked to answer this questionnaire.

²

See page 10

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HOMEMAKING CLASSES

Name _____ Age _____ Birthday _____
 Address _____ Telephone _____
 Location of home _____
 Father's name _____ Occupation _____
 Mother's name _____ Occupation _____
 Do you work away from home? _____
 Other members in the family _____ Ages _____
 Church preference _____
 What are your hobbies? _____
 What are your home duties? _____
 What do you like to do in your leisure time? _____
 What magazines and newspapers are taken in your home? _____
 What are your favorite books? _____
 What are your favorite magazines? _____
 Do you carry your lunch? _____
 Do you have an allowance? _____ If yes, what expenses must
 it cover? _____
 Does your family own your home? _____ How many rooms are there? _____
 What fuel is used for cooking? _____ For heating? _____
 What is used for lighting? _____
 What is the source of your water supply? _____
 Does your family raise chickens? _____ A garden? _____
 Does your family have its own milk supply? _____ Its meat? _____
 Check the things which you have at home:
 Power washing machine _____ Treadle sewing machine _____
 Hand power washing machine _____ Electric sewing machine _____
 Sink in kitchen _____ Running water _____
 Bathroom _____ Outside toilet _____
 Furnace _____ Radio _____
 Ice refrigerator _____ Piano _____
 Mechanical refrigerator _____ Pressure cooker _____
 Check the garments you have made:
 Slip _____ Wool jacket _____ Wool dress _____
 Cotton dress _____ Coat _____ Shorts _____
 Rayon or silk dress _____ Slacks _____
 Wool skirt _____
 List others: _____

The homemaking classes taught were eighth grade, Homemaking I and II each year and Homemaking III and IV in alternate years. The number of girls enrolled in each class is shown in Table 1. This table not only shows the enrollment per class but also which classes were taught each year.

TABLE 1

Number of Homemaking Students Enrolled

Homemaking Class	Number of Students Per Year			
	1942-43	1943-44	1944-45	1945-46
8th. grade	18	19	23	27
I	41	32	33	31
II	12	17	17	25
III	9	--	21	--
IV	--	14	--	19
Total Enrollment	80	82	94	102

TABLE 2

Number of Homemaking Students by Grade

Grade	Number of Students			
	1942-43	1943-44	1944-45	1945-46
8	18	19	23	27
9	28	20	27	31
10	14	25	16	21
11	9	10	18	7
12	11	8	10	16
Totals	80	82	94	102

It will be noted that each year there was a slight increase in enrollment over the previous year. This is especially

true of Homemaking II, III, and IV classes. Since these three classes are elective, the writer believes these enrollment figures indicate a greater interest and satisfaction in the work carried on.

Homemaking I, II, III, and IV were not always divided by grade. In 1942-43 Homemaking I consisted of ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students. The explanation given by students, parents, and administrators for this irregular grouping was that many students did not like homemaking classes and postponed taking this required year as long as possible. Likewise, the other classes were composed of students from several grades. However, in 1945-46 Homemaking I was made up entirely of ninth grade students but the other upper classes continued to have several grades represented in them. The way these homemaking students were classified is shown in Table 2, page 11.

The total enrollment in grades eight to twelve inclusive for the four years was as follows: 1942-43, 232; 1943-44, 227; 1944-45, 208; and 1945-46, 254. Since the total enrollment varied little from year to year, the writer believes there is some significance in the fact that there were 16 senior girls enrolled in homemaking classes in 1945-46 when only 11 were enrolled in 1942-43. These 16 students were 57 per cent of the girls in the senior class. Of these 16, nine had been in homemaking classes each year they were in high school, five had been in homemaking three years, and two had had two years work in homemaking. This

seems to indicate an increased interest and desire for this type of learning experience.

In view of the fact that interests generally vary at different ages, a study was made of the ages of the girls in the homemaking classes during each of the four years. The ages of the students ranged from 12 to 19 years, however, the majority of the students enrolled were between 13 and 17 years of age. Table 3 shows the number of students in each age group.

TABLE 3

Ages of Students in Homemaking Classes

Ages	Number of Students			
	1942-43	1943-44	1944-45	1945-46
12	0	5	5	3
13	18	15	14	20
14	24	21	25	32
15	12	20	19	24
16	17	10	18	12
17	3	9	10	10
18	6	0	3	1
19	0	2	0	0
Totals	80	82	94	102

Examination of this table shows that the 14 year old students were in the majority each year, while the 13, 15, and 16 year old pupils competed for second and third place. The increase in the number of older students is another evidence that more students were electing homemaking classes and that they took homemaking over a longer period.

The questionnaire found on page 10 and used to secure

general information regarding students and their homes was a simple one page form which was given to 80 homemaking students in 1942-43 and then only to new students at the time of their entrance. Facts brought out by this questionnaire in 1942-43 showed that 45 of the homemaking students lived in town, 25 lived on farms a short distance from town, and ten lived on far distant farms. Eleven of the girls whose homes were on farms stayed in town during the week, going home Friday evening and returning to town Sunday evening or Monday morning. There were no school buses and boarding in town meant fewer trips for the family car. Forty-six of the 80 homes represented by this group of students were family owned and 34 were rented property. By knowing how far students lived from school, it was easier to understand why students sometimes arrived at school late. Since Homemaking I and freshmen English both had two sections, these meeting the first two hours of the morning, the English teacher and the homemaking teacher decided it would be better for students who came from far distant homes to be in the first hour homemaking class and the second hour English class. Both thought that when roads were muddy and students were late arriving at school it would be easier to make up work missed in homemaking classes. Students are usually less embarrassed to come into an informal class tardy. This plan has been carried out for four years and has proved to be quite successful.

Information regarding the occupations of the parents

shown in answer to the questionnaire in 1942-43 gave further insight regarding the background of these 80 students. Seventy-five of the students had living fathers, and of these, four were retired. The fathers were found to be employed in a number of different types of work.

TABLE 4

Fathers Occupations As Reported by Homemaking Students

Type of Occupation	Number Employed
Agriculture	
1. Farmer	28
2. Dairyman	1
3. Stock Breeder	1
	<hr/>
Total - - - - -	30
Trade and Industry	
1. Laborer	9
2. Carpenter	3
3. Railroad Employee	3
4. Refinery Worker in Ponca City	2
5. Others	9
	<hr/>
Total - - - - -	26
Business Men	
1. Salesmen	2
2. Merchants	3
	<hr/>
Total - - - - -	5
Professional	
1. Ministers	1
2. Teachers	1
3. Lawyers	3
	<hr/>
Total - - - - -	5
Government Service	
1. Armed Forces	2
2. City Employee	1
3. Federal Employee	2
	<hr/>
Total - - - - -	5
	<hr/>
Grand total	71

Agriculture in its various phases was listed most frequently but this was to be expected since 35 of the 80 pupils lived on farms. Next largest group was those in trade and industry, the rest were equally divided. All of the girls had living mothers and eight of them were employed outside of the home. All the girls worked at home while ten worked away from home.

Thirty-two girls had allowances and were expected to pay for their entertainment, in-between-meal snacks, and other nonessentials. These allowances were small and in all classes they were used as a basis for discussion of wiser uses of money. Some of the girls who had allowances wanted to learn to budget them and to keep expense accounts.

Another kind of information that is usually significant is what foods are produced at home. It was found in this group of 80 students that 44 families raised chickens, 56 had gardens, 34 had their own milk supply, and 30 had their own meat. This information was used as a basis by students and teachers for planning lessons in foods. Because of these conditions, good methods of storing foods were stressed and some canning was done. Food budgets were studied and compared with the amounts of food produced by the families represented in the classes.

Other information secured from the questionnaire was the number of members in the families represented. In 1942-43 seven girls were an "only" child. Nineteen girls

came from families of four children, while one girl came from a family of fourteen children. The tabulation of this data is found in Table 5.

TABLE 5

Number of Children in the Families of Homemaking Students

Number of Children	Number of Families
4	19
3	17
2	17
5	9
1	7
6	6
7	2
8	1
14	1
9	1

If a teacher knows what home responsibilities pupils have, it is often easier to understand school attitudes which otherwise might be puzzling. Many of the students in this group helped with the housework while one girl had complete charge of the work in her home. A few of the girls helped with the chores. A very small percentage of the group signified that they did no work at home. Good housekeeping methods were practiced at school with the hope that they would be repeated at home.

It is also important to know how students use their leisure time. When leisure time is wisely spent, students usually have a more wholesome outlook on life. The writer learned that many of the students enjoyed outdoor sports, others enjoyed music, some listed working on their hobbies

as their favorite way to spend their leisure time. A large majority liked to read. Much can be learned about students from their reading habits. Those who enjoy good books and magazines are generally the ones who do better work in class. By again referring to the questionnaire, it was learned that the well known women's magazines were among the favorites of the students. Other favorites listed were fashion and teen age magazines, farm magazines, movie and picture magazines. Very few students listed the tawdry type of story magazines. Favorite books included those about girls the students' own ages, stories portraying home life, and stories of adventure and romance. Since so many good books were listed, the discussions in family relationships were opened by discussing the characters in books read.

A teacher in a new situation is always more or less at loss in knowing where to start a clothing class. In order to learn about students' past experiences in sewing the questionnaire was again consulted. The girls had checked and listed the garments they had made thus providing the following information: the eighth grade girls had done very little sewing. The few who had sewed at home had made slips, simple cotton dresses, a few aprons, shorts, and dish towels. The greater part of the class had done embroidery work and made doll clothes. The Homemaking I group had had little more experience. Likewise the Homemaking II class was lacking in sewing experience. Homemaking III was the

advanced class and these students showed evidence of the need for more sewing experience. Most of the garments these students had made were simple ones and had not provided them with enough experience to give them confidence in clothing construction. In addition to the information brought out by the questionnaire, other information was needed. A pre-test in textiles was given to the Homemaking II class. This showed that students had very little knowledge about textiles. By talking with all of the classes and discussing what they had studied the previous year and by asking them what else they wanted to learn about clothing, students were helped to see their needs. Plans were made with the help of the teacher. Since none of the students had developed skill in sewing, the content of the courses in 1942-43 was necessarily much the same in all classes. The construction problems were based on the needs of the students both from the standpoint of information and wardrobe deficiencies. The eighth grade girls made tea towels first, followed by simple aprons, then a simple garment of their own choice. The students in Homemaking I made garments with set-in sleeves. The Homemaking II students made winter garments, and the Homemaking III students made any type of garment on which they felt they needed experience.

When answers to that part of the questionnaire which asked for church preferences were checked, it was found that 29 of the 80 girls listed as their preference the

Christian Church, 16 the Methodist, ten the Baptist, eight the Catholic, and five the Presbyterian. Seven girls gave no answer. This may indicate an indifference to religion or it may mean that these students had not made a choice. Table 6 shows the tabulation of the church preferences as listed by the students enrolled in homemaking classes in 1942-43.

TABLE 6

Church Preference of Homemaking Students

Church Preference	Number of Students
Christian	29
Methodist	16
Baptist	10
Catholic	8
Presbyterian	5
Lutheran	2
Pilgrim Holiness	2
Church of God	1
No Answer	7
Total	80

The Christian, Methodist, and Baptist Churches had as many students in this group as all the others put together. This seems to be typical of the town population.

Twenty-four of the 80 students had to eat their noon meal away from home. Seventeen of these 24 students brought their lunches to school. The other seven ate up town.

More information pertaining to students' homes was

obtained from the questionnaire. To the question " what fuel is used for cooking" these answers were given: 49 of the 80 families cooked with gas, 15 used kerosene, 12 used wood, three cooked with gasoline, and one with coal. Fifty-seven of the 80 homes represented were lighted by electricity, 15 used kerosene lights, seven used gas for lighting, and one used gasoline. The homes were heated with a variety of fuels. Forty-seven of the homes were heated with gas, 15 with wood, nine with coal, three with gas and wood, two with fuel oil and coal, two with kerosene and wood, and one each with coke and coke and gas.

Forty-five of the homes were supplied with city water, while the water supply for the farm homes was obtained from wells and cisterns.

How well the homes were equipped was shown by that part of the questionnaire where the students checked the equipment owned. These facts were brought out: 64 of the 80 homes had power washing machines, seven had hand power machines, 57 of the homes had a sink in the kitchen, 43 had a bathroom, and 12 had furnaces. Thirty-eight of the homes were equipped with ice refrigerators, while 32 had mechanical refrigerators. Sixty-four homes had treadle sewing machines and ten had electric. Seventy-four homes had radios and 46 pianos. Thirty-one families had pressure cookers.

The facts brought out by the questionnaire supplemented the writer's first impression of the homes in this

community. The conveniences found in the homes were proof that the majority of the people were home loving. More than 50 per cent of the homes were supplied with gas, electricity, and running water. Seventy of these 80 homes had refrigeration and 74 had sewing machines and radios.

The information obtained during the first year was used in planning units of work and in guiding the selection of home projects. Students whose home duties were many or who lived far from school were encouraged to select projects which would save time and help in a better use of time, which would improve working methods and simplify tasks.

Forty-seven new students came into homemaking classes in the fall of 1943. They too answered the questionnaire referred to earlier. They came from homes much like those represented the previous year. Thirty-three of these students lived in town, one living in a well equipped trailer. Nine of the students came from farm homes near town and four from farms several miles removed. Thirty-one of the 47 homes were family owned. A careful review of the questionnaire answered by these students showed that their homes were equipped similar to those reported the year before, many being above average.

The occupations represented by the fathers of this group of students were similar to those represented in 1942-43. The fathers of two of the girls were deceased. Two girls had no mother, while six had mothers who worked away from home. One mother was the owner of a store,

another helped manage the family's store, while the other working mothers did office work. Two of the students entering in 1943 were employed. All of them helped at home, some having more responsibilities than others.

Twenty of the 47 students had allowances but most of them were larger than those reported by students the year before. Six of the 20 girls who had allowances were expected to buy everything they needed including clothing. These conditions may have been due to increased family incomes or to increased responsibility on the part of the students studied.

These 47 families produced a large part of their food. Thirty-two raised chickens, 36 had gardens, 19 had their own milk, and 13 produced their own meat supply.

The church preferences of this group of students were much like those of the former group. Seven girls gave no answer to that part of the questionnaire.

None of the new students had sewn very much. The extent of their sewing had been tea towels and a few simple cotton garments. Fourteen of the 47 girls had done no sewing.

New students coming into the homemaking classes in the fall of 1944 numbered 38. The following year there were 48 new students. The information obtained about these two groups was so similar to that which has been discussed that it will not be included in this thesis.

Through the information brought out in this study of

home conditions, the writer has found this to be a fairly stable community made up of a large number of families who are above average economically.

The first year the writer taught in this community, the work in all of the homemaking classes was necessarily very similar. During the year 1941-42 the majority of class time had been spent in making improvements in the homemaking department with the homemaking students doing much of the work. They had repainted most of the furniture in the department and made new curtains, consequently they had had little time for the study of personal, home, and family problems. Students had not had the personal help nor the basic learning experiences they needed. In order to stimulate interest and to prepare the students for more advanced undertakings, many basic things had to be included in the class work of upper classmen as well as in that of the beginners. The past experiences of students in the Homemaking I and II classes were much alike even though these students were of different age and grade levels. The older girls were more sophisticated than the younger ones, and for this reason good relationships were stressed. Class work in units of food and clothing was similar in Homemaking I and II, however, more work was covered in Homemaking II because of the greater urgency and increased intensity of the personal problems faced.

Part of the students in the Homemaking II group were very poorly groomed. Most of them came from comfortable

homes and could afford nice clothing, but their clothes received such poor care that they were never attractive. Part of the class work in the clothing unit was on good care of clothing. Each girl made a special study and gave a demonstration of the care of a particular type of clothing.

The need for more basic knowledge was even more noticeable in the Homemaking III class than in the other classes. This was particularly evident in students' expressions of dissatisfaction in regard to previous experiences, in their eagerness to solve personal and family problems, and in their desire to prepare themselves for life after finishing high school. Since all but one of these students were seniors, many things had to be crowded into this last year's work. All of the students in this class expressed a desire to learn more about clothing selection. The class was made up of a variety of types of students, so each one studied clothing selection from the standpoint of her own needs. In order to help solve personal and family problems, a unit in "Getting the Most Out of Life" was included. This unit dealt with vocations for girls, preparation for college, and for marriage.

During her first year in the community, the writer gave particular attention to the first things that happened in classes as clues for starting class work with the things in which the pupils were interested. The first few days younger students brought out flowers to school. They were

asked to arrange the flowers for the homemaking rooms. This gave the students a chance to learn where things were kept in the homemaking department, and the teacher an opportunity to learn the students' ability to use things at hand. Casual suggestions for improving the bouquets caused the students to become interested in learning more about arranging flowers. Therefore, a series of lessons in flower arrangement were the first ones in the Homemaking I class. Students brought flowers from their homes and experimented with various types of flower arrangements, learning to choose flowers and suitable containers. Using these community resources in school work enabled the teacher and students to contact a number of homes. As a result parents became more interested in the work being done in the homemaking classes and saw that homemaking was more than just cooking and sewing. Soon parents, too, were asking for help in using cut flowers to a better advantage. This led to requests for help in other phases of homemaking.

Health work during the teacher's first year in this community was based on observations made of the students. A large number of the students had colds during the winter and many of them had poor complexions. Health discussions were related to units in foods and personal grooming.

When starting the second year's work in the community, the upper classes in homemaking had a better background for their work than the classes of the previous year. The teacher was sure of this because she had a record of the

work carried out by them the year before. She knew better where to start this year's work. Progress had been made in personal grooming, in attitudes, and in skill in carrying on homemaking activities. This was shown by such things as students coming to class with their hair better cared for; by their tolerance of younger, less experienced students; and by their improved abilities to carry out class problems with less help from the teacher. For this reason, none of the work that had been taught the year before was repeated in these classes. They attacked problems more nearly in keeping with those usually thought of as upper high school level.

Most of the new students coming into the homemaking department in 1943-44 were in the eighth grade and Homemaking I classes, and it will be remembered that they came from homes similar in every respect to the homes that were represented the year before.

In 1943-44 because of the war effort, Red Cross classes for adults were being stressed in the community. The students, hearing their parents discuss Red Cross work, became interested in home nursing and first aid, and expressed a desire to learn more about this phase of subject matter. They asked if they could study these problems in class, so the first lessons in Homemaking I that year were in home care of the sick and first aid.

Many of the homes from which the students came contained good equipment, so some time was spent in studying

care and use of household equipment. Selection of equipment was not taught because the homes represented were already well equipped. Nevertheless, there was a need for knowing how to use the equipment properly in order to make it last as long as possible. At that time equipment was scarce and repairs hard to obtain, so it was imperative that every one using the equipment knew how to use it properly. Students were taught how to do such things as oiling sewing machines, repairing electric cords, and using small electrical appliances.

The students in the Homemaking II class were especially interested in learning more about equipment for the kitchen and dining room, so in this class emphasis was placed on that. The students were interested in learning why there is a difference in quality of china, silver, and glassware and these were studied as much as limited library facilities and illustrative materials would permit. More could have been done with these subjects if the students had had more examples of equipment to compare.

The study of dining room equipment led to a discussion of other rooms of the home, and soon the class was studying suitable colors for rooms and good room arrangement. More than one girl felt a need to improve the arrangement of her bedroom, and this was an excellent way to get help with her problem.

The eighth grade class is always made up of students who have had few homemaking experiences. Therefore the

problems set forth in this class are important because they form the background on which the other four years of home-making class work are based. The eighth grade students in 1943-44 were no different from those enrolled the previous year. Most of them were ambitious and eager to learn all they could about homemaking, especially cooking. Since their past experiences had been very limited, the simplest kinds of foods were prepared in class. Learning did not stop at school. This was evident by the fact that when a food was prepared at school, the majority of the students prepared this same food at home for their families. This carry over of learning experiences into the home was one evidence of the degree of interest taken by the students in learning to cook.

By the beginning of 1944-45, the classes were not as irregular in grade-age levels and in learning experienced as they had been in the two previous years. This is shown by the fact that of the 33 students enrolled in the Home-making I class, 27 were freshmen; and of the 17 enrolled in the Homemaking II class, 16 were sophomores. This made it easier for the teacher, because individual differences were not so great. The Homemaking III class had an enrollment of 21, an increase of 12 over the last enrollment in the class. This showed that students were staying in home-making classes longer.

The students in the Homemaking III class had studied all of the basic principles in food preparation and the

writer thought it might be unwise to let this group of students continue to plan and prepare family size meals in class when they had done this in previous years. Continued repetition tends to lessen interest in class work and is unfair to students since class work should grow with the student. By talking with the group and by suggesting various other problems which might be of interest to the class, the students became interested in learning to plan and prepare meals for larger groups. The students said that their mothers were always having to help with club and church dinners and that they would probably have to do it when they were older. They decided to serve a luncheon once a week to persons making reservations in advance. The class set up objectives, rotating activities and responsibilities so that each student could have a number of experiences. The division of personnel and duties planned by the class were: two business managers who would make and sell the tickets for the luncheon, do the buying, deposit the money, and pay the bills; one kitchen manager who would be responsible for the menu and be in charge of the kitchen; four waitresses to set the tables, serve the guests, clean up the dining room after the luncheon; one hostess who was responsible for the table decorations, who met the guests as they arrived, collected tickets, and helped in the dining room; two main dish cooks who were responsible for the preparation of the main dish; two vegetable cooks; two salad cooks; two bread cooks; and

two dessert cooks. At first the class planned to serve 25 at the luncheon, but soon the luncheons were so popular the students enlarged their problem to serve 40 people. The students enjoyed the work and many of them still comment on how much they learned during the project. The people who were guests enjoyed the luncheons and many of the students learned to like new foods. Boys were especially eager for an opportunity to be guests and this was one way their shyness about coming to the homemaking rooms was overcome.

During 1944-45 clothing became harder to obtain. Ready-made garments were expensive and scarce, and those that were available were often of a poor quality. Fabrics were almost nonexistent. Students found difficulty in obtaining good quality materials for their construction problems, thus many of them became interested in remodeling garments. Every student in the advanced class and many of the younger students made over garments or made new garments from old ones. These garments ranged from dickeys, dresses, and suits to fur coats.

Many of the younger students enrolled in homemaking classes were the youngest members of their families and were badly spoiled. Their interests were self-centered and their attitudes were selfish and immature. All through the year good relationships were emphasized with the hope of improving these selfish tendencies.

The writer feels that the year 1945-46, her fourth year in the community, was her most successful year of

teaching. More information about the students and the community was acquired each year she lived in the community. This knowledge made it easier to see what things should be taught. In the advanced class 14 of the 19 girls enrolled were seniors. Nine of these had been enrolled in homemaking classes all four years they had been in high school. This seemed to justify the writer's belief that the more known about students, their interests and needs, and the better these interests and needs are met, the more interested students will be in class work. By this time the teacher was an accepted part of the community. More and more adults were calling upon her for help in many phases of homemaking and her opinion and answers seemed to be respected. Students seemed to look upon her as a friend, and came to her with many of their problems. The teacher, in the meantime, had changed her attitude toward the community and its people. At first she was a stranger in a new town, planning her work on the basis of limited information and best hunches. Now, four years later, she has made this community her home; she feels that she is recognized and because of this recognition feels secure as a member of the group. She is more appreciative and more tolerant of the people and their peculiarities and is vitally interested and active in community affairs.

This year, 1945-46, for the first time the Homemaking I class was made up entirely of ninth grade students. They had all had similar past experiences and they were

all interested in the same things. Many of these students were new in the school, some coming from rural schools. A number of them had had older sisters enrolled in homemaking classes at sometime during the past three years. The majority of these students wanted to learn the same things their sisters had when they were freshmen. This seemed to show that their older sisters had taken a large amount of their homemaking instruction home with them.

Because such a large percentage of the students enrolled in Homemaking I were attending this school for the first time, many of them showing signs of extreme shyness, the teacher felt that a unit in personality development would help them become better adjusted to their new situation. Those students coming from rural schools had been the oldest in those schools and had been looked up to by the younger students, while in this new place they were among the youngest students and sometimes practically ignored by the others. They needed to develop a feeling of confidence. The teacher, knowing that the majority of girls that age are interested in new hair styles and in ways of improving their complexions, suggested starting the year's work with a study of themselves. Discussions and demonstrations on good care of the hair, skin, and hands were followed by lessons on good posture and care of the body. This in turn was followed by a study of clothing selection, then discussions of personalities. Next, acceptable ways to act at school, at home, and on the

street were discussed and demonstrated by students. How to make and keep friends was also a part of this unit. By the time the unit was completed, students had become much more secure and self-confident. They were better acquainted with each other as well as with themselves.

Many of the students in the Homemaking IV class expressed a wish to learn to renovate furniture. The majority of the homes represented by this group of students were well furnished, but many of them contained pieces of furniture that were wearing out and could not be replaced because of conditions brought about by the war. Some of the students were interested in learning to upholster furniture but had nothing at home that needed renewing. One of the churches in the community had a divan which was in a very bad condition. A church member offered to furnish the material if the students wanted to renovate the divan. Some of them wanted it as their class project so it was moved to the homemaking department. Many things about furniture repair and renovation were brought out on this one piece because of its appalling condition. This piece of work aroused much community interest in the work done in homemaking classes. Again people were made aware of the fact that homemaking students were being given the opportunity to learn more than just cooking and sewing.

During the war high school students worked after their graduation. Now these jobs are being taken by returning veterans or people returning from defense plants.

This past year more of the graduating seniors were planning to attend nearby colleges. As a result, much time was spent in the latter part of the senior year on a study of vocations and on preparation for college.

The information brought out by this study has been used each year chiefly to find a starting place for class work in homemaking classes. There may be other facts that were gained which are as important as those that have been listed but that the writer was unconscious of. They may be more important than those that were used. The writer does not know the extent of the effect she as a person had on the community nor does she know the total effect of the community on her.

Since starting to write this thesis, the writer has studied objectively the information regarding the community and has realized the very definite part the homemaking department can have in pointing the way toward newer things for students. The writer has found this to be a fairly stable community. Even though this study was made during the war, few changes were noted in the general conditions of the community. A stable community, especially one where the economic level seems to be average or above, offers a definite challenge to homemaking education. The department and all class work needs to be the type which helps people buy more wisely, use more efficiently, and which stimulates them to additional effort. Facts which cause the writer to believe this to be a stable community

but one which needs improvement are many. Approximately the same number of students were in school each of the four years with about the same proportion of the students enrolled in homemaking coming from nearby farms and farms greater distances from town. The population of the town is gradually becoming older due to the many retired farmers coming to town to live. This has caused a severe housing shortage. The majority of the business men are content to let the town remain as it is and little effort is being made to bring in any outstanding enterprises which would benefit the community. It will be remembered that many people go to nearby larger towns to buy clothing. This business could be kept in the community if some one would establish an exclusive clothing shop. There are a number of cafes in the town, but none of them are outstanding in any way. If some one with foresight would put in an attractive tea room, equipped to serve meals to organizations, he would be doing a real service to the town as well as establishing a profitable concern which would provide employment for young people. Not one of the grocery stores delivers and there are a great many old people, especially widows, in the town who are not able to go to town for their food supplies. A delivery service is badly needed and offers a splendid opportunity for an enterprising person. There is no bakery in the community, other than a doughnut shop; however, bakery products are brought in from larger towns. A local bakery could be a paying

proposition.

Many of the homes in the community are above average economically. The majority are equipped far better than those usually thought of as average Oklahoma homes. Equipment problems in most homes are those of selection and use rather than those of production.

Many of the people in the community are thrifty and enjoy producing things in their homes. This is evident in the fact that they like help in such things as furniture renovation and clothing remodeling.

Many of the school girls are extremely snobbish and have little tolerance for students who do not belong to their set. One thing which may have caused this attitude is an organization in the high school. It is called a pep club but is organized and carried out as a sorority. School organizations have their place in the lives of young people, but they should have as their purpose, practice in democratic living.

This knowledge of the community has brought to light very definite things about the homemaking department in the high school. Because so many homes in the community are well equipped, the homemaking department should be equipped above the level of the homes. The equipment should be new, unusual, and highly efficient to give students new experiences and to serve as an inspiration to the community. It might be possible to sell the idea to industries to loan new equipment to the school and keep it up-to-date. The

library in this department as well as in others should be superior, and much good exhibit and illustrative material should be available. The classes should work with home management problems which save time and energy, rather than with those which demonstrate ways of doing tasks with home-made equipment. This is especially true since most of the homes contain good equipment. Consumer education problems heretofore neglected should be given a prominent place in the curriculum.

It would be well to stress good family relationships, because of the arrogant attitude exhibited by some of the students. This could bring about a more democratic atmosphere throughout the school and community. However, homemaking classes need not take the full responsibility for teaching relations, because they are just as important in a number of other areas.

International relations should be emphasized. People who live in unchanging communities are apt to become self-satisfied and indifferent to others. It is only through practice in thinking about others and in sharing with others that individuals can develop those personal characteristics essential for democratic living. Homemaking students could include in their classes a study of the living conditions and customs of people in other countries. The recent war has made the world a much smaller place and students who are in school now will probably be associated with other nationalities more than those of the past.

Homemaking classes could help provide clothing and food for needy people at home and overseas. Foods classes could study the international exchange of food and other factors that affect prices and supplies of foods.

Because the majority of the families are financially able to buy ready-made clothing and do buy many of their clothes, it is more important for homemaking students to learn to choose good fabrics and suitable lines and styles in clothing than it is for them to learn many detailed construction processes. In communities where people make the majority of their clothing, construction is much more important, and probably should receive first consideration.

Good nutrition is important regardless of financial status, so here, even though much food is produced at home, it is wise for students in foods classes to learn how the foods produced at home may be supplemented in order for the family to have a well-balanced diet.

A community of this type places a huge responsibility upon the homemaking teacher. She must know more about homemaking than anyone else in the community; she must know new methods of doing tasks; and she must have up-to-the-minute information to give. Because the community already has a high standard of living, the teacher must not only meet the standard set but must go beyond it if she is to effect real changes through her teaching. These make refresher courses or summer school attendance imperative. The homemaking teacher's appearance must be attractive and

stylish. This will probably mean that she will have to use her knowledge of clothing construction to make part of her clothes. It is expensive to be as well dressed as she must be, so some garments should be made at home to reduce the total wardrobe cost. Making part of her clothes also serves as an inspiration to students to learn to sew. Likewise, where the homemaking teacher lives is important. If she teaches students how to have happy, attractive homes, hers should be happy and attractive also.

Since studying the information obtained by the various methods, it has again been brought to the writer's attention that no two communities are enough alike to warrant teaching the same information in the same manner. It is necessary to see these differences in order to do an effective piece of teaching.

The high school homemaking department in this community is not equipped as it should be to serve as a model for the community. The writer hopes that a number of improvements can be made during the next school year. She will contact industries and try to interest them in loaning equipment to the homemaking department. Equipment such as a steam iron, table linens, and small equipment for the kitchen are included in purchase plans for next year. Plans for improving the homemaking library are the addition of books and periodicals dealing with consumer education, economic and social conditions of families, housing, and such subjects as furniture, silver, china, and glassware. Plans are

also underway to improve the general appearance of the department by adding suitable furniture and decorative objects.

Again a picnic for all homemaking students will be held before the opening of school, at which the girls coming there for the first time will be special guests.

The writer will continue to collect information about the students, and this information will be used as much as possible to improve the curriculum in homemaking.

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