

PSYCHOLOGY FOR TEACHERS

PURPOSIVE BEHAVIOR, THE
FOUNDATION OF LEARNING

By

ELLSWORTH COLLINGS

*Dean of the College of Education,
University of Oklahoma*

and

MILBOURNE O. WILSON

Associate Professor of Psychology, University of Oklahoma

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DEDICATED
TO
FOUR GREAT TEACHERS
T. J. C.
S. M. C.
T. L. W.
N. C. W.

INTRODUCTION

The subject matter of paramount interest to the teacher is the purposive behavior of boys and girls. The teacher is concerned with what the pupils are *doing* at any given time. As an illustration of this type of behavior let us observe what John is doing in the work shop of the school. He has collected a varied assortment of tools and equipment, including a screw driver, pliers, knife, tape, wire, condensers, tuning coil, detector, switch key, head phones, etc. The material is manipulated and assembled in an orderly way. He works intently at his task. He pays little attention to others in the shop. No heed is given to the noises produced by the motors and other machinery. In other words, his behavior is so organized as to lead to the achievement of some goal. By observing this behavior for a short period of time, we shall discover that John is constructing a radio receiving set, possibly to be entered in the construction contest being fostered by some business firm during Boy Scout Week.

Now it is this and other forms of purposive behavior that engage the time and interest of the teacher, for it is through such behavior that boys and girls grow. The teacher for this reason must be a constant student of the behavior of boys and girls. First, she must have a dynamic point of view. She must understand that behavior of some kind along some line is the basis of all life. Second, she must recognize the fact that boys and girls, in common with all living things, grow in and through their own behavior. She must under-

stand that learning, growth, education take place at the time the activities of boys and girls are under way. Third, she must recognize the fact that the behavior of boys and girls, in common with the behavior of all living things, depends upon stimulation and direction of some kind. She must understand how to provide stimulation and direction conducive to changes in the behavior of boys and girls.

The study embodied in the present volume, it is hoped, will enlighten teachers and enable them to improve their work in these three respects. An effort is made particularly to give teachers a better insight into the process of growth in boys and girls and how to stimulate and guide the process in actual school situations. These are the present needs of all teachers interested in the education of children.

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PART I

**EDUCATION IN TERMS OF
PURPOSIVE BEHAVIOR**

