

THE TEACHING OF OCCUPATIONS
IN THE JUNCTION CITY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

by

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INTRODUCTION

Since our schools and educators have become concerned with presenting occupational and educational information to the youth of the nation, the problem has been the selection of the best method. One of the most popular methods, in addition to individual counseling, has been that of providing information through the teaching of a course in occupations. Junction City Junior High School has used this method for over twenty-five years, and recently felt a need to review its procedures, purposes, and needs. It is very important that the youth of this school continue to receive occupational and educational information, and that they receive it in a manner that is meaningful, educational, and within the means of the school.

Statement of the Problem

It is the purpose of this study; 1) to give a brief history of the teaching of occupations in the Junction City Junior High School; 2) to review the need for occupational information among the students of the Junction City Junior High School; 3) to report on occupations being taught elsewhere; 4) to evaluate the students responses to the effectiveness of teaching occupations in the Junction City Junior High School; 5) to establish reasons for the teaching of occupations; 6) to examine the contents of occupations courses; and 7) to make suggested recommendations for

the teaching of occupations in the Junction City Junior High School.

Importance of the Study

The need for making a wise occupational choice is becoming more pronounced as the nation is experiencing some major changes in its world of work, and so many different jobs are now available. Not only does an individual need to make a wise occupational choice, it is necessary for him to understand the people around him and how to get along with them. In order for the individual to receive information, to make an occupational choice and how to get along with others, a satisfactory method must be found that will benefit the largest number of individuals.

A review of the method of presenting occupational information to the individuals of the Junction City High School is highly important in that the most effective method can be chosen and used to the best results.

Definitions of Terms Used

Occupations. The word "occupations" is used in this report to designate the course in occupations which normally includes information about jobs, training for jobs, general aspects of the world of work, and preparation for work.

Occupational Information. The term "occupational information"

is used in this report to include the giving of information, by any means, about the general category of jobs.

Vocations. The word "Vocations" is used in this report to designate a particular course of occupations, as offered in the Junction City Junior High School.

HISTORY OF TEACHING VOCATIONS IN THE JUNCTION CITY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

In his search for information about the teaching of the course Vocations in the Junction City Junior High School, the writer found that there were many gaps in regard to time, names, and dates. Much information was gained about the teaching of Vocations from an interview with Mr. Marlin Schroeder, now of the California Test Bureau. Mr. Schroeder was employed by the Junction City Public Schools from 1934 to 1941.

In the early 1930's the Principal of the Junction City Junior-Senior High School wanted a guidance program through the homerooms. A homeroom guidance program was developed by Mr. Schroeder to include the following: 1) occupational information; 2) some testing; and 3) personal inventory. This program was supplemented by prepared materials and guidelines.

After two years trial it was determined that the homeroom could not meet the guidance needs. One factor was that the teachers could not see the relationship between guidance and the homeroom.

After the two year period of guidance in the homerooms, the

Principal of the Junction City Junior-Senior High School again requested that Mr. Schroeder attempt to develop some type of guidance program that could be used in groups. At that time Mr. Schroeder developed the course of Vocations. Every ninth grade student was required to take the course for one semester and received one-half unit of credit. The course was divided into three sections. The first six-weeks period was devoted to the text. During the second six-weeks period, the students were responsible for investigations of three occupational fields. In the final period, each student was to select an area of work and write a paper. They assembled material on the subject, then wrote up their own chances of success in the field. As reference material, a career file was developed by Mr. Schroeder and used in the classroom.

Very little information was found about the teaching of Vocations during the 1940's, especially in regard to texts and methods used. It was found that as the school enrollment grew, more than one teacher was assigned to teach the course. This meant that there probably was a difference in methods and objectives of the course among teachers. During the late 1940's the course was made an elective. It could be taken for one semester opposite Citizenship or opposite Driver Education.

In the early 1950's much progress was made in organizing another standard course of Vocations for ninth grade students. The person in charge of the guidance program was also assigned to teach most of the classes in the Vocations course. A course of study was set up and followed and this continued until 1960.

This course of study made up the major content of the Vocations course, with the text primarily as a reference guide. The text used was Teen-Agers, by Jenkins, Bauer, and Shacter (13). This text devoted much of its material to development of personality, health, getting along with others, and a short section on planning for the future.

The course of study for the Vocations course was a well designed guide, set up by former guidance counselors of the junior-senior high school. The course included the following major headings: 1) Your Future and You; 2) Understanding Yourself; 3) Charting a Vocational Direction; 4) A Detailed Study of an Occupation; 5) Your Intellectual Capacity in Relationship to a Vocational Level; 6) Your Personality in Relationship to a Vocational Level; 7) Obtaining The Job You Want; and 8) Progressing In Your Vocation. An outline of the course of study can be found in the Appendix, page 45.

The course of study was followed very closely and regular assignments were made in the text. Also the library and guidance office began building up a file for further reference materials. Therefore the students were receiving a fairly uniform course in Vocations.

School records indicated that approximately 60 percent of the ninth grade students completed the course of Vocations during the 1950's.

In 1957 the writer joined the staff of the Junction City Junior High School. He taught one class in Vocations for one semester. He was one of four teaching Vocations at that time.

Two of the teachers, including the writer used the outlined course of study. The other two teachers used the text primarily, but did include the detailed study of an occupation.

In 1958 the author became the guidance counselor of the junior high school and was assigned one class in Vocations and Citizenship. Five other classes in Vocations were taught, with one assigned teacher. In this case, the text was the main content of the course and a detailed study of an occupation was included. The text still being used at that time was, Teen-Agers, by Jenkins, Bauer, and Shacter.

In 1960 the writer was still teaching one class in Vocations for a semester. A new teacher taught the five other sections and used a course of study somewhat similiar to the one previously described.

The pattern of teaching Vocations remained the same until 1962. At that time the writer was relieved of any teaching duties and two additional staff members were assigned the responsibility of teaching any classes that included occupational information, making a total of three teachers. Also the course, including the name, was changed completely.

Present Method of Teaching Occupations

The course title was changed to Citizenship, making one course instead of two separate semester courses in Citizenship and Vocations. A student was enrolled in the course either for

a semester or a year, depending on whether he took Driver Education. The course included a six weeks unit of study on occupations during the second semester. Therefore, if a student took Driver Education the first semester, he received some study of occupations. This plan cut the number of students down to about one-third of the ninth grade class that received any study in occupations. Also, they only had one-third of the time for such a study. Previously Vocations had been offered each semester, instead of only one, and the course lasted the entire semester, instead of a six-weeks period.

NEED FOR OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

Nature of Junction City Junior High School and Community

In 1959 a new building was completed for the senior high school and the junior high remained in the former junior-senior high school building. Enrollment grew from 750 to 1,150 during 1962, for the junior high school.

Of the total enrollment, approximately one-third of the students were military dependents. Others were children of civil service workers, construction workers, workers connected with Fort Riley, Junction City business people, and a small number of farmers.

Ten percent of the school population was Negro or foreign, with many of the Negro students coming from very poor socio-economic backgrounds.

In 1962 one-third of the ninth grade class, which had an enrollment of 375, had not been in the junior high school the preceding year. This meant the school population was very transient and many types of backgrounds were represented.

The community of Junction City has a population of 20,000, with its main economy depending upon nearby Fort Riley. Little industry exists, so there is very little demand for skilled and technical workers. The main bulk of workers are those working in merchandising and providing services. For several years the largest single payroll within Junction City has been that of the Board of Education.

Limited Occupational Choices

In 1959 the writer conducted a survey to sample the availability of jobs for college graduates, high school graduates, and drop-out students, within Junction City.

A total of 161 business establishments were called upon to fill out a questionnaire. One of the questions asked, was: Do you have opportunities for high school graduates to work? The answers to this question was 115 yes (63.6 percent) and 56 no (36.4 percent). Due to the types of business, such as single ownership and operation, only 93 of the 115 could be taken into consideration. Of the 93 that were taken into consideration 58 percent were regarded as jobs with a future and 42 percent as only temporary jobs. Sales positions, secretarial work, trades, nurses,

telephone operators, city maintenance work, and postal work made up the bulk of the 58 percent.

The survey pointed out that the number of jobs for semi-skilled, skilled, technical, and semi-professional workers was very limited. The best opportunities seemed to be in the fields of professional services, sales, and the general area of service occupations.

It seemed to the investigator that many high school graduates would probably be leaving the community in search of jobs. Also, due to the fact that many of the students would be moving to different schools, it might be more difficult for them to become acquainted with jobs.

The writer determined then, that due to the limited number and types of occupations available in Junction City and the nature of the student body, a closer look was needed at the existing means of providing occupational information.

Occupations Taught Elsewhere

Sinick and Hoppock (23, p. 149) reported on the teaching of occupations from 1945 to 1951 in the Personnel and Guidance Journal. In a study of 58 schools that reported teaching occupations, they found the occupations course was required in 56 of the 58 schools. It was most often placed in the ninth grade or eighth grade. It usually met once a week for 36 weeks. The course the students liked ~~most~~ met once a week for 36 weeks, that

which the students liked most met three times a week for 19 weeks,

Hoprock and Lowenstein (11, p. 274) reported the following in Occupations.

A review was made of current practices of teaching occupations in 38 schools. The twelfth grade had almost caught up with the ninth grade in popularity, as the year to offer the course. Self-appraisal methods were the most frequently used by teachers. The course was required in 29 schools and elective in 9. It was offered as a separate subject in 23 schools, and offered in units in 13.

Sinick and Hoprock (24, pp. 328-330) reported in a study with the support of the National Vocational Guidance Association on the teaching of occupations in several states. The following are some of their findings.

During the school year 1952-53, reports Pennsylvania, occupations, either as a subject or as a unit within a subject field or as being integrated into subject fields, was taught as follows:

21 %	of the 7th grades
31 %	of the 8th grades
60 %	of the 9th grades
32 %	of the 10th grades
35 %	of the 11th grades
61 %	of the 12th grades

This percentage has been practically stationary for several years, with more emphasis being placed on the teaching of occupations in the 9th and 12th grades.

A 1953 survey of 99 Montana public high schools reveals that "thirty schools indicated some instruction relative to occupations."

South Dakota reported that "out of 298 high schools in the 1952-53 school year, 152 had offerings in career planning, occupations, or guidance activities.

A report from Mississippi based upon a small sample of the state's high schools indicates that, in addition to occupations units in industrial arts, English, and social science courses, "occupational information is offered in about one-half of the schools through separate courses."

An Illinois survey of 594 public schools in 1951-52 discloses use of occupations courses by 77 schools.

Lowenstein and Hoppock (16, p. 441) reported:

More than 5,000 students are studying occupations in each of the following states: California, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Texas. Total enrollment exceeds 150,000 and every state, with the sole exception of Nevada, is listed as having occupations courses in some of its schools.

STUDENTS REACTIONS TOWARD VOCATIONS

Student Survey

A survey was made during the spring of 1963 to sample the reactions and feelings of former students towards the course in Vocations, as taught in the Junction City Junior High School.

From school records, the names of all the students who completed the course in Vocations during the school years of 1959-1960, 1960-1961, and 1961-1962, were obtained. The names were then checked to see if these students still remained at the Junction City Senior High School. After determining what students were enrolled in the senior high school, survey forms were sent to the homerooms of the students. With cooperation of the teachers, administration, and guidance counselor, the forms were completed.

A total of 531 students had completed the course during the three school years of the study. A total of 239 students

completed the survey form, making a 45.18 percent return. This meant that over 50 percent of the students, who had completed the course, were no longer enrolled in the Junction City Schools.

It was not the purpose of the survey to gain statistical information. The questions were general in nature and answered by "yes" or "no". Primarily they were designed to cause the student to think back about the course and motivate him to make comments about the content and procedures. Most of the questions dealt with objectives of practically all the Vocations classes and teachers, therefore, they were more or less a review of the course.

Of the 239 students who completed the questionnaire, 64 or 27 percent, made usable comments. From these comments come the feelings of the students about the effectiveness and worth of the Vocations course.

Ninety-two percent of the students felt they had studied occupations in general, but many added that they did not study enough occupations. Sixty-four percent of the students reported they had written a term paper on a particular occupation while enrolled in the course. It was also found that many students, from their comments, wrote several short papers on various occupations.

The survey showed that 98 percent reported studying personality in some form. This high percentage probably was due to the text which included a great deal about personality.

Only 15 percent of the students reported studying or

receiving any information about scholarships, and 23 percent had received information about making college applications. Forty-nine percent said they had received information about senior high school.

Eighty-eight percent of the students felt they gained something from taking the course and 86 percent felt the course was useful. However, until the students actually get into the world of work, or higher education, these answers must be regarded as tentative.

Only 58 percent of the students felt the course had had any bearing upon their present plans.

Table I below shows the number and percentage of responses to the various questions on the survey form. Because of the nature and purpose of the survey, the responses were in "yes" and "no" form. The students were instructed to answer "yes" if they had studied a topic, even for a short time. No quantitative comparisons were attempted. A complete copy of the questionnaire may be found in the Appendix, page 48.

TABLE I
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE
ABOUT VOCATIONS CLASSES

STUDENTS HAD STUDIED:	Total no. of cases	Yes		NO	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent
7. Characteristics of personality	238	234	98	4	2
12. Skills of getting along	234	225	96	9	4
11. Dating, dress, manners	234	224	96	10	4
8. Improving personality	239	226	95	13	5
1. Occupations in general	234	211	92	23	8
13. Interview methods	230	197	86	33	14
3. More than one occupation	237	197	82	40	18
6. Future and outlook of a job	231	173	75	58	25
5. Training for a job	235	156	66	79	34
4. Wrote a term paper	239	152	64	87	36
2. A specific occupation	232	128	55	104	45
9. Causes of a code of values	223	116	52	107	48
10. Meaning of a code of values	223	111	50	112	50
16. Senior High enrollment	233	113	49	120	51
14. College application	235	54	23	181	77
15. Scholarship information	230	35	15	195	85
STUDENTS' OPINIONS:					
19. Gained anything from course	238	211	88	27	12
18. Course useful and liked	237	204	86	33	14
17. Bearing upon present plans	237	138	58	99	42

Students' Opinions

The following are statements made by students who completed the survey form. These comments were considered worthwhile in looking at the success of a Vocations class. They can be used as guides for evaluation and plans for the future.

Sixty-four students made comments, 54 of them were in favor of retaining the course or thought the course worthwhile. Ten students indicated that they did not think the course useful. The comments used by the writer were selected on the basis of those best presented by the individual students.

A tenth grade girl enrolled in college preparation and planning to attend college:

I enjoyed taking Vocations. It helped me decide about what I wanted to do. It made me make the decision that I wanted to go to college and graduate. Vocations helped me learn about different occupations and what each one included. In class I especially enjoyed writing a term paper. It not only helped me learn about a particular vocation, but it helped me to learn how to use reference material and how to write a term paper.

An eleventh grade girl planning to enter some kind of work after graduation:

The course of Vocations was a very good course and I did gain a lot of information that I can use now and in the future. I would like to take similar courses, except more extensive.

A tenth grade girl planning for college:

I felt I gained a considerable amount of general information. I worked at the public library for a year, and now feel I need to make more money. I am looking for another job and I feel the Vocations class helped me greatly in deciding how to plan my future.

An eleventh grade boy planning to attend college:

The course is helpful in many areas. Although it did not have any direct bearing on my choice of occupation, I am sure it did for many. This course helped me in the study of social life, its problems and remedies. I think it is a very worthwhile course for the majority of students going through the latter year of junior high or the first year of senior high.

An eleventh grade boy planning to attend college:

Although I enjoyed the course I felt I received little from it. The course was made much too easy and consisted of little work, less study, and no added incentive for personal work.

An eleventh grade girl enrolled in the general curriculum and planning to enter a trade or business school:

I enjoyed Vocations, things were discussed openly and truthfully. I learned a lot about other students by hearing their remarks and ideas in the Vocations class.

An eleventh grade girl in the general curriculum and planning to attend business college:

I thought it was very useful and surprisingly interesting. I would take it over, if I could.

An eleventh grade girl planning to attend college:

Vocations was interesting, but I would have benefited more if I would have written a term paper.

A twelfth grade girl enrolled in general curriculum:

In Vocations we chose six occupations which interested us the most. We were to look up information and write on each one.

A twelfth grade boy planning to enter college:

This was very helpful to me in choosing my future occupation. It helped to narrow my selection down, by learning the advantages and disadvantages. I am now choosing my occupation and it was one on which I wrote.

An eleventh grade boy planning to attend college:

Vocations enabled me to find out about some of the requirements for the occupation of my choice.

A twelfth grade girl planning to attend college:

Vocations was a very useful subject and while I was taking it I found it very enjoyable, though that was all. I couldn't see how it really would help me in the future, but when I applied for a job it really paid off big. I was so glad I had taken it, I recommend it to everyone.

A twelfth grade boy enrolled in college preparatory:

Vocations, as it was, widened my outlook on life. I enjoyed studying different vocations and personality traits. In my class we made a report on some occupations every six weeks.

A tenth grade boy planning to attend a trade school:

I liked Vocations. It helped me understand my present job. It also improved my outlook on life.

A tenth grade girl planning to attend business college:

I became more interested in one certain job, which, as of right now, I plan to go further into. Vocations aided in my decision.

A tenth grade girl planning to attend a music school:

In my opinion, the information about dress, dating, and getting along with others, was especially helpful. For example, many boys and girls came into our class shy and uncertain; and they left confident.

A tenth grade girl planning to attend college:

I took the course because I needed that one-half credit filled. My folks had already told me what they wanted me to be. Through Vocations I gained information that convinced my parents that it was up to me to choose my vocation.

In regard to the last comment made, the author found a statement by Arbuckle (1, p. 36) that seemed most appropriate.

Because of parental pressure, a child may come to accept an unrealistic goal. Often the teacher is the only person who can, at any early stage, note

this unrealism, and we may do much to help the child to come to realize the distortion of his vocational concept.

There is nothing unhealthy about the vocational dreams of youth, as long as the young are aware of the chances of transferring their dreams into reality.

Other Findings of Students Reactions

Rubinfield and Hoppock (21, pp. 45-48) reported on a study made of students reactions towards a course in Occupations offered in the ninth grade of the public schools of Newark, New Jersey. It included students' judgements on the value of the course, their opinions on whether it should be required or elective, and their suggestions for improving the course. For all respondents the reactions were submitted from 7½ to 8½ years after taking the course.

Retention of the course was strongly supported, with only six percent of both graduates and drop-outs recommending that it be dropped. Overwhelmingly, the students said that the course should be retained as a required subject.

The respondents offered many ideas for changes in the course, some of their suggestions were:

If this course were to include writing to different companies asking about all types of jobs that the company offers, or creates, students would get a better idea of what to plan for or choose.

Have more people talk to students about what is expected of them in different fields. Discuss necessary qualifications with students and do not glorify the business world.

Students should be given some background as to how to seek employment and present themselves to their prospective employers.

More research on different types of occupations and what the job contains, as far as qualifications and education.

In responding to the question as to whether the course should be required or not, the general consensus was that immature students are in need of definite help in the selection of an occupation.

The writer agreed with many other writers that getting the students opinion about the course is most meaningful. In courses designed to teach about occupations, you must include the students viewpoints in order to present more meaningful information. Every effort should be made to have all students completing an occupations course, evaluate their experiences before graduation. Then the ideal procedure would be to have a follow-up study sometime after the students have entered the world of work and formulated ideas as to what they should know, or what had helped them the most.

REASONS FOR TEACHING OCCUPATIONS

Hoppeck (10, pp. 1-4) in Occupational Information, gives the following reasons for teaching of occupations:

1. the choice of an occupation may determine whether one will be employed or unemployed;
2. the choice of an occupation may determine success or failure;
3. the choice of an occupation may determine whether one will enjoy or detest his work;

4. the choice of an occupation influences almost every aspect of life;
5. occupation choices determine how a democratic society will utilize its manpower;
6. occupational information is indispensable.

The above reasons represent general aspects of the importance of providing occupational information to the students, whether through a classroom or by some other means.

Cuony and Hoppock (6, pp. 389-391) compared an experimental group of students who had been taught occupations with an equated control group. The combined average earnings of the experimental group, one year after graduation, were \$68,420, of the control group \$60,521. Thus the students who had had the course earned \$7,719 more than those who did not have the course.

Total cost of teaching the course, including both instructors and overhead, was estimated at \$1,542. This estimate was reached by charging the course with two-fifths of the average overhead cost per teacher per term. The teachers salary was assumed to be \$5,000.

The writers further stated.

If we may conclude that the superior earnings of the experimental group were caused by the course in Job Finding and Job Orientation, then a community investment of \$1,542 in this course enabled those students to earn \$7,719 more than they would have earned without the course. If these additional earnings may be considered a community asset, then the community collected a profit of \$6,177 on an investment of \$1,542, and simultaneously produced a group of young workers who were better satisfied with their jobs.

In another report on the same study, Cuony and Hoppock (7, pp. 116-117) reported that five years after graduation, the superiority of the experimental group appeared to have been

maintained and increased. They also concluded that when depressed times come, those who have had the course can get jobs more easily.

Hoprock (10, p. 326), in making a summary of some of the studies he had conducted, stated:

Courses in occupations measurably increased the subsequent job satisfaction and earning power of the students who went to work and the academic success of the students who went to college.

Courses in occupations measurably increased the range of occupations in which students were interested, their interest in specific occupations and reduced the amount of unemployment.

Billings (3, p. 47-48) feels the school should provide for the organized study of occupational life, for counsel of individuals in the formulation of their education and vocational plans and in the adjustments needed in school life. She also feels that it is essential that a close relationship exist between those responsible for guidance in the schools and those responsible for employment and adjustment of young workers, in order that mutual cooperation, exchange of points of view, and unbiased information may eventuate in better understanding of both school and occupational life, and therefore better adjustment of individuals in their transition from school to work.

The writer concluded that the teaching of occupations, in a course like the Junction City Junior High School Vocations course, could also make some of the accomplishments as previously discussed.

FUTURE NEEDS FOR TEACHING OCCUPATIONS

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, (19, pp. 1-23) reported the following information in a study made for the President of the United States.

By 1970, eighty-seven million people will be working full-time. Of this group, 26 million will start to work during the time between 1960 and 1970. Therefore the schools must help 26 million youngsters work their way through this challenging decade.

Out of every ten youngsters now in grade schools, three will not finish high school, seven will earn a high school diploma, three will go to work, some as wives and mothers, and four will continue their education. Out of these same ten students, eight will not complete college.

The department further states, that, "occupational preparation is a task of every American high school." The world of work requires many young people well trained to enter employment in agriculture, the skilled trades, business, industry, merchandising, service occupations, and the technical and health fields, as well as homemaking. Since our population is highly mobile, responsibility for occupational preparation must be shared by every high school.

Schiffman (22, p. 17) in the Occupational Outlook Quarterly reports that entry of the great numbers of young people into the labor force during the present decade will occur simultaneously with a rapid expansion in those occupations (professional and technical, clerical and sales, and skilled) which require the most education and training. In the years ahead, workers in these occupations will need even more education and training to

keep up with constantly developing technology. Also, he states:

The number of job seekers will increase sharply and those qualified only for unskilled jobs, particularly if they leave school prior to high school graduation, may have even greater difficulties in finding work than do the young people of today.

Wrenn (28, p. 77) pointed out that the extent to which the school is responsible for vocational preparation is certainly an issue. He further stated:

The future will see more high school graduates who do not enter college securing specific vocational training in business schools, technical schools, hospital schools of nursing, etc, but such students will need vocational counseling in high school to prepare them for this step.

Lifton (15, p. 28), in discussing the noncollege bound, indicated that schools have overlooked the many students who do not go to college.

Intelligent attitudes toward the world of work need to be developed, starting in the elementary grades. The junior high school has a role to play in broadening occupational horizons. This can be done in part by helping pupils know what it feels like to work in a wide variety of occupations. The noncollege bound, and perhaps especially those from low socio-economic groups, need to have a realistic picture of the range of jobs, job satisfaction, training choices, and job trends.

Two additional arguments for the teaching of occupations in classes are that it is economical and more students can be reached. Figuring on a per pupil cost basis, a considerable amount of money is saved by presenting occupational information in groups. Also, when a counselor has a heavy ratio of students, the class in occupations will reach many that otherwise may not have received any information.

Baer and Roerber (2, p. 402) stated that group methods of presenting occupational information, which include both curricular and extra-class activities, are helpful to students and economical for the school.

ORGANIZATION OF A COURSE IN OCCUPATIONS

Who Should Teach Occupations

Stevens and Hoppock (25, pp. 213-216) reported that in a new course in Self-Appraisal and Careers, introduced in Worcester, Massachusetts, only certified counselors are permitted to teach it. They felt that the course cannot be taught by just anyone, who is available, because it is an individualized program to be conducted by experts in guidance techniques.

Hoppock and Stevens (12, p. 541) reviewed, with the help of the U.S. Office of Education, a list of 1,122 high schools that had reported having courses in occupations. The following comment was made on one of the surveys, by Laurence B. Kenyon, Davenport High School, Iowa: "A course like this should be taught by members of the counseling staff. Teaching a group guidance course gives the opportunity to become much better acquainted with counselors." One of the conclusions of their review was that courses in occupations should be taught by certified counselors, who should counsel the students they teach.

Hoppock (10, p. 200) stated, "the absolute minimum training

for any person undertaking to teach occupations for the first time should include the following."

1. One course in principles and techniques of guidance.
2. One course in facts about jobs and where to get them.
3. One course in the methods of teaching occupations.

According to Baer and Roeber (2, p. 400-401) most states do not have certification standards for teachers of courses or units in occupations. Generally, the only prerequisite to teaching occupations courses or units is certification to teach any subject in the secondary curriculum.

In local schools the occupations course has all too often been an "orphan" which was adopted by the teacher who happened to have a free period in his teaching schedule. This has been due in part to the fact that, in professional literature and elsewhere, the school administrator has found little of value to guide him in selecting the teachers for the occupations curriculum.

Baer and Roeber also give the following general traits desired for teachers of occupations:

A teacher in the occupations curriculum needs a guidance point of view. An occupations teacher needs a wholesome attitude toward all occupations. The able teacher in the occupations curriculum works well with other teachers and with counselors, parents, students, and other members of the community. The competent occupations teacher is well adjusted personally. Another criteria for an occupations teacher is that they have had industry or business work experience, and that they have had training in occupational information.

Hoppock and Lowenstein (11, p. 274) reported in 1951, that classes in occupations taught by counselors equaled the number taught by social science teachers.

What Should A Course In Occupations Include

Several studies were found in regard to the frequency of occupations being taught, and at what level. Some courses were offered every day, where others might have been offered only once a week. It was discovered that the content of the course varied with the training of the teacher, the objectives of the course, and the goals of the total school program. Therefore what should a course in occupations include?

Hoppock (10, p. 180) says, the content of the course will vary with the purpose, the grade level, the school, the counselor, and the students. He also believed that if teaching of occupations is to be effective, one must face the fact that some things cannot be done in groups, and that group guidance provides a background of factual information only.

Glanz (9, p. 257) believes that group procedures can provide for somewhat generalized attacks on occupational orientation and at other times can assist in providing for individual variations from a norm pattern within a class or school.

Stevens and Hoppock (25, p. 214) report on a Job Relations course for ninth grade students who may soon drop-out, in the Cincinnati schools. It includes:

1. Survey of occupational fields.
2. New occupations.
3. Old occupations changing status.
4. What happens to drop-outs.
5. What kind of jobs do young people get.
6. Important things to look for in a first job.
7. When to change jobs.

8. How to create a part-time job.
9. How to apply for a job.
10. What is expected of you on the job.
11. Laws
 - A. child labor
 - B. social security
 - C. workmen compensation
 - D. wages and hours
 - E. related to girls and women
 - F. licenses
12. Activities
 - A. job experiences
 - B. role playing in applying for a job
 - C. practices in filling in applications blanks
 - D. industrial tours
 - E. state employment agencies

Billings (3, pp. 69-71) made the following suggestions for topics of study in a ninth grade occupations course.

- Unit....I. Educational and Vocational Guidance
1. The need
 2. Discussion of phrenology, character analysis, misleading advertisements, etc.
 3. Six guidance functions
 - A. Self-discovery
 - B. Accurate information
 - C. Choice
 - D. Guidance in preparation
 - E. Placement
 - F. Follow-up
- Unit...II. Our Changing World and Ourselves
1. Survey of the groups of workers that have developed.
 2. How society is based upon the cooperation of thousands of workers.
 3. Relation of level of skill or responsibility, to education and training.
 4. Study of typical organization, preferably local.
- Unit..III. The World of Work
1. A general survey
- Unit...IV. The Ethics of Vocational Life
1. Importance of attitudes
- Unit....V. The Relationship Between Educational and Vocational Objectives.
1. Education and training essential for vocational preparation.

Unit...VI. You and Your Education
 1. Opportunities available

Unit...VII. You and Your Future
 1. Relation between school plans and vocational interests.

Unit...VIII. Successful Work and Right Adjustments
 1. Relation between attitude and success.
 2. Making a life while making a living.

Hoppock (10, p. 7) believed that in preparing for a course in occupations, that counselors and teachers should work together. The counselor should know where the drop-outs and graduates of the school got their first jobs. The occupational interests and plans of school and college students often bear little relation to the employment opportunities of the area in which they will look for work.

Hoppock (10, p. 15-17) felt the student in an occupations class should know the following: needs differ; the range of opportunities; the sources of information; how to choose; how to find; and significant specifics.

Hoppock (10, p. 192) made a general summary, in order of importance, as to what should be included in selecting an occupation for study.

1. The occupations in which substantial proportion of former students have found employment.
2. Other major occupations in the geographical area in which drop-outs and graduates look for jobs.
3. Other occupations of interest to the students.

Burack (4, p. 21), the Supervisor of the Bureau of Pupil Personnel Services in the Chicago Public Schools, developed the following outline for group guidance units in the upper elementary school grades.

Unit...I - Getting the Most Out of School

- A. Looking at my school.
- B. Getting the most out of learning.

Unit..II - Self-Discovery and Evaluation

- A. Discovering out interests.
- B. Determining our personal characteristics.
- C. Exploring our problems as teen-agers.
- D. Discovering our abilities.

Unit.III - Discovering Opportunities for Self-Development

- A. Discovering educational opportunities.
- B. Discovering vocational opportunities.

Unit..IV - Getting Along with Others

- A. Making and keeping friends.
- B. Living with adults.
- C. Participating in community life.

The purpose of introducing vocational information in the unit above was twofold: First, generalized vocational goals and educational decisions for ninth grade are interrelated, and some exploration is necessary. Second, it is well known that ultimate vocational choices are the result of a succession of earlier choices and derive from the individual's knowledge of his opportunities. Vocational choice is a long process, not a single act of decision; the substance for the decisions should begin to be acquired long before it is needed.

Morris, Zeran, and Hatch (18, p. 119-120) believed that occupational information at the junior high school level should be aimed generally at providing information that will aid students to make future and general, rather than specific and immediate vocational plans. It is at this level that young people can begin:

1. To learn about broad fields of work,
2. To see the relationship of these fields to curricular choices. In the ninth grade the student is approaching a time when major educational decisions will have to be made. Soon the student will enter the more departmentalized

curriculum of the senior high, where specific high school subjects or an over-all school program may point toward a particular career goal.

3. To secure information about specific job employment. Students are rapidly nearing the age at which some leave school.
4. To understand the means for obtaining accurate, up-to-date information about the occupational world.
5. To understand the significance and scope of vocational planning.

Baer and Roeber (2, pp. 405-407) explained about their suggested three units of study for occupations, as follows:

Unit...I - Americans at Work

1. How can I get a picture of the world of work?
2. How are occupational fields affected by social and economic trends?
3. How can I learn the role of workers in a particular occupation?

Unit..II - Making Career Plans

1. How do I make educational and career plans?
2. How can I test my career plans?

Unit.III - Securing a Job and Progressing in It

1. How do I secure a job?
2. How can I hold a job and obtain satisfaction from it?
3. How can I improve myself on the job?

Unit I of the occupations curriculum deals with the ways in which Americans earn their living in different settings. The writers thought perhaps this unit could even be started in the elementary grades. Unit II of the occupations curriculum deals with the major problem of developing and testing career plans. The writers felt that this unit should be offered in the second semester of the ninth grade or the first semester of the tenth grade. Unit III of the occupations curriculum is essential to the educational program of every student and should be available to all before

they leave school. The writers felt, for most students, this is appropriate during the twelfth grade.

Several different outlines of study for an occupations course have been presented, but generally speaking they have mutual objectives. A school would have to determine their needs, their objectives, and how well they could best carry out the various suggested outlines.

Will Group Methods Work

The writer realized that many different procedures and methods of presenting occupational information existed, and several writers had expressed their ideas as to how occupational information could be given through group guidance or teaching. Even so, many people argue that the best method is through individual counseling. In the Junction City Junior High School, where the counseling staff is not large enough to assure that every student will receive this important counseling, the writer therefore feels group methods of presenting occupational information are essential, and that group methods can work.

Some correlating viewpoints and thought were found. As an example Glanz (9, p. 16) stated:

The deeply held prejudices of the past against "group guidance", are passing. Many persons have continued to work for group procedures through the years. Hoppock, Strang, Wrenn, and Bennett are all names that stood for the best practice and professional concern for all students through individual and group approaches.

Multiple approaches to guidance as well as a multiple philosophy of guidance provide a receptive environment for skilled and professionally oriented use of groups in guidance.

Warters (27, p. 3) gave this viewpoint.

Group work is a method or methods designed to help groups function in ways that will aid the achievement of desirable goals (group and individual) and contribute to good personal-social growth of the members.

In talking about group procedures in general, Strang (26, p. 18) made this interesting comment about the vocational value of group work in education.

Some group activities not only give information about vocations and offer try-out experiences in the fields of art, music, journalism, and the like; they also afford valuable experience in adjusting oneself to other people. Employers seek applicants who have been active in school and college organizations. Success in many vocations depends more on the ability to establish good relations on the job than upon initial possession of any specific vocational skill.

Cohn and Sniffen (5, p. 133) reporting on the effectiveness of group counseling with underachieving seventh grade boys, state that imparting information through group guidance techniques is very effective, but it is not the best method for dealing with a specific problem.

Leonard (14, p. 195) reports that students can, in a group situation, be helped to adjust their self-concept to reality, besides becoming more sure of what they want and what they can get.

Mercer (17, p. 14) believed that those giving vocational guidance should be fully aware that the individual needs to have experiences and learning of group relationships.

Gaither, Rackman, and May (8, p. 79) report that vocational guidance and occupational information are needed in the schools, and that the need and desire for group procedures exists.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In reviewing the teaching of occupations in the Junction City Junior High School, the writer found that it has been done somewhat in the same manner as many other schools and as writers have recommended it being taught.

Since the course in Vocations no longer exists, and occupational information is not being presented to the extent that it was, some recommendations about the further offering of occupational information in the Junction City Junior High School are made.

First, the teaching of occupations should be put back into a full-semester course, instead of a six-weeks unit.

Second, it should continue at the ninth grade level: 1) because of the need of the drop-outs; 2) because of the need for educational planning; and 3) because a later grade level is too late to be exposed to occupational information and start the process of changing thoughts so often.

Third, information about personal and social growth should continue, since getting along with others is a prime factor in succeeding on the job.

Fourth, the teacher should have a guidance point of view,

and be familiar with the world of work. One writer suggested that teachers of occupations have had the basic course in techniques of guidance.

The writer considers these recommendations sound and practical. The Vocations course could be offered on a semester basis without any major changes. The current textbook could still be used, because it fits well the desired course of study. In the past many junior high teachers have had a graduate course in guidance, a qualification to teach the course. If these people cannot be obtained, perhaps the counseling staff and administration could work out an in-service training program for the teachers. It is definitely desired that all teachers of occupations, within a school system, have united objectives and purposes of the course. Methods, means, and activities may vary, but the learning outcomes should be basically the same.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this report a brief history of the teaching of occupations in the Junction City Junior High School by the means of a course entitled Vocations was presented. It was found that the course in Vocations was developed by Mr. Marlin Schroeder, who was extremely interested in the dispensing of occupational information as a part of vocational guidance. Originally occupational information was presented in the homerooms, but after a two year trial this plan was found unsuccessful. Then a one semester course, required for all ninth grade students, was set up. This course continued through the late 1930's and throughout the 1940's, except it became an elective course and various social science teachers were assigned to teach it and they did not all follow the same pattern of study.

Around 1950 a standardized course of study for the teaching of occupations was developed. The course was a well designed guide set up by the guidance counselors. The writer taught this course in Vocations from 1957 to 1962, using the developed course of study. In 1962 the course Vocations was dropped from the curriculum, and a six-weeks study of occupations was included in a course in Citizenship. The Citizenship course was offered for a year, or could be taken for only a semester. Student's received occupational information only if they were in Citizenship the second semester. This plan cut the number of students down to about one-third of the ninth grade class who received any

study of occupational information.

The nature of the student body of the Junction City Junior High is unique, as its population is so transitory. The community of Junction City has little industry, with the main bulk of the workers in merchandising and providing services. Many people depend upon Fort Riley for their income and the largest single payroll within Junction City, for several years, has been that of the Board of Education.

In 1959 it was found that the occupational choices were limited within the community of Junction City, especially in the areas of semi-skilled, skilled, technical, and semi-professional workers. Indications were that many of the high school graduates were leaving the community in search of jobs.

A review of literature showed that many other schools in the nation were offering occupational information in the form of a course, similar to the course of Vocations as taught in the Junction City Junior High School.

The writer conducted a survey during the spring of 1963 to sample the reactions and feelings of former students towards the course in Vocations as taught in the Junction City Junior High School. All students who had completed classes in Vocations, were asked to complete a questionnaire. Ninety-two percent of the students reported studying occupations in general, but many felt they did not study enough occupations. Eighty-eight percent felt they had gained something from taking the course and 86 percent of the students felt the course was useful. Fifty-eight

percent of the students felt the course had had some bearing upon their present plans. The writer gained additional information about the students reactions toward the course in the form of comments that 27 percent of the students made, with a majority of them feeling the course should be continued.

In reviewing the reasons for teaching of occupations, some studies showed that the students who had completed a course in occupations earned more money and experienced more job satisfaction than those who did not have such instruction. Koppock (10, p. 326) in making a summary of some of his studies he had conducted said, "Courses in occupations measurably increased the subsequent job satisfaction and earning power of the students who went to work".

A future need for the teaching of occupations appears because of the great influx of people into the job market during the sixty's. By 1970 eighty-seven million people will be working full time. Of this group, 26 million will start to work during the time between 1960 and 1970. Therefore the schools must help 26 million youngsters work their way through this challenging decade, as occupational preparation will be a task of every American high school.

Instead of social science or other teachers teaching occupations, many writers feel that counselors or someone with guidance qualifications should teach the course.

Much has been said about what a course in occupations should include, but most writers agree that the content of an occupations

course should include information that best fits the individual schools needs. Before developing an occupations course, one should find out what information the students need and do not have. Most courses include information about 1) the world of work; 2) the making of career plans; and 3) how to find a job and succeed in it.

Group procedures of presenting occupational information have been questioned, but many responsible leaders have expressed themselves in favor of group procedures such as would apply to the teaching of Vocations in the Junction City Junior High School. As in any other method, one might well take the suggestion of Rosengarten (20, p. 531) and test the hypothesis that group procedures will work.

The writer recommended that the course in Vocations be put back into the curriculum of the Junction City Junior High School, and that teachers with a guidance point of view and qualifications be assigned to teach it.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the review of studies about the teaching of occupations. One is that the course in Vocations, as offered in the Junction City Junior High School prior to 1962, was a sound and worthwhile course in comparing it to similiar courses being taught elsewhere. This report has brought out a need for a more extensive follow-up study to be made in order to more accurately measure the effectiveness of the Vocations course.

A weakness in the course as taught was that in many cases

persons who did not really care about the course were assigned to teach it.

A real need for an occupations course will continue to exist. One writer reported that entry of the increasing number of young people into the labor force during the decade of the 1960's will occur simultaneously with a rapid expansion in the occupations that will require the most education and training, therefore making wise choices all the more essential.

Indications are that the course in Vocations in the Junction City Junior High School has been well accepted and can meet a need which exists in the school and community. The proposed course in Vocations should be restored to the curriculum of the Junction City Junior High School and taught by teachers with guidance qualifications who desire to teach such a course.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Acknowledgment is given to Dr. H. Leigh Baker for his patience, cooperation, and assistance in the preparation of this report.

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APPENDIX

COURSE OF STUDY IN VOCATIONS
 JUNCTION CITY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

I. YOUR FUTURE AND YOU

- A. What your job means
- B. Your outlook on life
 1. The basis for happiness
 2. Avenues of happiness
 3. Criteria of worthy enjoyment
 4. Personal worth
 5. Values and goals
- C. Society and you

II. UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF

- A. Your physical self
- B. Your emotional self
 1. Attitudes
 2. Feelings and emotions
 3. Fear and worry
- C. Your personality
 1. What is included in personality
 2. Factors which affect personality
 3. Personality factors you like most in others
 4. Personality factors you dislike most in others
 5. Importance of personality traits
- D. Some problems of adjustments
 1. Inferiority complex
 2. Superiority complex
 3. Rationalization
 4. Your crowd
 5. Developing social skills
 6. Prejudice
 7. The vocational significance of personality
- E. Your intelligence
- F. Your aptitudes
- G. Your temperament
- H. Your interests
- I. Factors affecting your vocational choice
- J. The role of testing in discovering yourself

III. CHARTING A VOCATIONAL DIRECTION

- A. General view of the occupational world
- B. High School and you
- C. Investigate yourself
 1. Your life goals
 2. Where would you like to work

3. Under what conditions would you like to work
 4. Physical limitations
 5. Certain personal characteristics go with certain jobs
- D. Investigate all fields
 - E. Choose your job
 - F. Training for your vocation
 1. College
 2. Other training possibilities
 3. Sources of information about college and training
 - G. Improvement of your present capital
 - H. Special problems

IV. DETAILED STUDY OF AN OCCUPATION

- A. History and importance
- B. General considerations of the occupation
 1. Kind of work done
 2. How the work is done
 3. Working environment
 4. Responsible to whom
 5. Type of co-workers
 6. Comparative salaries
 7. Advancement
 8. Monotony of work
 9. Physical abilities needed
 10. Security
 11. Equipment needed other than training
 12. Areas of best opportunities
- C. Related Occupations
- D. Training required
- E. Advantages and disadvantages of the occupation
- F. Why do you think you can succeed in the occupation
- G. Your references

V. YOUR INTELLECTUAL CAPACITY IN RELATIONSHIP TO A VOCATIONAL LEVEL

- A. Inventive or genius
- B. Professional
- C. Skilled
- D. Semi-skilled
- E. Manual or unskilled
- F. Possible vocations on the basis of your grades

VI. YOUR PERSONALITY IN RELATIONSHIP TO A VOCATIONAL LEVEL

- A. Major executive position
- B. Minor executive position
- C. Position of average responsibility

- D. Routine positions
- E. Positions of your choice with desired environment

VII. OBTAINING THE JOB YOU WANT

- A. Finding the vacancy
- B. The personal data sheet
- C. The application blank
- D. Letters of application
- E. The interview

VIII. PROGRESSING IN YOUR VOCATION

- A. Special considerations on entering the world of work
- B. Understanding the life of work
- C. The role of labor unions
- D. Factors of why men fail
- E. Factors of achieving you aims
- F. The maturing outlook

STUDENT SURVEY

TO FORMER VOCATIONS STUDENTS: If you completed the course of Vocations in the ninth grade, of the Junction City Junior High School, I would like for you to carefully answer the questions below. The information gained from this questionnaire will be used in a Master's Report study, and for the evaluation of the course in Vocations.

All information will be held confidential and used for study purposes only. I will certainly appreciate you taking the time to fill this form out. Thank you very much.

Dale Stinson
Guidance Counselor
Junction City Junior High School

Name _____ Class of 65, 64, 63
Did you take the combination courses of Citizenship and Vocations, or Vocations and Drivers Education? _____
What is your present curriculum in senior high school?
General _____ College Prep. _____
Check one of the following for your present plans of the future.

1. College _____
2. Private training or trade school _____
3. Business college _____
4. Work _____ Any job _____ A job you have training for _____
5. Plans unknown _____

The following questions will be general questions about the Vocations content. Answer them "yes" or "no", if you did the following in the class you were in.

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Study occupations in general. | yes | no |
| 2. Study a specific occupation. | yes | no |
| 3. Study more than one occupation. | yes | no |
| 4. Write a term paper about an occupation. | yes | no |
| 5. Study the training and schooling for a certain job. | yes | no |
| 6. Study the future and outlook of a certain job. | yes | no |
| 7. Study characteristics and causes of personality. | yes | no |
| 8. Study ways and methods to improve personality. | yes | no |
| 9. Study causes and effects of a code of values. | yes | no |
| 10. Study causes and the meaning of a code of values. | yes | no |
| 11. Discuss dating, dress, and manners. | yes | no |
| 12. Study the skills of getting along with others | yes | no |
| 13. Become acquainted with interview methods and applications. | yes | no |
| 14. How to make college application and study of admission requirements. | yes | no |
| 15. Study scholarship information. | yes | no |
| 16. Study senior high school enrollment procedures. | yes | no |

STUDENT SURVEY (concl.)

The following questions ask for your opinion about the course. Answer them to the best of your ability.

17. Do you feel that taking the course of Vocations had any bearing upon your present or future plans? yes__no__
18. Did you like the course and feel that it was useful? yes__no__
19. Did you feel that you gained anything from taking the course? yes__no__
20. If you care to make any comments about the course, you may do so on the remaining space.

THE TEACHING OF OCCUPATIONS
IN THE JUNCTION CITY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

by

LAWRENCE DALE STINSON
B. S., Southwestern College, 1957

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

School of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1963

Approved by

Major Professor

In this report a brief history of the teaching of occupations in the Junction City Junior High School by the means of a course entitled Vocations was presented. The course in Vocations was required for all ninth grade students and they received one-half unit of credit for completion. This course was introduced about 1937 and later became an elective course.

Around 1950 a uniformed course of study for the teaching of occupations was developed by the guidance counselors. In 1962 the course Vocations was dropped from the curriculum and a six-weeks study of occupations was included in a course in Citizenship.

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In 1959 the writer conducted a survey and found that the occupational choices were limited within the community of Junction City, especially in the areas of semi-skilled, skilled, technical, and semi-professional workers. Indications were that many of the high school graduates were leaving the community in search of jobs.

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The writer conducted a survey during the spring of 1963

to sample the reactions and feelings of former students towards the course in Vocations as taught in the Junction City Junior High School. Ninety-two percent of the students who completed a questionnaire reported studying occupations in general but many felt they did not study enough occupations. Eighty-eight percent felt they had gained something from taking the course and 86 percent of the students felt the course was useful. Fifty-eight percent of the students felt the course had had some bearing upon their present plans. The writer gained additional information from comments that 27 percent of the students made, with a majority of them feeling the course should be continued.

In reviewing the reasons for teaching of occupations some studies showed that the students who had completed a course in occupations earned more money and experienced more job satisfaction.

A future need for the teaching of occupations appears as 26 million young people will start to work between 1960 and 1970.

Many writers feel that counselors or someone with guidance qualifications should teach occupations.

In reviewing what writers think should be included in a course of occupations it was found that most courses include information about 1) the world of work, 2) the making of career plans, and 3) how to find a job and succeed in it.

Group procedures of presenting occupational information have been questioned, but many responsible writers have expressed themselves in favor of the method.

Indications are that the course in Vocations in the Junction City Junior High School has been well accepted and can meet a need which exists in the school and community. The writer recommended that the proposed course in Vocations should be restored to the curriculum of the Junction City Junior High School and taught by teachers with guidance qualifications who desire to teach such a course.