

A STUDY OF STUDENT GROWTH IN AN EXPERIMENTAL HOME ECONOMICS  
EDUCATION CLASS AT OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL AND  
MECHANICAL COLLEGE, 1940

STRAITSMORE PARCHEMENT

100 YEARS

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MECHANICAL COLLEGE, 1940

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Introduction

A study of recent educational literature and a thoughtful evaluation of present social conditions leads one to accept the belief that the purpose of education is to prepare individuals so that they may, not only live in, but participate in an ever-changing world and to help them develop their abilities to their fullest capacities, in order that they may make the greatest possible contribution to an interactive, interdependent society.

In a true democracy, all ideals and beliefs are given a chance for expression. To follow only one pattern in education, as is practiced in a totalitarian government, would mean giving up individual opinions and quieting the voice of the thinking, growing student. Since democracy rests upon the ability of man to see and accept individual differences, desires, and abilities, both as a privilege and as a responsibility, it behooves educators to create learning situations wherein democratic ways of living may be incorporated into the thinking of its peoples. To incorporate such a principle involves not only its exposure to the American youth, but an opportunity for them to practice it. It embraces the attitude of human beings toward one another so that one's decisions are made in the light of their effect upon other individuals and upon society as a whole. It implies a way of thinking and of living which affords and encourages directed self-expression and initiative in all areas of living.

As an infant, man is conscious only of his physical well-being, but as he develops through associations with family members, with schoolmates, and chums he becomes increasingly important to himself and is constantly making adjustments to a group whose habits are strange to him.

By the time he has reached adolescence, he is involved in multitudes of relationships. He has close contact with many more people of both sexes and is expected to assume greater responsibilities within the home and within the social group. His interest in the opposite sex has presented a need for further adjustment. While the adolescent grows he is continuously confronted with finding his place in a broadening world. He becomes more active in school, church and club functions, as well as interested in civic movements. These call for the development of such personal traits as: cooperation, reliability, tolerance, courage, and social sensitivity.

No doubt, the student on entering college is faced with many complex problems which are of such magnitude that they are frightening in their nature. His responsibilities have increased and to his own surprise he recognizes that he is a part of the great economic and social whirl which interacts upon his personality. In only one way can education offer the student tangible assistance and that is by training him to think. He must be able when weighing one value against another to come to a conclusion which is satisfying both to himself and to society, and to have the courage to fight for his beliefs. The teacher who challenges thinking in the classroom, and who encourages its development, is giving these students an opportunity to become interdependent, contributing members of society. Working upon these understandings of the purpose

of education in a democratic society and accepting these beliefs, the following study has been made to determine if and how individuals grow in a classroom situation where the college teacher acts as a guide in thinking and where plans and procedures are decided upon in cooperative action by students and teacher, with each one having an opportunity to participate.

The class studied was an experimental class in home economics education at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College. This is a course which is required of students who have majors in the field of Home Life, Household Science, and Home Economics Education, and was set up to be taken in the junior year of the college curriculum.

The writer attended all meetings of the class, kept observer's records of class proceedings, studied the personal progress records kept by the students, and had interviews with all the students enrolled as well as with the instructor of the class. These devices were studied for evidences which indicated growth. In this class, adolescent psychology and general classroom techniques and procedures applicable to the secondary school received most attention. The laboratory work consisted of planned observations made in the home economics classes conducted in the junior and senior high schools of the various teaching centers.

The outstanding purpose throughout the course was to encourage class members to grow as persons, as members of a group, and as future leaders in the field of home economics.

A special effort was made to provide experiences which would improve the student's quality of thinking through; increased freedom of speech and ability to express themselves; increased ability to see beneath

the surface; a better understanding of themselves and others; an increased desire to develop to their fullest capacity; increased ability in critical weighing of procedures; greater development of questioning attitudes; clarified beliefs and opinions; better defined purposes for the future; the development of greater independence and interdependence; and through a greater realization of their needs.

Continuously students were given opportunity to participate in the determining of their own purposes, in the planning of class work and in the selection of procedures as well as in the evaluation of the results of their work and of their own growth.

Opportunity for collective thinking and cooperative action was afforded the students in the settlement of many class issues as well as in the organization of the class for group work.

Class members were also urged to carry on experimentation and investigation outside of the regular class hour. Frequent opportunities were given the students to report these.

In order that the reader may understand how this class was conducted and the general reaction of the students an attempt has been made to tell the significant things that happened as shown by the daily class records of the observer. No attempt is made to repeat all class discussions nor to record each student's comment but to show those things which made this class interesting and which indicated significant student growth.

Class discussions dealt with methods applicable to subject matter units observed in home economics classes in the training centers. These units included: Child Care and Guidance; Housing the Family; Clothing for the High School Girl; Social Courtesies; Helping with the Family Meals; and Health.

### A Description of the Class Studied

The first meeting of this class was on February 1, 1940, with fifty-eight college women enrolled in the course. Two instructors were present. The one in charge suggested a need for students and teachers to become acquainted with each other and gave opportunity for suggestions as to how that might be accomplished. For a time there was no audible response until one student suggested that all members of the class should make it a point to get acquainted with each other by talking together while in the living room and about the halls of the building. Another person, who was called upon, proposed that each one write a short biography of her life. The suggestion was not well received as was evidenced by such comments as "Who cares about that," and "No one would read them," spoken half aloud among the class members. The lack of interest was further shown in that no other suggestions were made by the students. The teacher, who apparently sensed the situation, explained the value of knowing the interests and experiences of those with whom one is associated, but she did not press the matter.

The teacher, in making some explanation about the course suggested that these girls, as students, might like an opportunity to participate in making the plans for their class work. Mary Jones showed that this idea was new to her in the response which she made to the instructor's request for possible class activities. Her statement, "Let's find what the teacher expects of us," brought the surprising question from the instructor, "Why should the teacher expect anything of you?". This question stimulated a lively discussion from which came several pertinent suggestions for possible student experiences. These were: participation

in class discussion; organization of groups for investigating problems; observation of home making classes being conducted in high schools; familiarization with some recent related literature; and contribution of written student biographies. One student suggested that each person write a list of class activities which she felt would contribute to student growth, that these lists be collected at the succeeding class meeting, and that a committee be selected by the group to determine the best contributions from these lists. Although this suggestion was accepted by a majority vote of the class, only a probable ten per cent participated in the open discussion. There was much discontent and many whispered objections, especially among the students whose major was not Home Economics Education. They seemed to resent being required to take the course and made statements to the effect that they could see no relationship between a course in methods and their own fields.

Another question which usually appears in the first class meeting was introduced by the teacher when she stated that there were several possibilities concerning a text book. Jane Brown's question, "What text book is used?", gave further evidence that these students were unaccustomed to making class decisions. In answer to Jane's question, the teacher explained that one or two of several books might be adopted by the class as a text or that it might seem advisable to the group to include many books in their reading and to adopt none as a specific text. Here the opinion was offered by an older person of the group that if a textbook were owned, little additional material would be used. "If a text book is decided upon, we should have additional books to read as well," was the statement offered by a heretofore silent member. This showed that these young women were

recognizing the value of extensive reading.

Because of limited time, the textbook question was still undecided when the class adjourned. This was settled later by the class when they set up their plan of work. "Homemaking Education in the High School," by Williamson and Lyle, was selected.

Since the enrollment was large, it seemed advisable to the two instructors offering the course to divide the class into two groups with each one conducting her class in her own particular way. On the morning of the second meeting, after the instructor in charge had explained the advantages of smaller working groups and the students had thoroughly discussed the subject, the class voted to divide into two sections. Instead of automatically dividing the group, an opportunity to weigh values was offered students when they were asked to suggest plans for making the division. Joyce McDonald, a major in Home Life, who had previously been heard to say that she objected to taking the course, gave open expression to her thoughts in the question, "Why not place all those girls whose major is Home Economics Education in one group and all others, whose purposes are different, in the other group." This question brought the class into an animated discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of such a grouping. Immediately from another student came the answer, "They would lose general information of non-Home Economics Education people if divided that way." But Joyce attempted to support her opinion with, "They are after different things in other departments than in Home Economics Education." Jane Brown came to her support with the idea that "Those not in Home Economics Education work with different age groups." Still another student offered the

suggestion that "Most Home Economics majors have to deal with many age levels." When the vote was taken upon the movement to make the division according to majors, the count was four in favor with the majority opposed to this plan which indicated that these girls hoped to learn from each other.

Then, in accordance with the wishes of the class, an attempt to secure a cross section of student personnel and interests was made by dividing the group alphabetically. There was still some evidence of disgruntled feelings. One student was heard to say, "I don't care what we do in this class. I'm getting married when school is out, anyway."

From this point the writer followed only twenty-eight of these students. This group, directed by the instructor, went back over some of the topics which had been touched upon and discussed them more in detail.

The teacher suggested that the class might be conducted in different ways and that students should feel free to state opinions in deciding this issue as well as on all topics which should come up for consideration. The familiar lecture method was mentioned as a possibility. A more democratic method was described which would give students an opportunity to express desires and opinions freely both in making and carrying out plans, and would afford individuals an opportunity to investigate and explore according to their own particular interests. The majority of the girls voted in favor of the latter form. They were left for the day with the questions, "Do we want to live in a democracy?", "What can we do about it in the classroom?", and "What experiences shall we plan for in this class if we want democratic principles to dominate?".

That the idea of open discussion in a college class was new to these people was evidenced by the fact that when the instructor opened the class by discussing different angles of growth, practically all students settled down to taking notes and showed by their general attitude that they had not anticipated being expected to make any contribution to the class discussion. Several leads were made and a number of questions asked before any response was made. Surprised expressions appeared on many faces when the instructor stated that the purpose of teaching was not only to improve techniques but to guide the individual in the solution of problems, to push the student to arrive at a conclusion which he in turn could defend, to improve the quality of thinking.

As the period progressed, the students began to help in the discussion and through teacher guidance they decided that good learning experiences provided opportunity for:

- a. Investigation and experimentation
- b. Expression of individual ideas through creative work
- c. Cooperative group work
- d. Weighing values and selecting courses of action
- e. Student participation in the formation and selection of goals
- f. Evaluation of personal progress and results of action.

The point on evaluation was worded by the teacher combining thoughts which had been expressed by several girls. The strangeness of this idea was reflected in the silence which followed this lively and easily flowing bit of planning. The expression on the faces of these girls left no doubt in the writer's mind that they were overcome

with the immensity of the challenge offered them when they were left with the question of how to plan their class experiences in order to meet these criteria which they had set up.

As a device which could be used by the teacher to know her students better and by the student to do self-evaluation through measuring her own growth, the instructor presented some personal progress sheets to the group. She suggested that they might take these and try filling them out. On these sheets, spaces were provided for the student to show the topics which had been discussed in class meetings, the contribution which she had made and her opinion of the results. A still further space was set aside for the student to show how she as an individual had grown from time to time.<sup>1</sup> All except five of the students took one of these sheets. When they were collected a week later, rather sparse comments had been written on them. The students voted, however, to continue the use of them.

At an early class meeting after some student proposals for planning had been discussed by the class, a volunteer committee of three people who represented the three departments of which the class was composed was created. They were to formulate a plan of work from the lists of suggested experiences which had been contributed by the different members.

Although it took this group several days to complete plans, it gave the students involved practice in using initiative, in weighing values, and in making decisions which could be defended. It also gave the entire class the feeling that they were, throughout the semester, following their own rather than a teacher's imposed requirement. The

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix No. 1.

three people comprising the committee met, decided on their chairman, and studied the suggestions turned to them from the members of the class. The instructor was called in for a brief consultation. A plan of work which had been called a contract by the former class was secured and evaluated. Students who had taken the course previously were conferred with, and after three meetings which lasted from two to four hours, the committee was ready on the fourth meeting of the class to submit a report which they recognized to be in need of criticism and further suggestions.

The fact that class members were now interested in helping to make their plans was shown in the discussion when at least three-fourths of the group took part. This was a larger per cent than had hitherto contributed during any one meeting.

The criticisms made were of high quality; concern was shown as to the values to be gained by adopting certain points of the report. Undesirable statements were eliminated, some were reworded, and others were added.

When a choice was offered by the committee for naming their plans for the semester, "Plans for Growth" was adopted because it suggested the very thing for which they were striving. According to Mary Jones, this would allow for modification and would not be binding. When the term "contract" was suggested by a class member, it was definitely rejected by the group on the grounds that it was inelastic.

Following this lengthy discussion, the work plan was referred back to the committee who offered to make the proposed alterations. These corrections were made and the "Plans for Growth" was brought again to

the class for final approval. It was accepted and a typed copy was handed to each girl three weeks after the first meeting of the committee.

This working outline for the course consisted of three levels of development. These students decided that only those things which were necessary for passing the course should be placed in the first grouping which was called "Minimum Essentials". The title given to the second level was "Additional Experiences". A student might reach this goal by increasing the number of certain of the requirements found in the first grouping. The third level of attainment was called "Additional Individual Goals" and included such experiences which would meet particular individual needs of the various students.<sup>2</sup>

The need for cooperative work, which was felt by the students, was provided for in the "Plans for Growth" when the committee included group activities as a part of the essential development.

In discussing the experiences which should be included in the group activities, a number were suggested. After much discussion of how to set up the grouping for these, Beth Reed moved that a committee be elected to work out the details. The move was completed and a committee of three with Julia Rice as chairman was selected. This committee took the suggestions which had been made by the class and came back at the following meeting with their report. Groups had been organized for the following specific tasks: to study and evaluate observation reports; to locate evidences of growth as seen in the personal progress reports; to select and present valuable illustrative materials which

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix No. 2.

would be appropriate and helpful in performing the tasks that these students were preparing to do; to keep new and stimulating material on the bulletin board; to acquaint themselves with and compare text and reference books; to explore by making studies of the status and significance of organizations, publications, and movements which concerned the various members of this class and people in general.

The committee also presented a form which they had worked out on which the class members could sign up for participation in specific groups at definite periods. The chairman explained that in signing for groups each girl would have an opportunity to work on each type of experience and that by careful planning she could arrange to work with many different people on topics pertaining to home economics.<sup>3</sup>

The entire report of the committee was accepted by the class who suggested that the chairman be responsible for getting signatures, for announcing changes in groups, and for helping students keep plans in mind.

With students enthusiastically signing up for participation in the various groups, the class found itself organized for carrying on class procedures.

After discussing general possibilities, the decision regarding what would be worthwhile to present to the class and for the presentation of the same became the duty of each group of girls working together. The responsibility for getting together, for selecting chairmen, for making plans, and for study was left entirely to the various individuals in the groups. They were organized for the purpose of providing opportunity for personal development in the acquiring of certain knowledge,

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix No. 5.

which in turn should be reported to the class. The accomplishment of this purpose was seen in several ways. By working in small groups, it was necessary for more students to assume responsibility for hunting out sources of information and for selecting that which might be considered reliable. They were faced with the realization that much variance in opinion existed, consequently they were forced to weigh values and to arrive at conclusions.

No definite time for the rotation of groups was established in order to allow for a variation in the time needed for investigating and reporting work done and for the discussion of problems at a time when they seemed most pertinent. In this manner, time was also allowed for reports of special interests. At times when students or teacher were able to relate some unusual experience or when some question of general concern to the group had been asked, the class was given the privilege of deciding whether or not the group work planned for the day should proceed or should give way to these other experiences. In order to make sure that all might profit by the work of each group, the class decided that not only an oral report would be prepared but a brief written one would be filed in a drawer which had been set aside for the use of this class. This file was in the instructor's office and was accessible to all of the class members throughout the school day. In order to avoid repetition of experiences, it was agreed that each group would investigate a new topic or study the same one from a different angle.

Although the emphasis in this report seems to be upon class organization, it must be understood that such discussion of methods and pro-

cedures was paralleling this planning. Even before the semester plans were completed, much time was spent in discussing the attitude and conduct of the high school class members being observed and in deciding upon the content and form of observation reports. It was a class decision that these reports should be checked by the instructor who in turn would place criticisms on them in the form of questions, suggestions and references. They were then to be returned to the students who would examine them carefully, confer with the teacher if necessary and finally file them in the instructor's office. The reason, given by the class members, for keeping all of each student's observation reports filed where they were always available was that it provided another means of helping both the student and the teacher to measure individual progress.

The responsibility for thinking through needs and for deciding on courses of action was constantly thrown upon the shoulders of these young women. The instructor encouraged individual thinking, even if in disagreement with her own theories, by challenging in a friendly manner the girl to support her opinion with facts. She repeatedly confronted her students with "What things do we need to consider today?", "Do you make that in the form of a motion?", and "What will we need to do before next class meeting?". The choice of what was to be read was left to the individual students, but not without guidance, for frequently books were brought to the classroom and portions read or something of the life and experiences of the authors told. Students seeking solutions to specific problems were cited to definite references. In the case of Judith Brown, who recognized that she did not

know what to expect of high school students and that if she understood them better she would be more capable of interpreting the actions of the students whom she was observing, the instructor referred her to "Science in General Education," a report to the Commission on Secondary Education of the Progressive Education Association, and to a number of articles in recent Progressive Education magazines. At the same time, she asked other students what references they had found. Quite a number of adolescent psychology books were named.

At one class meeting, some ten minutes were spent in discussing the amount and kind of reading which should be done. A lively argument ensued over the means of reporting it. The usual college reading cards were considered valueless by the majority of these students since a number expressed themselves as believing that the cards gave no indication of the quality of reading done and were often misleading as to the amount. The group felt that reading did contribute to personal growth and that it should be reported on the personal progress sheets with the understanding that the benefit lay in the reading, not in the reporting of it.

An attempt to meet problems with frankness, openmindedness, and honesty marked the general atmosphere of the classroom as shown by this statement of the teacher in one of the early meetings. "We want our class to be one in which you feel free to express your opinions. They will not be held against you."

Plans were always open for revision and reconsideration. This was shown by the fact that students were frequently asked such questions as, "Are you gaining anything from the Personal Progress Reports? If not, do you wish to drop them?". The immediate answers were, "They serve as

guides in our plan of work.", "They help us see ourselves.", and "They show us how we have grown.". These and other statements settled that question and the reports were continued.

On a class day near the end of the semester, the instructor asked the students to evaluate the class in the light of the criteria for good learning experiences which they had earlier set up. The manner in which they expressed themselves showed appreciation for the opportunities which had been afforded. The discussion was free with many arguments given for and against certain procedures. Both strong and weak points were mentioned. Many students cited instances where they had chosen courses of action such as: a choice of twelve to fifteen observations; a voice in the manner in which the class was conducted; a vote as to the division of the class; the privilege of setting up the plan of work; and a choice of what things would be investigated and studied outside of class.

Believing that the needs of students should be considered at all times, plans and procedures were kept elastic so that they might be adjusted to fit the occasion. For example, on a certain morning when the Committees on Exploration and on Teaching Materials were to make their reports, a question on ethics and methods was asked even before the class had entirely assembled. When presented to the class, the committee reports which were to have been given were postponed and the entire hour was spent in discussing discipline problems. This was one of the most worthwhile and interesting meetings of the class, and the majority of the students contributed to the discussion. Many points on methods were driven home and this experience might have been

entirely missed had not general plans allowed for the consideration of problems at the time they were pertinent. The waiting committees made their contributions at the following class meeting.

Continuously these students were led to express their opinions, to get at the bottom of things, and to clarify and defend their beliefs. This was seen when the responsibility of the vocational teacher was under consideration. "What would make up the teacher's job?" was the instructor's opening question. The answer came from a number of students who had been studying teaching situations. The group concluded that the general purposes of a conscientious teacher would include the promotion of student growth; the improving of attitudes, of skills, techniques, and of behavior patterns; the acquirement of further knowledge; and the provision for new experiences. They went further to assert that they believed these purposes should be known to the students. Within this discussion, a field trip which had been made by two students to a high school class was reported. This group discussed it from all angles and decided that it had been a failure. They attempted further to discover the causes of failure and arrived at the conclusion that if these girls had thought through or had planned with the rest of the class and the teacher, the expected outcome of their visit, the trip could have been beneficial. The instructor took advantage of this situation to emphasize the importance of careful pre-planning, on the part of the teacher. The fact that the girls recognized the value of basic information in preparing themselves for accepting responsibilities came to light when they were asked the question, "What can we as juniors in college do to prepare ourselves for our future jobs?" Several people answered, "Make as many contacts as possible; study Stillwater and try to understand its community

problems; get as much basic information as we can while in college, recognizing that it is a tool of work." "Make use of psychology case studies."

An evidence of continual guidance, even though the class had assumed an unusual amount of responsibility, was shown on still another day when these students were looking over returned observation reports on which comments and criticisms had been written. The instructor said she felt that many were failing to look under the surface, that they did not see the real problems and purposes of the classes observed.

On another day after the Committee on Observations had made its report, which had dealt with the group experiences of a high school class, these students showed their ability to analyze classroom situations. Various students enumerated the different steps which they had observed in the development of this particular unit. On organization days they had seen the whole class setting up purposes and planning procedures. As the unit developed they watched the problem being attacked from different angles with results being reported to the entire class as they accrued. At the close of the unit they had seen the group take stock of their progress. In summarizing this discussion these college girls were guided to see that the steps taken by this class were those which were involved in the process of thinking. In order to arrive at this conclusion the instructor asked, "What processes do you go through in thinking?" and after much discussion they listed these points: recognition of a problem; experimentation; application of possible solutions; consideration of results; summarization and statement of conclusions. They decided that a good class would show also personal development in new experiences and in facts learned regarding methods in home economics.

Further evidence that this class had been pushed to do thinking for themselves and to arrive at conclusions was shown in a discussion on the problem of where the teacher should start in making lesson plans. These students indicated that they felt that the needs of the students should determine the subject matter taught. Naomi Jones believed that the former experiences of the students should be considered. Stella Brink suggested that such activities as would lead to personal development should be included. "The existing needs of each person should be planned for," and "Certain basic information related to the course needs to be taught," were additional comments. "Would people doing demonstration work need such information as this?" was asked, and for answer Beth Reed said, "Yes, regardless of what public task one is doing, she would need to know these things." It was here that one of the girls whose major is household science and who had been heard to express her opposition to taking this course made this significant statement, "Everything that any of us plan to do is teaching." The tone of her voice indicated that she herself was surprised at having drawn this conclusion.

These young ladies agreed after observing many different situations that any teacher must sell herself before she can teach successfully and that she must establish a friendly, sympathetic attitude toward her students. They concluded further that taking orders did not call for much, if any, thinking and that if education is to prepare one for living in a democracy, it must train people to weigh values and to develop a questioning yet cooperative attitude. Viola Mathis, in

relating an incident where a clothing teacher had pinned all hems in for her students, expressed her opposition to this procedure when she said, "This teacher robbed her students of a valuable experience and she had no time left to help in other problems. She was not acting as a guide, but as an assistant seamstress and was failing to incorporate cooperativeness in her teaching. She was also failing to contribute the most possible guidance in personal development." Another student suggested further that this teacher was making these girls dependent rather than training them to help themselves. That these college students adhered to the theory that the teacher is responsible for her classroom was seen in the concluding statement of that discussion, "The situation should be teacher-controlled but not teacher-dominated."

The belief that students should help in evaluating their own growth was shown early in the semester when the first observation reports were returned to owners. The instructor had explained that she had made comments but had placed no grades on these. She asked, "How could one put a grade if measuring student growth?" The puzzled facial expressions indicated their bewilderment. "Do you wish to be graded by comparing one student with another?", the instructor asked. Immediately the response to this came through expressions of protest from nearly every girl present. The substance of these protests was that they believed that all students should be scored according to their growth and to their industry in trying to improve themselves. In answer to the instructor's question, "Who should evaluate you?" or "Do you think that it should be left to me alone?", Jerry Wilcox answered, "Other students should help evaluate." When asked, "Should you evaluate yourselves?", the answer "Yes" was indicated by all present. But as for

suggesting how this was to be done, opinions seemed to be rather scarce. One girl came forth with an idea when she said, "Maybe we can check ourselves against the plan of work." This plan was accepted by the class and they decided that each should attach her rating to her personal progress report of the following week. A code for checking these personal progress reports had been set up by the class observer.<sup>4</sup> She had made an explanation as to how she used them in order that the students might benefit. She proposed that they look over their reports and check evidences of growth that she might have missed and make note of those which they interpreted differently.

Some evaluation of personal growth was done by the students themselves when they were working as members of the committee which was studying observation reports. This was done through the selection of outstanding reports which had been made by student observers. The reports which seemed to show the most ability for seeing and interpreting classroom situations on the part of the observer were selected. Later, when another group of girls was working on this committee, they attempted to measure student growth according to how students had grown rather than how one person compared with another. This they did by taking several of one girl's reports and by checking the later ones against the earlier ones.

It became necessary for the instructor, who was teaching this class, to absent herself from the last five class meetings. She made an announcement to this effect two meetings previous to her going. That the students were accustomed by this time to assuming responsibility and felt capable of doing so was shown in the response which

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix No. 4.

this announcement brought. When the instructor said, "I have some suggestions as to how you might use the remaining class periods, and would like to have some others from you," there were no indications that anyone felt that they would not be able to carry on; instead they went forward with suggestions as to how they would use this time. The first came in the form of a question from Jane Brown when she asked, "When are we going to display illustrative materials?" and one from Ila Cox, "How do we report what we have found about high school texts and references?" Another student said, "I would like to know more about vocational home economics." All of these things seemed so important that the class decided to combine topics and plan time so that none would be omitted. With practically every girl helping in the planning, the various groups chose topics and agreed upon the days for considering them. They also selected a grand chairman for the remaining class periods. Each group chairman had conferences with the instructor before her departure and received help with plans and reference materials. Each chairman then worked with her own committee in working out details.

When Miss Rice, the grand chairman, opened the class meetings, she showed real forethought in inquiring as to whether or not all committees were functioning and in giving opportunity for announcements.

During these five class meetings, students contributed freely to the discussions which were aptly conducted by the various groups. Questions were asked and answers given. The group on illustrative material brought to class a variety of examples which they considered to be usable for people in various phases of home economics and a score card for rating these materials was set up. Marian Carpenter informed the group of the existence of the Educator's Index in the main library which would

be of assistance in finding helpful illustrative material. One of the members of the exploration committee had contacted the County Health Officer and it was with a great deal of enthusiasm that she told of the means by which home economics teachers might play a prominent part in improving the health of the people in their communities. The black-board as well as illustrative material was employed to emphasize points.

In spite of the objections on the part of some for taking the course, a spirit of friendliness prevailed in the classroom after the first few meetings, throughout the semester, both while the regular instructor was present and in her absence.

The comment from Donna Zinn which appeared on her last personal progress report was typical of the class attitude. She said, "I think our classes showed that a class can be carried on by students. The information was very worthwhile and interestingly given. Each of us had a chance to assume more responsibility."

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### Student Growth Shown by Progress Reports

This instructor who proposed to help her students grow into well-rounded, well adjusted individuals felt that she would be better able to do her task if she learned all she could about these students as individuals. Believing this to be true, early in the semester she presented the idea of personal interviews and personal progress reports to the group. The personal progress report, described earlier,<sup>1</sup> afforded space for the expression of opinions and one entire page on which the student could show her personal growth. It was believed that the student would show on these reports not only many ways in which she has grown but many environmental factors which influenced her actions and her personality.

These progress reports did more, however, than help the teacher understand her students. They served also as a tool by which students could measure their own growth. They proved to be an incentive for students taking stock of what they had or had not accomplished, consequently, they served as a means for pushing students to read and to carry on any sort of investigation or personal improvement which they felt they needed. Students were urged verbally and through the activities of the various groups to broaden their experience and knowledge in all areas of living. Many such experiences were reported on the personal progress sheets. Plans for improved home living were also shown.

In order to have some idea as to the evidences of growth which should be expected of these students, the writer studied and enumerated those which had appeared on the personal progress sheets of the students

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<sup>1</sup>See page 15.

who had taken this course during the previous semester. As a result of this study she decided that the following types of growth would appear: increased interest seen through class contributions, reading and investigation; expressions of needs and desires; changed opinions about adolescents and a recognition of their ability and characteristics; changed beliefs and attitudes; increased ability to analyze situations objectively and to make self-analyses; an appreciation for class opportunities and a critical evaluation of class work; a recognition of own growth; and the acknowledgment of responsibility as student and citizen. Using these expected evidences of growth as a guide, a code for checking student reports was set up by the observer and used to tabulate the many evidences of student growth appearing on the personal progress sheets for the class observed. This section of the study attempts to summarize those evidences of growth actually reported by the students. It is realized that totals of a study of this nature do not show quality of growth, nor the scope of subject matter covered.

Two of the eighteen weeks had elapsed before the use of the progress reports was started and it was decided by the group, near the close of the semester, that a report should not be turned in for the last week of school. The largest number of progress reports from any student was fifteen, there being six girls who submitted this number. Only one student turned in as few as five. Of the twenty-eight students submitting progress reports, there was an average of twelve each.

From the data on these reports, it was apparent that eight of these young ladies were definitely interested in this course from its very beginning. All except two of this group showed continued enthusiasm throughout the semester. New signs of interest began to show

up each week by additional students and on the reports which were written on the fifth and sixth weeks evidences of interest were apparent on the part of all except seven or eight students. Not only did students show a change in the manner of writing but the quality and number of experiences which they reported had improved decidedly. There was one student who failed to show on any of her progress reports that she was concerned about the values to be gained from the course.

A majority of the students indicated that they were group conscious in that opinions about class procedures were stated in terms of class or group benefits rather than in terms of individual gains. Seven of these girls consistently interpreted procedures in the light of personal benefits.

No class member failed to show that she had made some contribution to class discussion. As a matter of fact, only four students reported that they had made less than four comments in class discussions.

A third of the class showed that regular reading had been done throughout the semester. All save three students reported that they had been reading. Many books and educational periodicals on teaching methods, adolescent psychology, philosophy of education, personal improvement, and related subjects were read.

As an indication of what these students did to add to their personal development outside the class, it was noted that these twenty-eight students reported exploration and experimentation in one hundred seventy-six experiences. The policies of various federal, state, and local agencies and services were investigated. Among these were: Federal Housing Administration, National Youth Administration,

Works Progress Administration, Farm Security Administration, county health program, organizations related to the home economics program, various youth movements, and many types of schools.

Many students showed that they had been taking advantage of opportunities for developing social graces. One young lady wrote, "Yesterday I helped serve a tea. I was glad Mrs. Smith asked me to help for I had never done anything like this." Audrey White believed that she had enjoyed a valuable experience in having her first dinner guest. Other girls explained the value of being responsible for entertainment programs, for the serving of refreshments and for filling offices in organizations. Many students recognized the value of new experiences in the assuming of responsibilities in their churches.

These personal progress reports also showed that students were recognizing their own needs. A number of girls confessed their fear of talking with people or of talking before groups and explained different plans which they were using to overcome this timidity. Donna Zinn said, "I need to look beneath the surface and into things more deeply." When discussing her preparation for becoming a teacher, Joyce McDonald wrote, "I have become conscious of the importance of a pleasing personality and a broad knowledge of adolescent traits to better understand my students."

A young lady who, by her quiet ever-serious attitude, left the impression that she was very serious minded, recognized her problem when she said, "I feel that I have accomplished such a little as far as self-control is concerned since I still go to pieces taking examinations." At another time she wrote, "Having realized that I need some

form of recreation, I am making a time schedule for myself in which I am reserving some time for leisure." On the week before Beth Reed did her first observation, she wrote, "I feel that I need to know more about what to look for in observations." Following a class discussion in which the group decided that a teacher should be a well developed individual, Jane Brown expressed her decision in, "I am planning to learn to type, to drive the car, and to learn how to swim this summer, as I believe a teacher should know how to do these things."

The development of the ability to recognize and interpret adolescent characteristics was seen in the numerous statements which were made concerning them on these reports. Students made from one to nine interpretations of adolescent behavior under their observations. Some examples of these are cited. June Sneed showed understanding when she told of the manner in which a high school boy reacted to the confidence his teacher placed in him and to the responsibility which was given him. Beth Reed explained that after observing a certain student for a number of times, she had decided that the student, instead of being disrespectful to the teacher, was merely expressing herself in her natural, gruff, manner. Another college student, near the close of the semester, wrote, "The chief characteristic which I see about adolescents is that they are still children no matter how old they think they are. It is very difficult to deal with them because they are childish one day and very grown up the next." Still another young lady who showed in much of her writing a sympathy for the under-privileged told of how she had made friends with a timid high school girl. She said of this incident, "At first she was self

conscious but in a few minutes we were talking as old friends." The desire on the part of adolescents to be actively employed was observed and reported by many student observers. Joyce McDonald suggested that it was interesting to compare the adolescent characteristics which had been discussed in class with the ones she had observed.

A complete change in student attitude toward this course was apparent from the reports of three students. Their first reports revealed unconcern as to class proceedings with very few opinions given. Most of these were mere unsupported statements. No mention was made of outside investigation or reading for the first four to six weeks. Very few comments of any kind were found. An examination of the reports of these girls which were submitted the last seven to ten weeks showed that they were expressing appreciation for having had an opportunity to participate in class discussion and in making class decisions. They were showing recognition of their own growth in the experiences which were reported. Two of these three girls showed unusual ability in recognizing adolescent characteristics. In general, their statements indicated that they were enjoying and appreciating the various opportunities which the class was affording them for developing leadership in home economics.

Two-thirds of these girls made statements which indicated that they were looking at themselves objectively. One student wrote of some previous college courses which she had taken, "I am realizing now that I only skimmed the surface in these courses." Another girl stated, "While reading some of my past progress reports, I saw some examples of growth which I had failed to recognize at the time of

writing these reports." Mary Jones saw that she was letting many learning experiences pass by without making use of them.

This body of students had shown by vote that they wanted to participate in the making and executing of class plans. They continued throughout the semester to express appreciation and evaluation of the class opportunities which were afforded them. Not one student failed to express gratitude for the democratic procedures employed in this class. Kathryn Wiley wrote, "Although confidence in one's self should be accomplished before one gets to college, it can be developed to a great extent by participation in class discussion and by forcing one's self to meet new situations." Following an early meeting of the class, Beth Reed stated, "This is the most democratic class of which I have been a member. I am liking it and am developing my power to think by this method of procedure." Another student in evaluating a high school class which she had observed suggested, "I believe the teacher should allow the students to do more of the planning." Virginia Little showed the same feeling in "I think many teachers have a tendency to be too dominating in planning class work and the students miss the experience which participation in planning would give."

The importance of employing democratic procedures was recognized by Joe Bright. These significant statements were from her. "The teacher's remark that some schools were carried on in a dictatorial manner was quite a shock to me. When the children grow up they will probably live under our government, and it seems reasonable to me that they should be educated in democratic environment. In a

dictatorial group they learn to follow and obey instead of learning to cooperate." "I appreciate the manner in which this class has been conducted and the learning experiences which it has provided," was Jo Bright's comment.

That the personal progress reports, as used in this class, served as a tool by which students could measure their own growth was seen in the statements which appeared from week to week. All save three students pointed out indications of growth. One quiet girl who very seldom spoke in class wrote of the advancement that she had made in this manner. "I have been making contacts with town mothers to gain information for a class project. For the first few times, I was frightened but have found that I can meet them now and find some common interest with most of them. This has made me have more confidence in myself and caused me to look forward to talking with them." Another girl stated, "I realize that I do not have the same attitude toward my classes as I previously had. I am now able to see the potential value of classes I am taking in relation to those which I may be teaching in the future." Joyce McDonald recognized an opportunity to grow in acting as chairman of her group. She felt that it gave her experience in organizing and presenting material to the class. Naomi Jones saw personal development when she could write, "For the first time this year, I contribute freely to class discussion. I have always had the feeling that perhaps my ideas were not very good, but today I expressed my opinions and these were accepted by the class." Still another student wrote, "I have been reading from Spafford's book on the importance of the teacher and it makes me anxious to start teaching."

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A young lady who had visited a high school class analyzed the situation she had observed in this manner. She said, "A teacher must consider the welfare of all her students; therefore, we who are planning to teach should get as many worthwhile experiences and as much knowledge while in training as possible." Sue Black wrote, "I'm finding it easier to make social contacts and to feel at ease in all groups." Several girls went to the files and looked over all of their progress reports to see what growth they had shown. This, they said, enabled them to look at themselves more objectively.

It became apparent through the study of these reports that many students were becoming conscious of their responsibilities as related to the social order. This was seen in such comments as were made by Jerry Wilcox after she had made a visit to the Federal Nursery School. She told of having given the children some needed personal attention and said, "Although this doesn't sound very important, the task was very distasteful to me and I made myself do it after I had decided that something had to be done. The teacher in charge didn't seem to be particularly interested in these children. She just stood around and talked." On another day she wrote that she had visited a small Indian school near her home and had come away with a greater appreciation for their culture.

Julia Rice mentioned an opportunity which had been given her of reading some negro newspapers. She made the statement that she believed that studying the accomplishments of the negroes would help to break down prejudice against them. Another student, after assisting in the Federal Negro Nursery School wrote, "I have given myself a new goal to reach, that of accepting the colored race as people."

In comparing high school students in two different towns, Judith Brown wrote, "I realize more than ever the difference that a community has upon individuals."

"I walked over that part of Stillwater which is generally spoken of as the wrong side of the tracks today and as I looked at those homes I tried to picture the type of people who lived in them and the factors of their environment which affected their personalities," wrote another student. "Some day I may be teaching and may be in a position to help this class of people," she said. The statement that all members of society were confronted with the problem of assisting in raising our standards of living expressed the sentiment which appeared on many student papers.

That these students were willing to assume and felt capable of accepting the responsibility of carrying on class work in the teacher's absence was shown by their attitude and statements. Following the meeting in which plans were formulated for the carrying on of class work during the instructor's absence of two weeks, a majority of the girls made mention of the appreciation and the pride which they experienced in being given this degree of responsibility. Fern Highsmith expressed it in this statement, "We were certainly democratic in planning the rest of our work." Other opinions were given: "The work for the rest of the semester is very important and gives students entire responsibility"; "This is a good chance for more personal growth"; "I felt that every member of the class was especially willing and eager to make contributions"; "We proved that we could plan our work intelligently"; "The class showed evidence of being able to weigh values and make plans for covering material." Appearing on the last personal progress report

of June Sneed was this frank confession, "We carried on class work although the teacher was gone. I had not expected this, even though the class voted to do so. I didn't think half of the members would attend but most of them were present and the class went off as usual. We had some very good committee reports."

One of the most significant things to the writer was that these progress reports also showed that many students were evolving philosophies or accepting and recognizing others as their own. As evidence of this, the following statements were written by the class members: "I agree that skills should not be stressed as much as formation of ideals in the pupils." "From reading in Williamson and Lyle, I gained the idea that needs change with every year and we must educate for future needs through the training which we give for the present ones." "I have learned that to be a good teacher one must be expert at planning"; "I believe that information should be used as a means to an end but not as an end in itself"; "I realize that a teacher should make plans which would contribute to student growth rather than serve as busy work"; "A democratic plan of teaching provides excellent opportunity for the application of good learning experiences"; "A class where students participate in planning stimulates them to do more thinking. It affords opportunity for practice in talking before a group and discourages idle criticism of procedures."

Case Studies Summarizing Student Growth

After carefully evaluating the growth of these students, the writer selected five case studies believing that the growth and development as observed on the part of these students would be indicative of the entire class. These case studies attempted to summarize the student needs, significant changes in behavior, and indications of significant changes in thinking. In order to give a more complete picture of these girls, data was secured from the observer's records, the personal progress reports of the students, and from anecdotal records of the personal interviews. In measuring growth, all evidence was considered significant which pointed toward personal development resulting from the influence of this class as well as that of student's own recognition of growth.

Mary Jones, a junior in Home Economics Education, was selected to represent that group of students who during the first half of the semester gave little or no evidence of either interest or growth, but showed quite rapid personal growth during the latter part of the semester. She was a regular attendant of the class but until near the close of the second month made no contribution to the class discussion, although there were many opportunities given. That she was a capable person but had not been accustomed to using her own initiative was indicated when a group with whom she was working gave their report to the class. When Mary's turn came, she was poised and well prepared and gave an interesting and stimulating account of her findings. In private conference she conversed easily and intelligently.

Her personal progress reports showed no statement of progress, no outside investigation and no reading for the first month. Her first

recognition of progress was shown in mere statements with no evidence to support them. On April 14, after the class had been meeting two months, she gave the first evidence of real growth in reporting an informal visit with two friends who had done their first teaching and home demonstration work since Christmas. She said of this visit, "With my background of methods, I discussed various topics with them. They seemed pleased and happy with their work, and gave me a confidence and desire for teaching which I have not felt strongly before." In this same report she made mention of the personal development she received in a social activity for which she had assumed some responsibility. It was this approximate date when she made her first contribution to class discussion.

In the last two months, reading was shown on all but two of her reports and the observers record showed an occasional contribution to class discussion.

This increase in interest and desire for personal development continued throughout the semester as was shown particularly through the progress reports. She recognized that the experience she was having in teaching a Sunday School class of sophomore high school girls was of great value to her.

Throughout the remaining reports which she made she showed ability in recognizing adolescent characteristics and in interpreting and applying situations to the teaching field as was seen in her statements, "On days when I am not prepared or do not have a good background for my Sunday School lesson, the girls seem to feel it and are less attentive. This is a lesson to any teacher. Know your material," and "They do

take the lesson seriously, but are easily distracted by any noise," and again, "These girls have many activities but show a lot of enthusiasm." She said of an observation made at a high school class, "In observing last week I can understand the real joy of teaching. It really made me envious of the teacher; the girls were so very sweet and willing."

As further evidence of growth and her recognition of it, she cited her experience with one of the class groups. "Working in this committee has taught me much, not only about getting along with people, but also of actual methods."

In preparing herself for taking her place in society and for the teaching profession, she recognized her need for assuming responsibility when she said, "My most outstanding experience this week was that of taking charge of a worship service. Although I was a bit frightened, I did enjoy doing it, and the experience is valuable to me. Responsibilities of this type are important to a would-be teacher because teachers are asked to do innumerable guidance affairs and they are expected to do them well." She showed evidence of having assisted at a faculty tea at her dormitory, of having sponsored a picnic for her Sunday School class, and of having helped arrange a banquet program.

Mary Jones showed professional growth in the fulfillment of the plan of work developed by the class. She made fifteen observations of high school classes, the minimum essentials having specified from twelve to fifteen. She had become familiar with the text as well as with six books dealing with recent trends in psychology and problems in both secondary and adult education, and she reviewed nine high school texts. She had read from ten other professional magazines and books. She acquainted herself with ten leading home economists and with organi-

zations in the field of teaching. A file was made of illustrative material and a mailing list for further teaching aids was compiled. Reported conversations showed that she had made friends with several high school students.

In evaluating this class of which she was a member, she expressed appreciation for the opportunities which the class afforded her when she said, "The policies carried out in class have been democratic. As students we discussed the possibilities of class work. Goals were set up in terms of our own needs and possible ways of reaching them afforded. There is much room in a class of this type for cooperative group work. Each girl may be in a different group each time working on a new problem. These group experiences gave us a definite view of how a class of our own may be set up. The class afforded an unusual amount of experience."

A teacher who was rating this student on participation in class and on written tests only would not have been able to see her in the true light of what she accomplished, nor could she have seen the evidence of the latent abilities which made their existence known throughout the latter half of the semester.

A second student, Stella Brink, was selected to represent that type of student who appeared to have unusual talent but who failed to make the most of it. She was a junior in Household Science. She was attractive, had a pleasing personality, got acquainted easily, and did not stand back on formality. Stella attended class regularly and made a contribution to the discussion at the fourth meeting. That she was capable of expressing her views and was unafraid to do so was shown in the type of comments and the frequency with which they were made. While discussing methods, one of the college students had reported the visit of two high

school girls to a down town tailor shop as of no value either to them or to the class. Voluntarily Stella offered her opinion of the incident when she said, "I saw that class, and I felt that if these girls had decided, before going, what they should look for and what the tailor should have been expected to tell them, their trip would have been profitable." At another time, when teacher qualifications were under consideration, it was she who said, "It takes more than a college education to put the job over." In reference to using some specified book as a text, she frankly admitted, "If we have a text we will tend to rely on it and let other reading go." Again, when the investigation of some topic was postponed until a later date, she volunteered this opinion, "I think if we keep postponing things, they will pile up."

The observer's record showed that she participated in discussion on nearly every day that opportunity was afforded. She appeared to be a person who was fair-minded, capable of thinking, and was challenged by argument as shown by statements made on her progress reports. "Putting my suggestions up for comments and debate lets me see how worthwhile they are." "To be honest, I don't feel that I have progressed much this week, but I am ready to start my second week of observations where I expect to see that these students have grown." When the groups were discussing an incident which occurred under the supervision of a practice teacher, she asked, "Don't you think we should make allowances for teachers who are new?" Further, the courteous manner in which she questioned statements of other students and of the teacher led to the conclusion that she had an inquiring mind.

Her conversation showed that her conclusions had been reached through her own thinking but that she needed to be reading in order to

support her opinions and to acquire a reading knowledge of the principles of psychology. On many occasions she made pertinent statements or introduced significant ideas but could not support them authoritatively. Only one time did she report that she had been reading.

Since her progress reports and summary sheet showed little preparation and a very small amount of investigation outside of class, it may be assumed that her growth was limited. She did express appreciation for the opportunities which the class afforded her in her statements, "I was glad that the class didn't stick to topics interesting only to those preparing to teach"; "We were given the privilege of participating in class plans and procedures"; "The class period was open to any and all opinions, and if the student didn't agree with the ideas or the decisions made, she had the privilege of giving her viewpoint."

In a class where few devices for rating were employed, this girl might go through on the brilliancy of her mind, thus being rated upon her capability rather than upon actual personal development.

Another student, Elizabeth White, was also a junior in Household Science. She was selected to represent that group of students who showed consistent growth from the beginning to the end of the course. She was quiet and retiring but had a friendly, pleasing manner. Her class attendance was regular and her concentrated attention to class proceedings was conspicuous. She volunteered and served on the first committee. Although she made occasional contributions to the class discussion, at other times she showed by her general demeanor that she was ready to talk but evidently lacked the courage to speak up.

The writer was early impressed by Elizabeth's seriousness of purpose. She showed in a personal interview, requested by her soon after the opening of the semester, and in her first personal progress reports that she weighed values and chose courses of action only after careful consideration. Personal interviews also revealed that she was attempting to prove to her family that a college education was worth while. She showed that she had thought through her position when she explained that the college course which she was following was her father's choice. He had a particular dislike for the profession which she wished to pursue and she had decided to follow his advice, since she had no other choice, until she was able financially to change her course.

She continuously showed ability for recognizing her needs and for trying to improve. This was shown when she wrote, "I had an opportunity to help in an initiation service Sunday. I know that I need to do more things of this nature," and again when she said, "It has been so long since I have been around high school students that I am going to their classes early each day in order to get better acquainted with them." At another time, she stated that she was trying to learn to express herself to better advantage. She said she recognized that she needed to learn to relax and to take things less seriously.

Her ability for recognizing adolescent characteristics showed up frequently in progress reports as well as in class discussion and in frequent conversations with the observer.

Throughout the semester she made statements which indicated her recognition of growth. Following a day when her group had been in charge of class proceedings she said, "I felt as if I helped make yesterday's lesson a success. I like to make suggestions, to plan, and to carry on

the program." Again, she recognized personal development when she wrote, "I gave the devotional for the first time Tuesday night. My voice quivered only once and I didn't have to refer to my notes," and later in another statement, "I don't get acquainted easily but I have gained several friends through my methods class. We talk of our experiences, the finds we have made, and new sources of information."

After the third class meeting, all her progress reports showed that she had been reading much material on teaching methods and child psychology and had done some reading in educational philosophy. She had familiarized herself with the text and seven other recent books on methods and psychology. An unusual amount of investigation and experimentation was shown on her reports. She had visited various types of schools and drawn conclusions concerning them. She had personally investigated a number of public services. Evidence was given which showed that she had attended many educational programs sponsored by the college.

She made nineteen observations of junior and senior high school classes in four different schools, and showed that she had made contributions to these classes. These contributions were: repairing an extension cord, furnishing some illustrative material, helping students interpret questions and locating material, and helping students with minor clothing construction problems.

She also showed that she had become familiar with the contributions made by twelve leading home economists.

This student would not have given evidence of the growth which she made had she been rated, as many students are, on class contributions and tests alone. Only through some device which measures personal development could the teacher have learned of the numerous experiences which

Elizabeth purposely planned to contribute to her growth.

If the findings in these reports are interpreted as indications of factors which play upon the personality, the teacher may be better able to understand many contradictory characteristics of her students. One student in this class showed excellent ability in seeing situations and in making suggestions on progress sheets which she regularly handed to her instructor. She also expressed appreciation for the opportunity of student planning and often voiced her interest in the class. She was seen frequently conversing in an easy manner with her classmates, but until the last month of school she had made only two contributions to the class discussion. This statement which appeared on her report during the second month helped explain her case. "When I was in high school, I developed a timidity concerning leadership which I had not possessed when I was in grade school. I am putting forth an effort to overcome that weakness."

Almost a month later, she reported, "I am conscious of a lack of general experience and of my timidity around strangers and superiors. I think rather slowly and can express myself much better by writing than by talking. If I am going to make a successful teacher, I'm going to have to be able to talk." That she made some progress in gaining confidence was seen in her statement near the close of the semester, "For the first time this year, I contributed without fear to the class discussions."

In direct contrast to this student, was another who volunteered and did serve on the very first class committee. She showed by progress reports to have entered into class discussion on all but six days of the class periods. That she believed quantity rather than quality of experiences was important was shown in several ways. Progress report

pages were always filled with writing. At times, these were almost exact repetition of the preceding one as for the thought expressed. She reported having familiarized herself with forty leading home economists but failed to show any value received either on reports or in discussion. When summary sheets were checked at the close of the semester, fifteen or twenty additional pages were included as compared with one to three from other students. This included much repetition and some illustrative material which the class members rather than the teacher were to have scored. Although she did make some statements which indicated growth, many of them seemed very superficial. That some other person or persons have made her decisions and have done her thinking for her seem obvious when one tries to analyze her personality. She was friendly and willing to give of her time. She sought conferences with both the instructor and the observer to discuss her progress. She made many statements to the effect that she had grown but failed to give any evidence to support them. Her writing indicated further that she was inclined to accept all theories which were presented to the class. This was seen by the absence of any questioning attitude and through her statements of acceptance. No statements which showed that she recognized her needs were written on any of her reports.

It is hoped that the reader will recognize that no two of these class members developed alike and that many other interesting case studies could have been cited if space and time had allowed.

### Conclusions

After having had interviews with each class member and having made a thorough study of the data found on their personal progress reports, and after having made a careful summary of the records of class discussion, the writer arrived at the following conclusions regarding the conduct of this class and the growth of the students enrolled.

Students desire and appreciate an opportunity to plan their own class work.

In this class where students were allowed to participate in plans and procedures, where a feeling of fair play and freedom of speech existed:

- a. Antagonism decreased.
- b. Cooperativeness increased.
- c. Interest decreased.
- d. Responsibility for personal instruction was felt.
- e. Self-confidence increased.
- f. Initiative increased.

These students who participated in the planning of all class work showed their ability in assuming responsibility for proceeding with plans, thus permitting the teacher to act in the capacity of adviser only.

The ability to think through situations and to arrive at solutions came to light when students weighed values and selected courses of action.

The keeping of personal progress reports definitely encouraged students to put forth increased effort in analyzing and improving

themselves. These reports showed individual growth and helped the teacher to understand and interpret the attitudes of students. They further enabled her to determine students' ability for self-expression as well as their ability to understand and apply educational principles.

In this class, where the need for personal development was realized by students, much reading and individual investigation resulted even though no definite assignments were made.

Actually practicing democratic procedures resulted in an increased understanding and appreciation of the importance of such policies.

When students were so guided that they recognized their own problems, they attempted to solve them.

Students grew in their ability to evaluate themselves and others.

In this class, where the opinions of all members were recognized as equally important, students showed an increased appreciation for the beliefs of others.

Continuity of thought and an orderly arrangement of experiences was maintained, although the plans made as a result of cooperative action were not necessarily identical with the pre-plans of the teacher.

The teacher seemed to be conscious of democratic procedures and ready to follow student leads when they pointed toward probable individual or group growth.

Through the various class experiences provided, students showed an increased awareness of the values derived from cooperative action and of their opportunities and responsibilities for improving the social order.

A more nearly complete and more personal picture of student growth was seen because several measuring devices were used.

The writer firmly believes that these conclusions could be made in regard to any class where an attempt is made to follow democratic procedures and where emphasis is placed upon personal development. She regrets that it is impossible, at this time, to cite other classes dealing with different subject matter and with various age levels.

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**APPENDIX**

PERSONAL PROGRESS REPORT  
(Student's Record of Class Work)

Home Economics Education 313  
(Methods of Teaching Home Economics in High School)

Name Helena MauersbergerDate April 2, 1940

TOPICS DISCUSSED	WHAT I DID	MY OPINION OF RESULTS
<b>TUESDAY</b>		
The materials committee gave a report of some illustrative material it had collected.	Although I made no suggestion, I was very interested in the committee report.	I feel that the class gains much from these reports as they can find out briefly, in a few moments, what the committee did in a long time.
<b>THURSDAY</b>		
Committee reports were continued. Then the class further discussed methods of teaching; that there should be a balance between: (1) personal development; (2) facts presented; (3) student experiences.	I made two suggestions to the class.	I am very glad we had this discussion. It helped me a lot when I observed Thursday evening. It helped me to better see what and how the material was being presented. I feel that the entire class profited from this discussion as I heard several girls remark that they had.

PERSONAL PROGRESS REPORTName Helena MauersbergerDate April 2, 1940

"During the vacation I spent much of my time among adolescent boys and girls, becoming acquainted with several; keeping in mind to notice the characteristics of their age. I have one brother and one sister, both in high school, in whom I am very interested. I also visited several adults in their homes, thus adding to my experiences with both ages and their problems. I gained much during my vacation from this angle alone.

"I have gathered additional illustrative materials. I had never before realized its value.

"I have reviewed six high school texts and find that I have much room for improvement.

"I now have a total list of twenty-one leading home economists with whom I am familiar. I have met several state leaders.

"I have studied the program of the 4-H clubs, being a member and interested in them since 1930. I still keep up with what they are doing. Last week, I attended one of the Collegiate 4-H parties, where I met a number of students."

H. E. E. 313

SUMMARY SHEET

Donna Zinn

- I. What is your opinion of the policies carried out in this class? Do you feel that you have gained or lost? Why?

"The policies have been excellent considering the ideals, aims, and values set up as standards desirable for American people. The class has served as the representatives and senators for their own thought, and the teacher has acted as president to suggest and direct our thoughts. I have changed or revised many thoughts, but I feel that it was for the better and I now have grounds for my reasons and conclusions. I am ready to forfeit these ideas likewise, if adequate information can be furnished to convince me that other theories are better. Some students do not approve of this plan, however."

Organize your statements under the following headings:

- A. Opportunities for student participation in the planning and selection of class procedures

"The students have had opportunities to plan their own plan of work, designate the committees to carry on the program, decide when and how the group should meet and make their reports; and they have been urged and requested to discuss any plans, topics, questions, or problems that they feel should be discussed at the time they are most vital. Some students did not participate. They would rather take some one else's decision than to think through the problem or they like the way things are being carried on."

- B. Opportunities for cooperative group work

"The students have ample opportunity for cooperative group work every time their committee meets. It seems that the rotation of chairmen spurs the committees to do their part, because they know that they must assume the responsibility soon. Many of the students find material that would be of value to another group, or sometimes students have met with other committees because they had material or problems that should be discussed and presented."

- C. Opportunities for student participation in the evaluation of personal and group progress

"The personal progress committees and the observation committees were so designed that the students could read, check, and evaluate each person's progress or the class' progress, as well as the student's progress in relation to the group. Miss Pearson suggested that we might set up our own grading system and grade

-2-

our own papers, but the class didn't take advantage of this opportunity."

D. Opportunities for student evaluation of values and alternative courses of action

"The students were provided opportunities to establish their own values; the class period provided opportunity for other people's view points, and a definition or a more 'clear cut definition' of what values are and what should be of value to you. The class was given opportunity to make individual and class decisions, and to choose courses of action."

E. Opportunities for individual and group investigation and experimentation

"The class and groups were stimulated to make investigation and experimentation at their own will. The entire class procedure was carried on in the light of a scientific experiment."

F. Opportunities for individuals to express ideas through creative work

"The class was given opportunity to express ideas through creative work and were even pushed to express opposing ideas."

II. Estimate the number of times you have contributed to local school situations while observing and list the types of experiences those contributions provided.

"I assisted one of the girls in adjusting the tension on her machine. It gave me confidence and I came to feel a definite need for adequate and correct knowledge, for some day I may be in a responsible position. I assisted students in holding material, in pinking seams, giving instructions in removing electric cords from the plugs. I asked questions to arouse or stimulate thought, and I took what material I had to be used in the unit when the opportunity arose. Each experience brought about a better understanding of what should be done and how I should meet the situation."

III. List any other experiences that you have had this semester which you think were definitely a contribution to your preparations as a teacher to be.

"(1) Talk to my sorority; (2) correspondence, conversations, and conferences with home economists and government officials; (3) consciousness of personal appearance; (4) wise use of leisure time; (5) open houses; (6) Elijah - presentation of the chorus;

(7) special lectures; (8) cabinet meeting; (9) collecting illustrative material; (10) reading articles on subjects I am interested in; (11) articles by outstanding people; articles and books on psychology, adolescence and human behavior in general; (12) listening to the radio; (13) attending movies; (14) talking with homemakers and students; (15) attending parties; (16) planning work for the summer which will increase my background; (17) looking at each experience new or old in a new light--critically and investigatively; (18) demonstrations; (19) attendance at P.T.A. meetings, Scout meetings, and investigation of other organizations that home economists should be interested in. I feel that everything has its value if I could just realize it and take advantage of the opportunity."

IV. Attach a marked copy of your class contract showing the things that you feel you have satisfactorily completed.

"I feel that I have satisfactorily completed all my plan of work. I have discussed the plan by an outline form. My summary was entirely too lengthy, but I feel as if much remained to be said. I had hoped to do more than I found time to do."

PLAN OF WORK

H. E. E. 313  
Spring, 1940

## Plans for Growth

Minimum Essentials	Additional Experiences	Additional Individual Goals
1. Observe from 12 to 15 times in a junior or senior high school.	1. Increase the number of observations made to 18.	1. Acquaint yourself with leading home economists.
2. Report observations approximately 48 hours after making a visit to a school.	2. Acquaint yourself with as many of the students under observation as possible.	2. Become familiar with the organizations in your own field of interest.
3. Become familiar with Williams and Lyle, <i>Homemaking Education in High School</i> as a background text.	3. Increase your professional background by reading up to date references, reporting same on personal progress reports.	3. Review five to eight high school texts.
4. Become familiar with proposed plans and procedures used in major field of interest.		4. Collect illustrative material following your major interest.
5. Become familiar with magazines and books in own field.		
6. Contribute material to the bulletin board and share responsibility.		
7. Carry on group work when possible.		
8. Become familiar with recent books dealing with recent trends in psychology and problems in both secondary and adult education.		
9. Make weekly progress reports.		

## Appendix No. 4

CODE USED IN CHECKING EVIDENCES OF STUDENT GROWTH WHICH  
APPEARED ON PERSONAL PROGRESS REPORTS IN  
HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION 313

- I. Evaluation of class work
  - A. Appreciation for class opportunity
  - B. Statements evaluating class work
- II. Understanding of adolescent psychology
  - A. Changed opinions about adolescence
  - B. Recognition of adolescent ability and differences
- III. Evidence of interest
  - A. Class contribution
  - B. Reading
  - C. Investigation
  - D. Voting
  - E. Expressed interest, curiosity or desires
- IV. Changes in thinking
  - A. Changed beliefs
  - B. Self-analysis
  - C. Changed attitude
- V. Improved personal characteristics
  - A. Manner of expression
  - B. Leadership
  - C. Poise
- VI. Recognition of personal growth

## Appendix No. 5

## SCHEDULE FOR GROUP WORK PRESENTED BY A CLASS COMMITTEE

March 12 - 20	March 21 - 29	April 2 - 10	April 11 - 19	April 23 - May 1	May 2 - 10
<u>REFERENCE</u>					
Donna Zinn J. McDonald Beth Reed Vivian Kent	Julia Rice Judith Brown Highsmith M. Jones	Naomi Jones Viola Mathis Joe Bright Elsie Arnott Zoe Dupree	Stella Brink Jane Brown Audrey White June Sneed Kathryn Wiley	Virginia Little Sue Black Jerry Wilcox Alice Green Ann Rich	Eliz. White Betty Snow Ruth Cummings Doris Wright Marg. Cowan
<u>BULLETIN BOARD</u>					
Highsmith Joe Bright R. Cummings V. Little E. Arnott Betty Snow	McDonald Eliz. White Sue Black M. Jones M. Cowan	Donna Zinn Jane Brown Beth Reed Mary Jones J. Brown Kathryn W.	Doris Wright Julia Rice Naomi Jones Alice Green R. Cummings	Audrey White Betty Snow V. Mathis V. Kent	Ann Rich June Sneed McDonald S. Brink J. Wilcox
<u>MATERIAL</u>					
<u>OBSERVATION</u>					
<u>PERSONAL PROGRESS</u>					
<u>EXPLORATION</u>					

Cleo Calderhead

Typist