

Resources for

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## Teaching about the World: Secondary

THERE was a time when resources for teaching about the world were limited and many of them of dubious quality. That period is now past. Today there is an abundance of resources on most areas and topics. The chief problems are where to obtain such materials and how to utilize them most effectively.

Unfortunately there is no central agency in the United States where resources for schools on many aspects of the world may be purchased. There is a real need for some type of "National Curriculum Bureau on the Schools and World Affairs," sponsored by a university, a commercial group, or a teachers organization.

### Variety of Sources

Until such a center is established teachers and librarians will have to obtain their materials on the world from a variety of sources. A fairly wide range can be purchased from such places as the World Affairs Bookstore (345 East 46th Street, N.Y.C. 17), World Affairs Materials (Brooklyn College, Brooklyn 10, N.Y.), and some of the local offices of

the Foreign Policy Association and the American Association for the United Nations. A wide range of materials on Asia are handled by the Asia Society and the Japan Society (both located at 112 East 64th Street, New York, N.Y.). The best single source on Latin America is the Pan American Union (Washington, D.C. 20036).

Two concise, comprehensive, inexpensive guides to such materials on the world are now available. One is the special issue of *Intercom* magazine for October 1963 on "Teaching World Affairs: A Special Guide for Educators and Program Planners," available from the Foreign Policy Association (345 East 46th Street, New York, N.Y.) for \$1. The other is a booklet on "Studying the World: Selected Resources," issued by the Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University (New York 27, N.Y.) and sold for \$1 per copy.

*Intercom* has also published special issues on "South and Southeast Asia,"

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quire information in depth. Schools can obtain authoritative assistance in this task by seeking, as district consultants, specialists in geography or anthropology whose field work has brought them into contact with specialized regions of the world. Authoritative resources are available through a valuable bibliography (Mandelbaum, 1963), recently published, and useful in its listing of large numbers of anthropological studies centered in specific communities.

Providing children information concerning the life patterns and customs of these cultures is a problem generally approached through a variety of means. Films, filmstrips, artifacts, and the resources of ethnic recordings and folklore are increasingly available to schools, and can be located through a variety of means. Bibliographies (1, 2, 5, 9, 10), the resources of lending museums and libraries, as well as the consulting services of colleges and universities are productive places to begin. In all these activities, teachers are cautioned to select with care, making certain the materials chosen are those which communicate, authentically and vividly, significant information concerning basic processes and values in the culture under study. One set of guidelines to such selection has appeared (7), and offers hope we may see more of such practical assistance in the future.

### Opportunities To Participate

In seeking to bring children into current contact with a selected culture, teachers have used a variety of approaches. Programs of exchange between schools of art products, artifacts, letters and photographs can be useful, provided they are incorporated into significant cultural studies, and supported by open

discussions more meaningful than simple platitudes about our shared likenesses. Foreign visitors, invited to discuss and—hopefully—to involve children in some aspects of the culture, can offer extension of the classroom study, provided children are first prepared for a profitable experience, and provided guests and children together seek the bases of shared understanding.

Despite efforts to the contrary, a large majority of our resources remain secondary, depending on a fund of prior experience to make meaningful the concepts we explore. Shaftel (8) has noted the particular challenge this problem presents to teachers of children in highly urbanized, industrial societies, when the cultures under study are those of the pre-industrial and developing nations of the non-Western world. Helping children “move into” these cultures with understanding and sensitivity for their traditions, life patterns, and aspirations requires a fuller involvement of teaching effort than has commonly been recognized.

Teachers, concerned with the importance of providing children the opportunities which make such understandings available, are including within their studies certain basic industrial arts processes which introduce children to the core technology of a people. Participating, for example, in basic food-getting processes of a pre-technological society—usually at an unanticipated cost in personal labor—children may experience the meaning and reality of work in a manual culture. Relating experiences such as these to changing culture-ways, as nations industrialize, opens for children opportunities for perhaps the most critical learnings cultural studies can support—insights into the aspirations of  
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"Africa," "Latin America," "Japan," "Trade," "Foreign Aid," and other themes. The Bureau of Publications at Teachers College, Columbia University, has issued three special guides on "Studying Africa in Elementary and Secondary Schools," "Studying the Middle East in Elementary and Secondary Schools," and "Studying South America in Elementary and Secondary Schools." Each of these nine publications is priced at \$1.

A wealth of free and inexpensive materials is also available from embassies and from numerous organizations. Many such items are listed in the excellent booklet on "Free and Inexpensive Learning Materials," issued yearly by the George Peabody College for Teachers (Nashville, Tennessee) for \$1.50 or in "The Educators Guide to Free Social Studies Materials," printed annually by the Educators Progress Service (Randolph, Wisconsin) and sold for \$6.75. A more specialized listing is the pamphlet on "Free and Inexpensive Materials on World Affairs," printed in 1962 by the Bureau of Publications of Teachers College, Columbia University, and sold for \$1. per copy.

A few useful kits for teachers are now available and are of great value. Kits on South Asia and on Southeast Asia are sold by the Asia Society, a kit on Japan by the Japan Society, and one on the Middle East by the Association for Middle East Studies (11 West 42nd Street, New York 36, N.Y.). Each kit is \$2.

A relatively new type of kit, including filmstrips, pictures, and realia is being produced by the International Communications Foundation (9033 Wilshire Boulevard, Beverly Hills, California). Some of the original kits were too expensive for most schools but there are now a number of smaller, less expensive kits on various nations.

Lest any reader get the impression that books and booklets are the only resources for teaching about the world, let us hasten to suggest that the best source for developing international understanding is *people*. You can have education *for* international understanding through many media, but education *in* international understanding must be carried on with human beings.

### Through Many Media

There are thousands of persons in the United States who can become human resources for teaching about the world. Some of them are students from abroad studying in our colleges. Some are visiting teachers and school officials. Others are persons who have worked abroad in the Peace Corps, in Operation Crossroads, or in similar programs. Some are students who have been abroad with the Experiment in International Living or other projects in improving understanding. Some are business or church leaders who have lived many years in other parts of the world. Some are fellow teachers who have visited various countries.

Then there are the exchange students in this country who have come here through the American Field Service, the American Friends Service Committee, or some other organization, plus the members of the Herald-Tribune Youth Forum.

Such persons should be carefully selected and wisely used. In many cases they should be offered some remuneration. In the case of foreign visitors, they should meet small groups of students in face-to-face situations and not always be platform personalities. They should also observe teaching here as well as talk to and with students, since they will usually

be regarded as "experts" on our education when they return home.

Probably the richest resource for promoting international understanding is the idea of school affiliations. Ideally every student going through an American school today should have at least four opportunities for experiences with affiliated schools. In the elementary school one such opportunity might well be in another part of the United States, preferably with pupils of a different regional or socioeconomic group. Another opportunity might be with a school in Mexico or Canada so that students, teachers and parents might visit each other. The opportunity in junior high school might be with a European country whose language the students are beginning to learn. The high school affiliation might well be with a school in Asia or Africa.

Films and filmstrips can be invaluable resources for introducing young people to the world. Several organizations issue brief, annotated lists of such visual materials but there is only one overall listing now available. That is a booklet on "Audio-Visual Aids for International Understanding," published by the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession (1227 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.), available for \$2.50 per copy. We need desperately more brief, annotated lists compiled by persons who know about world affairs, visual materials, and young people.

An often neglected approach to the world is through the music of other countries and cultures. Two organizations are outstanding in presenting such learning materials. One is the Folkways Records (121 West 47th Street, N.Y.C. 36). The other is the Cooperative Recreation Service (Delaware, Ohio). The latter organization specializes in pocket-

size song books on various parts of the world.

## United Nations

Teaching about the United Nations and the specialized agencies has received all too little attention in recent months. With the publication by UNESCO of a booklet on *Telling the U.N. Story: New Approaches to Teaching About the United Nations and Its Related Agencies*, it is hoped that many teachers will reevaluate their work and deepen and extend such studies. In the United States the publisher of this small book is the Oceana Press (Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.). The price is \$2.

Other materials on this theme may be obtained from such sources as the American Association for the United Nations (345 East 46th Street, New York 17, N.Y.), the Department of Public Information of the U.N. (United Nations, New York, N.Y.), and the United States National Commission for UNESCO (U.S. Department of State, Washington 25, D.C.).

A publication which deserves far wider use than it is now getting is *The Unesco Courier*. Many libraries should subscribe to two or three copies, mounting the fine pictures on cardboard and placing some of the splendid articles in easily accessible files. Language classes should find it of considerable value, using its editions in Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, or Spanish. The cost per year for the English edition is \$5.00 from the UNESCO Publications Center (317 East 34th Street, New York, N.Y.).

*World Health* is the title of another useful magazine, profusely illustrated. It is published by the World Health Organization and available for \$3.00 per

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be based. Core features of American culture itself may function to inhibit or prevent this process.

Further constraints may be found within the personality of the individual and his relationships to his immediate social environment. Efforts to obtain the necessary insight and relativistic viewpoint must account for these powerful inhibiting factors and must extend beyond traditional training methods. The forging of chains into tools often means extensive reshaping of the basic materials. We must ask first *should* this be done, then, *can* it be done.

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## Elementary—Crabtree

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developing nations, and the vast dislocations occasioned, within the culture and the world, as these efforts find consummation. Investments schools might make in the resources needed for developing industrial processes such as these would seem small cost indeed against the dividends paid in cross-cultural and world understanding.

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year from the Columbia University Press (2960 Broadway, New York 27, N. Y.).

Paperback books are an increasingly important source for teaching about the world. Scores of books might be mentioned, yet we select two for special attention. They are both anthologies of African literature. One is Langston Hughes' *An African Treasury* (Pyramid) and the other is Peggy Rutherford's *African Voices* (Universal Library). English teachers will find these two small volumes inspiring and helpful.

These are only a few of the rich resources available to high school teachers today to help boys and girls live effectively in the emerging international community of our time. Yet they are also some of the outstanding resources we can all obtain with little effort and little cost.

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## Alternative—Gorman

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If we fail notably to raise the cultural level of our teachers, we shall surely shape in our twentieth century schools minds admirably fitted to live only in the nineteenth century.

American humanity does indeed need to pull itself up by its bootstraps. Only through its schools can it create a generation of persons who may be capable of looking at another people and judging them on some bases other than the number and quality of material things they do or do not have. This aspiration will fail American education unless its leaders and thinkers help American teachers to find better yardsticks for measuring their own and their pupils' humanity. This is the fashioning of an alternative to an ignorance we can ill afford.