

**DIRECTED OBSERVATION  
AND SUPERVISED  
TEACHING**

**BLACKHURST**

# DIRECTED OBSERVATION AND SUPERVISED TEACHING

BY

J. HERBERT BLACKHURST

PURDUE UNIVERSITY



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## PREFACE

As a supervisor of teacher-training at Purdue University, the writer has for some time felt the need of a textbook which could be put into the hands of student teachers to serve as a guide in observing, in supplementary reading, in making lesson plans, and in reporting to the supervisor. With such an aid it would be easier to keep the class together and their attention simultaneously centered upon a given problem. Students should be instructed in the ethics of observation; they should be made to appreciate the conditions under which observation and student teaching are done; they should be given daily instruction bearing upon the phase of classroom activity upon which they are to center attention; they should be instructed how to proceed in making lesson plans; they should be directed to outside reading. This routine phase of the supervisor's activity consumes, in many instances, all his time, leaving none for the real business of making significant observations or of directing progress in obtaining skill in teaching. It therefore seemed desirable to prepare in book form such an arrangement of materials as would enable supervisors to direct the major part of their energy into professional rather than into clerical channels.

It will be seen from an examination of the text that the writer has attempted to make a complete analysis of the student's activity while observing and practicing, and then to arrange each unit of work so that it takes its proper psychological position with respect to the entire program. The student begins by directing his attention to the material side of the classroom, later he observes the physical and mental characteristics of the teacher and pupils, and still later he observes the technique of instruc-

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tion. This is followed by a theoretical discussion of the making and utilizing of lesson plans, a few model plans of varying types, and a discussion calculated to prepare the student to teach his first lesson. The remainder of the book deals with such problems as arise in actual teaching situations; for example, teaching pupils to think, conducting drill lessons, conducting development lessons, effective questioning. Because the needs of the pupils must at all times be kept uppermost in mind, it was not possible to arrange the teaching projects in any rigid sequential order. For example, the needs of the pupils alone should determine whether the drill or the development lesson is to be considered first.

The observation lessons aim to direct the student's attention in a systematic manner to classroom conditions and activities. Along with each observation is included a theoretical discussion of that which is to be observed, thus making the process more intelligible and effective. Provision is made for a daily report on the observing by including after each lesson a guide to observation and a model report upon it. It therefore becomes an easy matter to know just what any student is doing at any given time and to check his progress day by day. At some time during the student's teaching activity he should be required to submit a written report upon his attempt to accomplish the aim of each lesson of Part IV. These reports, when filed with the submitted lesson plans and reports of observations, make a complete record of the student's activity.

In the preparation of the book the writer has kept in mind also the possibility of its use in training teachers in service.

The following publishing companies and individuals have given permission to quote: The Macmillan Company, Houghton Mifflin Company, The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Charles Scribner's Sons, Public School Publishing Company, Ginn and Company, Professor Guy M. Whipple, and A. Ashmun Kelly. The author acknowledges indebtedness to the Kewaunee Manufac-

turing Company for the use of several wash drawings illustrating laboratory equipment; to Professor H. O. Rugg for the use of his Rating Scale for Judging Teachers in Service; to Charles A. McMurry for the preparation of a project-lesson plan; to his brother, John A. Blackhurst, for the preparation of diagrams; also to the administrators and teachers of the schools of Lafayette and West Lafayette, Indiana, and to Professor George L. Roberts, head of the Department of Education, Purdue University, for laboratory opportunities. Finally, he is grateful to Professor Hermann Remmers, to Dean Stanley Coulter, and to Professor O. H. Williams for the reading of the manuscript.

I hope that readers and users of this text will write to the author freely regarding its defects and merits, so that it may be improved if new editions should be required.

J. H. B.

WEST LAFAYETTE, INDIANA

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# DIRECTED OBSERVATION AND SUPERVISED TEACHING

## PART I

### INTRODUCTION

In Part I we attend to the setting in which educational procedure is to take place; that is, buildings, classrooms, instructional equipment, teacher's personality, library, study halls, etc. These are very important considerations, for the extent to which they are adjusted and properly coördinated measures the extent to which the real business of the school is possible. They determine also the type of schoolroom outcome that may be expected. The school of yesterday, for example, contained only recitation rooms and study halls. Such buildings would be totally inadequate to our present conception of legitimate school activity. Well-equipped laboratories, playgrounds, and auditoriums are now considered necessary. The whole school setting then was more suited to the getting and reciting of lessons than to the directing of pupil activities toward the development of initiative and power. Such a setting contrasts strongly with that of the present, in which even the decorations on the wall have their rôle to play in fitting the setting to the task.

It is our purpose in the first sixteen lessons to observe carefully these tools and the skill with which the teacher adjusts them to the task in hand. The student should bear in mind that the tools have their excuse for being only as a means to an end; they never can be justified in themselves. Their only

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excuse for being is that they serve the purpose of education. Hence it is only through outcomes that they have any meaning and can be justified. It is the work of the expert to keep each tool nicely adjusted to the task of education; to see that attention is not directed upon it as an end in itself but rather as a means to an end; to see that on the whole the tools do not function at cross-purposes, that is, to see that they are so subordinated that all contribute as a unit to maximum efficiency; and finally to see that they operate in the attaining of desirable outcomes.

During this series of observations the student should make an effort to follow the text rather closely, making only such deviations from it as the director of observation may prescribe. Each observation must be preceded by a careful reading of the text if the student is to get the most out of it. He will then be intelligent about the things which he sees. One cannot effectively observe lighting, for example, without some definite notions as to the requirements for good lighting. It would be just as effective for an uninformed individual to observe in the operating-room of a hospital in order to determine the suitability of its equipment as for a student whose only idea of a schoolroom and its needs has been obtained as a pupil to observe without previously informing himself as to what is needed. He will, of course, observe things which the outline of the day does not call for. Such observations should be ignored at the time, and the attention should be centered upon the task at hand. There is a great advantage in this, as the student is thereby focalizing his efforts upon a few things which he is prepared to observe.

Lesson XIV, in which we study the instructional equipment, will require that the student select for study those topics with a bearing upon the subject under observation. The student, for example, who is observing in a physics laboratory will pay no attention to discussions that have a bearing upon other types of laboratory work.

## LESSON I

*Aim. To become acquainted with the educational organization behind observation and student teaching and to become familiar with good procedure in the matter of observation.*

Student teaching done under various types of organization. In general there are three types of organization under which student teaching is carried on. (1) Many normal schools and universities set up model schools of their own, which serve as laboratories for practice teaching and observation. Many of these schools charge tuition and attract a rather highly selected student body. In certain schools of this class, such as the University of Chicago Elementary School and the High School, there is a long waiting list; hence the selection, which would be considerable if nothing but the ability to pay the tuition were taken into account, is undoubtedly added to by the influence exerted by parents, who are often members of the university faculty. The visitor is struck immediately by the fact that these are not average children but highly selected children. (2) Other institutions enter into contract with the city board of education to utilize certain of the neighboring public schools as practice schools. (3) A third and less desirable type of organization is one in which there is no understanding between the institution and the board of education. In such situations the supervisor must depend upon the good will of the superintendent, principals, and teachers, who constantly jeopardize their positions in the cause of education.

The advantage of the model school is evident. The supervisor is free to work out the methods of procedure that are deemed most effective. He is not subject to the worry that comes from

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complaints of parents who continually threaten to disrupt the system. On the other hand the pupils, as was said above, are a selected group. The student teacher does not become acquainted with a school of the sort in which he must teach during the coming year. The problem of discipline is less acute than in most schools, as the pupils come from the best homes. Similarly the problem of presenting the material effectively is much lessened. The contract arrangement, on the other hand, gives the student teacher a very realistic situation in which to work. Success there is much more likely to mean success in a public-school situation. True, the student teacher is somewhat sheltered in either case by the fact that the supervisor is ultimately responsible for what goes on. But the one trained in the public school has an opportunity at least to become more familiar with the problems presented in such schools. The dull children are more in evidence; the problems of discipline are more frequent; the equipment is more likely to be that which the student teacher will have when he enters the service; and teachers must work in closer conjunction with the community.

The third type of situation, under which many student teachers at present must work, is almost an impossible one. However, when teaching under those conditions the student teacher must bear in mind the favor granted by the classroom teacher and principal and do his best to conduct his work so that serious consequences can never fall upon those who jeopardize their positions by giving him an opportunity to observe and teach. The writer believes that if the candidate for student teaching understands the conditions under which he is about to work, there will be less likelihood of failure to meet the situation.

The following contract between Ohio University and the Board of Education of the city of Athens represents a very desirable situation for observation and practice teaching:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted with permission of Ohio University.

## AGREEMENT

*THIS AGREEMENT* made this — day of — between the Board of Education of the city of Athens, Ohio, and Ohio University:

*WITNESSETH*, That the parties of this agreement each in consideration of the agreements on the part of the other herein contained, do hereby agree, the Board of Education for itself and Ohio University for itself, as follows:

1. That the Board of Education:

(a) Permit the University to use such classes and rooms in the Athens School System as the University deems necessary for its practice teaching and observation, the selection to be approved by the City Superintendent of Schools.

(b) Permit the University with the advice and counsel of the Superintendent of Schools to designate teachers already in the Athens School System as critic teachers for those rooms where the University shall place practice teachers.

(c) All critic teachers, supervising principals, and superintendent shall be approved by both the University and the Board of Education.

(d) The Board reserves the right to retain any teachers now in the schools.

(e) Until the discontinuance of the University High School the Board agrees to continue the financial arrangements now existing between the Board and the University and to pay such additional critic teachers as may be employed the maximum salaries paid to non-critic teachers of the same rank during the school year 1922-1923. When the University High School is discontinued the University agrees to pay all salaries for instruction except those of teachers in the schools owned and operated by the Board of Education. In the event larger building facilities are furnished by the University, the Board of Education agrees to pay the additional teachers at the same rate and in the same manner as in the buildings provided by the City. Critic teachers in the schools owned and operated by the Board of Education will receive from the Board the maximum salaries according to the schedule, paid by the Board to other teachers of the same rank during the school year 1922-23, and shall have their salaries supplemented by the University. In the event of the employing of critic teachers for new subjects or new grades the Board will pay toward the salaries of such teachers what it finds to be the usual salaries paid to non-critic teachers under similar conditions. In the event of any general reduction in teachers' salaries at the request of the Board a joint committee of the Board and the University shall be ap-



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pointed to determine what salaries shall be paid by the Board ; the findings of such committee to be subject to the approval of the Board before adoption. Likewise, in the event of any general increase in salaries the above joint committee shall at the request of the University make recommendation to the Board relative to increase in salaries.

(f) Permit the University to supervise and direct the teaching of the critic teachers and the practice teachers in the Athens School System, subject to the suggestions and recommendations of the City Superintendent. The Superintendent of City Schools may be called into conference at any time by the University for discussion of matters of mutual interest.

(g) Enforce all school laws relating to attendance, incorrigibles, medical inspection, records, and registrations.

### 2. That Ohio University :

(a) Supplement the salaries of those teachers designated by the University as critic teachers.

(b) Consider all members of the teaching force whose salaries are supplemented by the University to be members of the faculty of the College of Education. All such critic teachers are members of the corps of city teachers and as such are subject to rules and regulations of the City Superintendent.

(c) Employ a director of the training who shall be approved both by the University and the Board of Education, who shall have charge of the teacher training and all instruction and materials of instruction in that portion of the school system which is being used by the University for the teacher training; and likewise such supervisors of regular classroom instruction as shall hereafter be deemed necessary to be selected by the University. The director of training may be required by the Board to attend any or all meetings of the Board.

(d) Discontinue the University high school.

(e) Operate the present Elementary Training School at the University as a training or a model observation school to be maintained as at present. This school shall conform to all arrangements in this agreement except that the 50% limit in practice teaching shall not apply until September, 1925.

3. All courses of study, the selection of instructional materials, and assignments of pupils for instructional purposes shall be made by the superintendent of schools and the director of training and be approved by both.