

A STUDY OF THE TEACHING OF OCCUPATIONS  
IN HIGH SCHOOLS OF THE UNITED STATES

by

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## INTRODUCTION

Since one of the trends of the modern secondary schools is to prepare young people to find their places in the vocational world, the problem concerning the best principles and methods of teaching occupations in high schools is of ever-growing importance. The fact that occupational information may be presented to groups of students in a variety of different ways tends to further confuse those individuals responsible for this important procedure, in that no one best method for presenting occupational information to groups of students has been found. It is very important that the students of the high schools be given the opportunity to study occupations in order that the best choices possible can be made by each of them.

### Statement of the Problem

It is the purpose of this study (1) to give a brief history of the teaching of occupations in secondary schools of the United States; (2) to determine current practices employed in the teaching of occupations; (3) to determine effective methods of presenting occupational information as a separate course; (4) to report means of integrating occupational units within a subject field; (5) to determine effective methods of presenting occupational information via extra-class group activities; (6) to summarize effective use of occupational information in the counseling interview; and (7) to determine effects that the teaching of occupations in high schools have had on influencing proper

choices and adjustments for individual students. It is the author's desire to explain at this point that he is reviewing the historical development of the teaching of occupations but is limiting reports on practices and research to the years following World War II.

### Importance of the Study

The wise choice of an occupation requires accurate information about what occupations are available, what they require, and what they offer. Since occupational information alone is not enough, it is necessary for an individual to know his own aptitudes, abilities, interests, limitations, fears, likes, and dislikes. It is obvious, however, that knowledge of oneself can be applied to the choice of an occupation only when one knows something about occupations.

A review of the different methods for presenting occupational information to high school students since World War II is highly important in that the more effective methods can be chosen and can then be applied to the teaching of secondary school youth.

### Definition of Terms Used

Guidance. The task of the guidance program is to facilitate the adjustment of the school to the pupil and the adjustment of the pupil to the school and to life Froehlich (9), p. 11.

Counselor. The word "counselor" is used in this report to designate anyone who is trying to help another person to choose

an occupation or to get occupational and educational information.

Occupational Information. This term is used in this report to mean any and all kinds of information regarding any position, job, or occupation, provided that the information is potentially useful to a person who is choosing an occupation.

## HISTORY OF OCCUPATIONAL OFFERINGS IN HIGH SCHOOLS

### Brief History of the Teaching of Occupations

In his research for the history of the teaching of occupations, the author found that no courses in occupations were actually taught until the beginning of the twentieth century. Brewer (3), p. 124, reported that the first known course in occupations was taught in 1908, at Westport, Connecticut, by George H. Boyden, high school principal, at the suggestion of Superintendent William A. Wheatley.

The following chronological history on the teaching of occupations can be found in the History of Vocational Guidance by John M. Brewer (3), pp. 37, 31, 77, 81, 176, 103.

In 1836, Edward Hazen in The Panorama of Professions and Trades, a book published in Philadelphia, recommended including in the schools a course on occupations.

In 1899, John Sidney Stoddard wrote a book on What Shall I Do? "---in the form of reports on a series of imaginary school classes in which the advantages and disadvantages of fifty different occupations were studied."

In 1910, Louis P. Nash in Boston proposed "a course of study upon occupations." This proposal was included in the 1911 annual report of the superintendent of schools.

In 1913, the Boston School Committee established a vocational information department which sent to the schools "a plan for a course in vocational information one half hour per week, open to all graduating classes from the eighth grade and all others thirteen years old or over."

In 1915, the first issue of the Vocational Guidance Bulletin, now The Personnel and Guidance Journal, was published. W. Carson Ryan, Jr., was the editor. He was also secretary of the National Vocational Guidance Association. The longest item in the first issue "commented on an article by Supt. W. A. Wheatley of Middletown, Connecticut, 'A Course in Vocational Information in a Small City'" from the March, 1915, School Review.

In 1916, Ginn & Company, Boston, published Occupations by E. B. Gowin, instructor in economics at Wesleyan University, and Superintendent W. A. Wheatley. This was the first textbook for classes in occupations to achieve widespread use. It was written for boys' classes; it was later revised by Brewer and extended to cover mixed classes of boys and girls.

In 1925, in New Haven, Connecticut, "Marie McNamara began an intensive attempt at guidance through the home-rooms of a junior high school...." The program included carefully prepared lesson plans, demonstration lessons by the supervisor, observation and supervision. "It was early discovered, however, that occupational information could not be given effectively by home-room teachers, and special regular classes in that subject were provided."

Hoppock (12), p. 450, gave the following chronological history on the teaching of occupations from 1938 to the present:

In 1938, the public schools of Chicago, Illinois, introduced their elective course in self-appraisal and careers for high school seniors, to be taught only by teachers trained in guidance.

In 1949, The U. S. Office of Education reported 158,098 students enrolled in courses in occupations from grades 7 to 12.

In 1952, the public schools at Worcester, Massachusetts, introduced their elective course in self-appraisal and careers for high school juniors and seniors, to be taught only by certified counselors who have time reserved for individual counseling with the students in the course. Harvard, Brown, Dartmouth, and M. I. T. accepted the course



for college entrance credit.

In 1953, Cuony reported that high school alumni who had had a senior course in job finding and job orientation were better satisfied with their jobs and earned more money than comparable students who had not had the course.

In 1955, Lowenstein reported that college freshmen who had had a high school course in occupations made a better adjustment to college than comparable students who had not had the course.

In 1957, Cuony reported a five-year follow-up of the students who had his course in job finding and job orientation. They were still superior in job satisfaction and in earnings to comparable students who had not had the course. During the fifth year the students who had had the course also suffered less unemployment. All differences between the two groups were greater at the end of the fifth year than at the end of the first.

#### Reasons for Teaching Occupations

Probably no one statement has been quoted more often in the literature of vocational guidance than the following by Parsons (21), p. 5.

In the wise choice of a vocation, there are three broad factors: (1) a clear understanding of yourself, your attitudes, your aptitudes, your abilities, ambitions, resources, limitations, and their causes; (2) a knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work; (3) true reasoning on the relations of the two groups of facts.

The author feels that in order to acquire these factors it would be necessary for an individual to have a background of factual occupational information such as one might gain through an occupations course. Lowenstein and Hoppock (16), p. 443, claimed that occupations courses are not in vain as they force



students to think of their future, to think of their potential abilities, to think of information about training or educational possibilities, and to think about the world of work.

Cuony and Hoppock (6), p. 389, found that a course in job finding and job orientation resulted in greater job satisfaction and increased earnings for those students who had taken the course.

Hoppock (12), p. 176, gave the following as reasons for teaching occupations:

- It saves time in giving the same information to students.
- It provides a background of related information that improves counseling.

- It gives the counselor an opportunity to know his clients better.

- It focuses collective judgment on common problems.

- It provides some assurances that the problem cases will not monopolize the counselor's time.

- It can be provided without increasing the school budget.

- It may permit a part-time counselor to spend full time on guidance and thus to become more competent.

- It keeps the counselor up to date.

- Counselors recognize the need for it.

#### Occupations Courses Titles

Since World War II not only has there been a trend for more occupations courses to be offered in high schools but also there has been a variety of occupations courses titles used in the different high schools of the United States. Hoppock and Lowenstein (13), p. 275, found the following titles to be the most popular among schools teaching occupations courses:

Occupations, Occupational Orientation, Vocational Information, Vocational Civics, Self-Appraisal and Careers, Social Problems, The World at Work, Career Determination, Career Opportunities, Career Problems, Guidance, Human

Relations, Trades and Industries, Introduction to Occupations, Living in a World of Work, Making a Living, Occupational Classification, Orientation and Sociology.

#### Occupations Courses Offered in Various Sections

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

According to figures which appear in the Biennial Survey of Education in the United States 1948-1950, recently released by the U. S. Office of Education, courses in occupations now enroll more high school students than many of the more traditional subjects such as economic geography, trigonometry, solid geometry, German, office practice, retailing, salesmanship and advertising, journalism, and consumer education. More than 5000 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.

Sinick and Hoppock (27), p. 328, reported research from several states on the teaching of occupations in The Personnel and Guidance Journal. The following is a summary of their research:

In 1952-53, Pennsylvania reported occupations either as a subject or as a unit within a subject field or as being integrated into subject fields. These courses were taught in the various grade levels as follows: 21% of the seventh grades; 31% of the eighth grades; 60% of the ninth grades; 32% of the tenth grades; 35% of the eleventh grades; and 61% of the twelfth grades.

In 1953, 99 Montana schools replied to questionnaires, and 30 of the schools indicated some instruction relative to occupations.

From 298 high schools of South Dakota in 1952-53, 152 had offerings in career planning, occupations, or guidance activities.

In Illinois of 594 public high schools in 1951-52, 77

schools used an occupations course.

In Wyoming two-thirds of the schools in that state offered occupations courses during 1951-52.

Based upon a small sample of its schools, the state of Mississippi indicated that in addition to occupations units in industrial arts, English and social studies courses, occupational information is offered in about one-half of the schools through separate courses.

#### PRACTICES EMPLOYED IN THE TEACHING OF OCCUPATIONS

In reviewing the literature of techniques employed in the teaching of occupations in high school, the author found that the four major practices of presenting occupational information were the following: occupational information taught as a separate course in the school curriculum; occupational information taught as units within a subject field; occupational information via extra-class group activities; and occupational information in connection with the counseling interview. Sinick and Hoppock (26), p. 88, reported a study by Evelyn G. Rimel on current practices of teaching occupations in 327 small public high schools under 300 enrollment. The following indicate practices that Miss Rimel found:

##### Films

- Unbound current vocational file
- Occupations course
- Supervised excursions
- Library reading list on occupations
- Materials on trade opportunities
- Career or college days
- Bulletin board display
- Outside speakers at assemblies
- Occupational units in social studies
- Vocation stress in subject fields
- School paper covers vocations

### Occupations Taught as Separate Courses

Requirement and Credit. The author found that opinions differ as to whether occupations courses in high school should be required or elective. In general, Hoppock (12), p. 178, found that courses in occupations which are offered at the junior high school level appear to be required more often than they are elective. Courses offered in senior high school and college appear more frequently to be elective.

Replies from 255 high schools which offer courses in occupations revealed to Hoppock and Stevens (14), p. 540, the following information:

Grade	Number having elective courses	Number having required courses
12	58	23
11	42	9
10	31	22
9	27	88
8	1	30
7	1	6

Hoppock (12), p. 179, reported that the more common practice appeared to be to give credit for courses in occupations on the same basis as for other academic subjects.

Space in the Curriculum. The author is convinced that no one who really hopes to see education improved is impressed by the argument that no new subject can be added because the curriculum is already filled. When responsible authorities desire it, a new elective subject can be added to any curriculum.

Hoppock and Stevens (14), p. 540, reported the total number of clock hours per occupations course varied from 6 to 216. The median figure was 82, and the range of the middle 50 per cent was from 66 to 86 hours per course.

Even college preparatory students usually have room for a few free electives, and Lowenstein and Hoppock (17), p. 21, reported that college freshmen who had a course in occupations as high school seniors made better grades in college than students from the same school who did not have the course.

When To Teach Occupations Courses. Hoppock (12), p. 180, declared that the appropriate place to teach occupations is just before or at the time that large enough numbers of persons will need and want substantially the same kind of occupational information as a background for individual counseling. The appropriate places are likely to be the following:

Last term preceding the point at which substantial numbers of students terminate their full-time schooling. Local statistics on dropouts provide the best basis for locating this point. Likely points are:

- Last term preceding attainment of compulsory school age
- Last term of elementary school
- Last term of junior high school
- Last term of senior high school whether academic, vocational, or comprehensive

- Last term of college, junior college, technical institute, business school, etc.

- Last term of graduate school

There may be two or more points in any school at which the dropout rate is high enough to warrant a course in occupations.

Heus and Wood (11), p. 290, reported that in the state of New York the general recommendation seemed to be to offer a

unit devoted to occupational orientation in the ninth year social studies course; and, if possible, follow this by an occupational study in the senior year.

What To Include. Hoppock (12), p. 187, found that the first rule in planning an occupations course is not to try to do too much, and perhaps the second rule is to let the students help plan the course.

Lowenstein and Hoppock (16), p. 442, suggested that objectives for the occupations course should be: occupational information; student appraisal; techniques of getting and holding a job; adjusting the student to the school curriculum; and student surveys of occupational opportunities in the local community.

Hoppock (12), p. 192, expressed the fact that occupations selected for study should include the following, in order of importance:

The occupations in which substantial proportions of former students have found employment; other major occupations in the geographical area in which drop-outs and graduates look for jobs; other occupations of interest to the students.

Splaver (29), p. 18, found after investigating the contents of occupations books that they should be comprehensible and interesting, for freshmen and seniors alike stressed the value of the books being written in simple language which all high school students could understand and in such style as to make the readers feel they are having a personal chat with the author. Splaver also stated that freshmen and seniors likewise believed that duties, qualifications, preparation, hours of work, and advantages



and disadvantages of the work are very important components of occupational books.

Wright (35), p. 32, received the following information as to the content of occupational courses in Illinois secondary schools:

1. Relationship between school life and occupational life and the importance of particular subjects.
2. The development of wholesome attitudes toward occupational requirements and rewards.
3. How to understand and improve one's own personality.
4. How to study.
5. How to conduct oneself during an interview for a job.
6. How to select an institution for further education and/or training.
7. Where and how to obtain information about openings.
8. How to fill out an application blank for a job.
9. How to write a letter of application.
10. How to use information gained from tests of intelligence, aptitude, interests, and abilities to help solve occupational problems.
11. How people differ physically, mentally, and socially.
12. Information about apprentice training--method of entry, length of training, trades in which used.
13. Qualities which have helped people to attain success.
14. Conditions and trends in occupational groupings, such as: professional and semi-professional; clerical and sales; service; agriculture, forestry, and fishery occupations; and skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled occupations.
15. Information about military service.
16. Relationship of workers and their interdependence.
17. Basic human needs and how they affect occupations.
18. Socio-economic factors related to occupations.
19. How to make and use a community survey of occupational opportunity.
20. Legislation affecting workers.
21. How to write an autobiography and use it as an aid in making occupational choices.

Teachers for Occupations Courses. Hoppock (12), p. 198, gave the following opinion on who should teach occupation courses:

The twenty-fourth yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators recommends one full-time counselor



to every 200 students in the secondary school. Several states now require counselors to be certified in guidance. Such certification usually required training in occupational information and how to present it. The counselor thus trained is the person to teach the course in occupations.

In a study made by Lowenstein and Hoppock (16), p. 442, one found that the number of occupations classes taught by guidance counselors exceeded the number taught by social studies teachers.

McKown (18), p. 253, in his Home Room Guidance declared flatly, "The study of occupations is a very highly specialized subject and cannot be adequately handled by the average home room sponsor."

Teaching Techniques Employed in Different Sections. The author found the following study on teaching methods by Sinick and Hoppock (25), p. 447, to be of interest:

Three studies have been found which attempt to determine the relative effectiveness of two or more teaching methods of occupations. Of a number of practices employed by 16 Missouri public high schools, reading of occupational books and pamphlets was the only one which showed a significant positive relationship with high scores on an occupational information test.

Another study, after rotating four techniques so that four high school classes used each method once and then testing all 444 pupils on information learned about the four vocational fields covered, found that all critical ratios indicated true differences between the test means obtained after the different methods of instruction. The order of efficiency of methods was (1) speakers; (2) visitations; (3) pamphlets; and (4) films.

Another study in evaluating the one-semester, three-credit occupational development course required of all freshman at San Francisco State College found that students and instructors alike rated lecture lowest among the general activities and rated highest group discussions, films, guest speakers, and field trips the last two having been arranged for special interest groups.

Sinick and Hoppock (25), pp. 147-148, reported the ranking of various techniques according to extent of reported use:

2112 seniors in 16 Missouri public high schools--career day, 62%; occupational books and pamphlets, 56%; industrial visits, 53%; instruction in occupations, 46%; school supervised work experience, 16%.

252 New Jersey public secondary schools--movies, 87%; speakers, 78%; subject-matter courses, 72%; industrial visits, 64%; occupations courses, 36%.

339 Michigan schools--visual aids, 93%; industrial visits, 61-70%; occupational units in other courses, 65%; occupational courses, 34%; career conference, 33%; work experience for school credit, 30%; occupational surveys, 26%.

227 New England and Middle Atlantic independent secondary schools for boys--industrial visits, 29%; group study of occupations, 23%; career days, 21%.

114 Washington state public schools--films, 82%; pamphlets and books, 77%; bulletin boards or posters, 75%; class reports, 63%; career books, 62%; industrial visits, 40%; vocational clubs, 12%; hobby clubs, 11%; "Dutch Uncle" plan, 11%; radio broadcasts, 11%; home-room discussions, 32%.

Lowenstein and Hoppock (16), p. 441, reported the use of guest speakers and career conferences as the most frequently reported special technique in occupations courses.

In addition to the usual class discussions and preparation of career books, job-getting techniques were taught in seven schools by having the pupils write job reviews and letters of application, rehearse job interviews, and analyze want ads.

Six schools reported that students worked in committees conducting library research, interviewing job holders, and reporting to the class in panel discussions.

Other techniques were the making of occupational charts by pupils, buzz sessions, socio-drama, and career "wheels."

Public schools of Newark, New Jersey made a color

motion picture of students participating in a job visitation program in which high school seniors spent a day visiting jobs and observing workers in their chosen fields. The same system also broadcasts over the school radio tape recordings of different occupations discussed employment and recreational facilities.

Wright (35), p. 32, gave the following summary of teaching techniques, procedures, and materials in the Illinois secondary schools:

1. Intensive individual study of one or more occupations selected by each student.
2. Counseling by a trained counselor in connection with the course.
3. Use of movies, slides, and filmstrips to provide information about occupations.
4. Have each student match his own characteristics with those of a particular occupation.
5. Self-appraisal through the use and interpretation of standardized psychological tests.
6. Practice filling-out application blanks and writing letters of appreciation.
7. Use of speakers representing occupations in which they are successfully employed.
8. Field trips and visits to places of work.
9. Close study of as many occupations and/or occupational fields as possible.
10. Student reports based on interviews with workers.
11. Career conferences.
12. Conduct practice job interviews in the class.
13. Class survey of the occupational opportunities in the community.
14. Committee study and reports on occupational fields.
15. Have class members write letters to business concerns in order to obtain information about occupational opportunities.
16. Obtain occupational information through biographical studies.
17. Follow-up study of previous students made by the class.

Hoppock (12), p. 202, believed the follow-up technique of teaching occupations had the advantage of human interest, live material, and direct contact with original sources. It may be used for an entire course, a part of a course, or a club program

independent of any course.

#### Occupations Units Within a Subject Field

Some schools have introduced occupational information units into various subject fields. Wright (35), p. 33, reported that more schools in Illinois are teaching occupational information through units in separate courses than through a separate course in occupations. The majority of these units are either in English or social studies classes. Units in other courses are taught most frequently in the eleventh and twelfth grade.

Hoppock (12), p. 305, declared that from evidence available, the results of occupations units introduced in social studies and English classes appear disappointing. He stated that M. E. Lincoln in a study completed at Harvard University found that the teaching of occupations through English produced even poorer results than a home-room program. Lincoln, however, did find that high school students who received educational and vocational information as part of a course in English added more to their knowledge than did students who received such instruction in home-rooms and in separate classes which met five times a week.

In New York State occupational information units were for several years included in the course of study approved for social studies classes. Hoppock (12), p. 305, mentioned the fact that D. Hartley of the New York State Education Department reported that twenty-one of thirty-three schools with counselors had occupations units in social studies. These guidance units were

left to the individual teachers and were taught according to their interest in the subject. Many counselors were only partially satisfied with the occupations units in social studies and some of the teachers of the units indicated they passed over them as quickly as possible.

Hoppock (12), p. 305, reported that W. C. Hoy in a survey of Pennsylvania secondary schools found that in schools where units on occupations were included in other subjects, 40 per cent of the principals expressed satisfaction with the results; in schools which had separate courses in occupations, 76 per cent were satisfied.

#### Occupational Information via Extra-class Group Activities

Audio-visual Aids. There are other methods of teaching or supplying occupational information to individuals other than those methods described in previous sections of this report.

Recordings. Kenyon (15), p. 131, has reported how one high school, its staff and students, a radio station, and local industries cooperated to prepare recorded descriptions of local employment opportunities and requirements. All recordings were made at the factories and included the normal factory noises as sound effects. The recordings were used in the course in occupations. Hoppock (12), p. 289, reported that one instructor prepared colored slides of fifty local occupations and recorded on tape a synchronized commentary describing duties, training,

and working conditions.

Exhibits. Kenyon (15), p. 131, produced an "Opportunity Day Career Exhibit" for which local industrial, professional, and labor groups provided materials. The entire exhibit was placed in the high school gymnasium. The displays were housed in booths which varied in size from 8 by 8 to 16 by 60 feet. Students were invited to inspect these displays during free periods. Evening hours were provided for parents and for visitors from other schools

Bulletin Boards. Hoppock (12), p. 291, claimed the counselors who use bulletin boards to display occupational information should place the board where it will be seen and passed frequently by large numbers of students. Only one item should be posted at a time. Items should be changed frequently. Use short captions in big letters that can be read from a distance. Occasionally post something amusing--a cartoon, a joke, or an anecdote.

Motion Pictures. Hoppock (12), p. 293, suggested that students and teachers with 8 or 16 millimeter motion-picture cameras might make a homemade motion picture on beginning jobs in their community or a film on how to hunt a job. He also claimed that several commercial companies have produced film and filmstrip expressly for vocational guidance. The most widely advertised of these is the "Your Life Work" series produced by Vocational Guidance Films, Inc., Des Moines, Iowa. Hoppock reported the fact that the most complete list of educational films on all subjects was the Educational Film Guide which described 11,000 16-millimeter pictures.



Television. Goedke (10), p. 278, reported the use of fifteen-minute television programs picked up in school classrooms, preceded by fifteen minutes of class discussion. One program for high school seniors showed good and poor job interviews. Hoppock (12), p. 295, claimed the principal advantage of educational television was in reaching a larger audience than can go on a plant tour or participate in a group conference, but the disadvantage appeared to be the fact that there was a lack of active pupil participation and the inability of the audience to ask questions of those who appeared on the screen.

Group Conferences. The group conferences resemble a press conference; however, in place of reporters, there are students seeking information for their guidance. Their questions are answered by one or more persons who have the information that students want. This technique may be used to get information about occupations, employers, unions, schools, colleges, and other subjects. Hoppock (12), p. 252, claimed the group conference had certain advantages over other techniques in that it provided direct first-hand contact with primary sources of up-to-date information. He declared the chief disadvantage was the fact that the guest may be a dull or poorly informed individual. He might be biased by limited experience, prejudice, age, success, or failure.

Career Day. The career day is a variation of the group conference. Several speakers are invited for the same day and



assigned to as many classrooms. Each guest makes a speech and answers questions about his occupation. Hoppock (12), p. 307, believed that a career day was inferior to a series of group conferences, spread over several weeks and months. Students can attend only one or two meetings in one day if just a Career Day is held while they can attend any number of group conferences held on different days.

**College Night.** This is another variation of the group conference. Hoppock (12), p. 309, believed this was even worse than a career conference because every speaker had a selfish interest in the outcome. Hoppock reported a suggestion by R. G. Ross, State Department of Education, Des Moines, Iowa, that if a college-day or night type of activity is to be held in the school, it should be broadened to include all types of training situations. Students should learn about trade training, apprenticeships, and business schools as well as about colleges and universities.

**Assemblies.** Assembly speakers are sometimes used to present information about schools, colleges, and occupations. Hoppock (12), p. 309, stated the fact that this form of group conference was inferior because it required too many students to sit through lectures in which they were not interested.

**Clubs.** Many high schools have a career club program which is, in effect, a course in occupations on an extra-curricular basis. Members of a career club might conduct a follow-up study of school alumni. Hoppock (12), p. 217, claimed two advantages for the

follow-up study:

(1) It has no geographical limits; it goes wherever the alumni go, and it maps the true geography of the employment market for this group. (2) It reveals the kinds of jobs that the alumni have been able to get in the open competition of the employment market.

Another particularly appropriate technique in the study of occupations for the career club to use is that of the plant tour. A survey of beginning jobs in their community is another good project for a career club.

Field Trips. The field trip which would include plant tours is another means of getting students to absorb information about occupations. An entire course may be taught by this technique alone, it may be used to add variety to a course taught by other methods, or it may be used independently of any course.

Miller (19), p. 374, remarked that students can make significant gains in information about occupations through the use of occupational films followed by discussions or job visits. The visitation group in a controlled experiment by Miller, in addition to significant gains in occupational information, showed unique gains not experienced by the film group. These gains were in occupational stability and in the decrease in non-choice of an occupation, based on pre- and post-experience data.

Hoppock (12), p. 219, maintained that the purpose of the plant tour was to give students an opportunity to see, hear, feel, and smell the environment in which they may work if they choose any occupations observed. He claimed the conducted tour presents

important factual information in a way that is easy and pleasant to absorb.

Hopcock (12), p. 220, reported the following potential sources of employment should be considered for plant tours:

Retail stores, restaurants, and hotels, telephone company, railroad and bus companies, garage and service stations, electric light and gas companies, cleaning and dyeing firms, building and general contractors.

Publications. Several public school systems have prepared series of occupational pamphlets. Some schools prepare summaries of local wage scales and employment opportunities in the specific occupations for which their school offers training.

Splaver (28), p. 371, claimed the phrase "sugar-coated occupational information" is often descriptively applied to career novels. She described career novels as book-sized fictional tales of the "girl meets boy--girl loses boy--girl wins boy again" variety with information regarding the occupation of the hero or heroine interwoven into the tale. Splaver believed if the occupational information in the career novel was accurate, up-to-date, and authentic, this form of occupational literature might play a significant role in stimulating these readers to search for further information in the non-fiction career books. Splaver also reported that the two foremost series of career novels are the Dodd, Mead Career Books published by Dodd, Mead and Company, and Julian Messner Inc.'s Romances for Young Moderns.

Other Means. Hoppock (12), p. 296, reported several schools have had students write and produce one-act plays designed to teach something about guidance. He also mentioned the fact that he had seen some very good dramatizations of right and wrong ways to apply for a job.

Role Playing. This is a kind of dramatization without a script, sometimes without an audience. Each actor is told to pretend that he is a certain character with certain problems, interests, motives, needs. Each actor improvises his own conversation as the action proceeds. The action may take the form of an interview between a client and a counselor, a student and parent, a student and an employer or employee. Hoppock (12), p. 297, stated that role playing was often used to give students classroom practice in applying for a job, the teacher or another student playing the role of employer.

Cuony and Hoppock (6), p. 389, used a form of role playing in his practice job interviews with local employers.

Libraries. Hoppock (12), p. 301, suggested that students might be more likely to use a library if they knew that it contained something they wanted and if they were acquainted with the personnel and with the procedure for using the library's resources. He, therefore, suggested that a library tour be used to acquaint students with vocational materials in the library.

## Use of Occupational Information in the Counseling Interview

General Aspects. Hoppock (12), p. 160, reported the fact that the basic problem in all vocational counseling is to help the client to find out what he hopes to get from his job, what he has to offer in exchange for what he hopes to get, and in what occupations he will have the best chance of getting what he wants. Super (32), p. 92, stated the following:

Vocational guidance is the process of helping a person to develop and accept an integrated and adequate picture of himself and of his role in the world of work, to test this concept against reality, and to convert it into a reality, with satisfaction to himself and benefit to society.

Tyler (33), p. 177, claimed an important function that occupational information needed to serve in the counseling process was the injection of as much realism as possible into an individual's thinking.

Baer and Roeber (1), pp. 425-426, suggested the following categories of possible uses of occupational information in the counseling interview:

**EXPLORATORY USES:** Occupational information used to help the counselee to make an extensive study of the world's work or selected fields of occupations. These uses are similar to those recommended for exploration in the occupations curriculum....

**INFORMATIONAL USES:** Occupational information used to aid the counselee to make an intensive study of a few occupations. These uses are similar to those described... for the occupations curriculum.

**ASSURANCES USES:** Occupational information used by the counselee to assure himself that he has made an appropriate choice of vocation or that he has abandoned an inappropriate vocational choice.

**ADJUSTIVE USES:** Occupational information used to assist the counselee to gain the insight necessary to change attitudes

and ultimately to change his plans from an inappropriate to an appropriate vocational choice.

**MOTIVATIONAL USES:** Occupational information used to arouse the counselee's interest in schoolwork or in vocational planning.

**HOLDING USES:** Occupational information used as a means of holding the counselee until he gains some insight into his real needs and into his behavior.

**EVALUATIVE USES:** Occupational information used to check the accuracy and adequacy of the counselee's knowledge and understanding of an occupation or family of occupations.

**STARTLE USES:** Occupational information used to see if a counselee shows signs of certainty or uncertainty after he chooses a particular vocation.

Clark and Murtland (4), p. 459, stated the counselor should encourage the counselee to discriminate in the use of published information by pointing out that some material had not been gathered from first-hand sources, was out-of-date, or was presented with some bias.

Hoppock (12), pp. 162-174, reported that one of the most common uses of occupational information in counseling was to answer questions raised by clients. These questions might concern the following: employment prospects, nature of the work, work environment, qualifications, unions, discrimination, preparation, advancement, earnings, number of workers, distribution of workers, likes and dislikes, hours, vacations, and stability of employment.

Contribution of Client-centered Counseling to Vocational Counseling. Hoppock (12), p. 113, summarized the non-directive or client-centered approach as follows:

The non-directive counselor seeks to understand, accept, reflect, and clarify the feelings of the client; the



counselor scrupulously refrains from directing the conversation, expresses no approval or disapproval, and generally seeks to focus his own and his client's attention upon the feelings being expressed by the client rather than upon the intellectual content of what he says.

Hoppock (12), p. 115, stated that client-centered counseling was developed by social workers and clinical psychologists whose major interest was in the internal emotional conflicts of anxious, unhappy persons. Client-centered counseling was not designed to help a person to find out where he could get a job or what kind of activity any specific occupation involves. Client-centered procedures were intended to help remove emotional obstacles to the perception and acceptance of reality, which obstacles may prevent a person from thinking clearly even when all pertinent facts are available to him. These procedures can be helpful in vocational counseling; they were never intended to do the whole job of vocational counseling.

Combs (5), p. 261, stated that non-directive techniques appeared to have particular applicability to vocational counseling in the following situations:

1. As a preliminary interview technique....
2. When the level of aspiration shows marked variation from demonstrated ability or when there is a wide discrepancy between expressed and measured interests....
3. When the pre-counseling information from testing, observation, or reports from others indicates a pressing social, emotional, or personal problem....
4. Whenever it is necessary for the client to make decisions....
5. Whenever it is necessary to deal with parents.

Rogers (22), p. 252, stated that for the individual who was vocationally confused or educationally maladjusted, or whose



personal conflicts were resulting in vocational and educational failures, a client-centered type of counseling had a great deal to offer.

Directive Approach. In contrast to the non-directive approach is the directive counselor who assumes responsibility for directing the interview, he asks questions, he answers questions, he supplies information and suggestions. He may or may not tell the client what he thinks the client should do. Williamson (34), p. 236, believed the counselor's function was to suggest possible occupations commensurate with the student's aptitude. Brayfield (2), p. 495, claimed that any use of occupational information should be preceded by individual diagnosis.

Strang (31), p. 120, stated that when the counselor had information which the counselee needed to move forward in his thinking, why should he withhold it? Knowing the client better than other persons know him and recognizing his readiness, the interviewer should offer the information at the psychological moment.

Current Practice. Hoppock (12), p. 116, claimed that it was now fairly common practice for a counselor to begin all interviews non-directively and continue in this manner until the nature of the problem was identified. If it then appeared that the problem was one of emotional conflict, the counselor might continue non-directively. If it appeared the problem was

caused by lack of information, the counselor might help the client to get the needed information. If the problem involved both emotional conflict and a lack of information, the counselor might try to help the client with both aspects of his problem.

Hoppock also claimed that we were still a long way from knowing what was the most effective techniques of vocational counseling. He stated that on the basis of present knowledge it appeared that neither directive nor non-directive procedures was wholly satisfactory.

Rusalew (24), p. 88, believed the growing emphasis in psychological factors in vocational guidance did not minimize the role of occupational information. Occupational information has greater meaning when it is related to the emotional life of the client. Rusalew believed when this information was related to feelings that it became most effective in achieving aims of counseling. He stated the closer the proximity of the individual to the actual job of his choice, the greater would be the helpfulness of the occupational information gained in aiding clients to select occupations, to confirm realistic choices, and to negate unrealistic vocational decisions.

#### EVALUATING THE RESULTS OF TEACHING OCCUPATIONS IN HIGH SCHOOL

From the results of his research, the author has found that a number of studies have been devoted to evaluating the results of teaching occupations in high school. The following are

specific results from a number of research projects.

Cuony and Hoppock (6), p. 389, taught a course in job finding and job orientation to an experimental group of thirty-five high school seniors in Geneva, N. Y. One year after graduation he compared them with an equated control group from the same school. The students who had had the course were better satisfied with their jobs than those who had not had the course. The combined annual earnings of the experimental group exceeded those of the control group by \$7,719; the course cost \$1,542.

Cuony and Hoppock (7), p. 116, found that after five years the students who had had the course were better satisfied with their jobs than those who did not have the course; the difference between the groups was greater. During the first year after graduation the combined annual earnings of the experimental group exceeded those of the control group by \$7,719. During the fifth year after graduation the difference was \$14,226. The course cost \$1,542. During the first year there was less unemployment among students who had had the course than among the control group, but the difference was not statistically significant. During the five years there was still less unemployment among the experimental group; this time, however, the difference was significant at the 1 per cent level of confidence. If given a choice of any job in the world 55 per cent of the experimental group would choose their present jobs, while only 17 per cent of the control group would do so.

Lowenstein and Hoppock (17), p. 21, taught a course in occupation

to college-bound seniors at James Madison High School in Brooklyn, N. Y. One year after graduation he compared them with an equated control group from the same class of the same school. The students who had had the course made a higher grade-point average during their freshman year in college, despite the fact that they reported spending less time in study. More of the experimental group participated in extra-curricular activities.

Nick (20), p. 264, found the occupational plans of eleventh- and twelfth-grade students were brought into closer harmony with employment opportunities when information about local employment opportunities was presented to them through school assemblies and through group and individual conferences.

Recktenwald (22), p. 220, found that high school seniors after studying occupations which they liked changed their attitudes toward related occupations which they had previously said that they disliked.

Edmiston and Scrivner (8), p. 262, compared four methods of presenting occupational information to high school students. Using tests of occupational information as the criterion, they found the order of efficiency of the four methods to be speakers, visitations, pamphlets, films.

Hoppock (12), pp. 328-329, reported the findings of M. E. Lincoln who found that when the occupational plans of high school students were compared with certain items of information about the students and their preferred occupations, and when the

appropriateness of occupational plans was judged by the investigator, the students judged to have the best plans were those who had had both a course in occupations and individual counseling. When the measured mental ability of high school students was compared with the estimated mental ability required in the occupations of their choice, the students whose choices appeared to be most appropriate were those who had received individual counseling plus group instruction in educational and vocational information in classes which met five times a week. Next best were the students who received counseling without instruction, next were the students who received neither, and last of all were the students who received counseling plus instruction once a week. The occupational choices of ninth-grade students who had had both a course in occupations and individual counseling included nearly twice as many different occupations as did the choices of students who had received individual counseling without the course and the choices of students who had received neither.

Hoppock (12), p. 330, reported that Lincoln also found that high school students in courses on educational and vocational information which met five times a week learned more than students in similar classes which met once a week. The latter group learned more than pupils who studied educational and vocational information in home-rooms. High school students who received instruction in educational and vocational information as part of a course in English added more to their knowledge of

occupations than did a control group of students who received no instruction.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this report the author gave a summarization of the teaching of occupations in high schools since World War II. In his research the author found that no courses in occupations were actually taught until the beginning of the twentieth century. Since World War II an added emphasis has been placed in high schools upon occupations courses and upon occupational information offered to groups and individuals through various other means. Total enrollment in occupations courses exceeds 150,000 and every state, with the sole exception of Nevada is listed as having occupations courses in some of its schools.

The four major practices of presenting occupational information were the following: occupational information taught as a separate course in the school curriculum, occupational information taught as units within a subject field; occupational information via extra-class group activities; and occupational information in connection with the counseling interview. Hoppock (12), p. 327, reported that separate courses in occupational information, which met five times a week for one semester, were measurably more effective than home-room programs or English courses as mediums for the presentation of occupational information.

There were many effective methods of presenting occupational



information as a separate course. The content of the course in occupations varied with the purpose, the grade level, the school, the counselor, and the students. The author found the first rule in planning a course is for one not to try to do too much, and perhaps the second rule is to let the students help plan the course. Hoppock (12), p. 327, stated that more high school principals were satisfied with the results of courses in occupations than were satisfied with occupational units in other courses.

Although results appeared disappointing when occupational information units were integrated as units within a subject field, the teacher who has or will get accurate information about employment opportunities in his own field can be a real asset to the counselor and students.

The author summarized several effective methods of presenting occupational information via extra-class group activities. These were: audio-visual aids, which included exhibits, bulletin boards, motion pictures, and television; group conferences, which included career day, college night, and assemblies; clubs; field trips; publications, which included career novels; and other means, such as role playing and libraries. Hoppock (12), p. 327, stated that with high school students, speakers and visitations were more effective than pamphlets and films.

Since the basic problem in all vocational counseling is to help the client to find out what he hopes to get from his job,



what he has to offer in exchange for what he hopes to get, and in what occupations he will have the best chance of getting what he wants, the use of occupational information in the counseling interview is very important. This report summarized the contributions of client-centered and directive approaches to vocational counseling. It also reviewed current practices. Hoppock (12), p. 161, stated the justification of the counselor's existence is found, not in his ability to solve all problems or to help all people, but in his ability to give enough help to enough people to be worth what he costs.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the research studies evaluating the results of teaching occupations in high schools. Several research projects successfully proved that courses in occupations measurably increased the range of occupations in which students were interested. It was found that the occupational choices of ninth-grade students who had had both a course in occupations and individual counseling included nearly twice as many different occupations as did the choices of students who had received individual counseling without the course and the choices of students who had received neither.

One investigator showed that students who had had a course in job finding and job orientation were better satisfied with their jobs and earned more money than comparable students who had not had the course. He found the combined annual earnings of the group who had taken the course exceeded the earnings of those who had not

taken the course by a total of \$7,719. This same investigator also found that after five years the students who had had the course were still superior in job satisfaction and in earnings to comparable students who had not had the course. During the fifth year the students who had had the course also suffered less unemployment. All differences between the two groups were greater at the end of the fifth year than at the end of the first.

Courses in occupations, with emphasis upon local opportunities for employment, brought occupational choices into closer harmony with employment opportunity but failed to bring them into closer harmony with measured abilities. Hoppock (12), p. 326, claimed that psychological testing plus individual counseling brought occupational choices into closer harmony with measured abilities of the students but failed to bring them into closer harmony with employment opportunity.

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A STUDY OF THE TEACHING OF OCCUPATIONS  
IN HIGH SCHOOLS OF THE UNITED STATES

by

ROBERT JAMES SIGG

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AN ABSTRACT OF  
A MASTER'S REPORT

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requirements for the degree

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1958

It is the purpose of this study (1) to give a brief history of the teaching of occupations in secondary schools of the United States; (2) to determine current practices employed in the teaching of occupations; (3) to determine effective methods of presenting occupational information as a separate course; (4) to report means of integrating occupational units within a subject field; (5) to determine effective methods of presenting occupational information via extra-class group activities; (6) to summarize effective use of occupational information in the counseling interview; and (7) to determine effects that the teaching of occupations in high schools have had on influencing proper choices and adjustments for individual students.

A review of the different methods for presenting occupational information to our high school students is highly important in that the more effective methods can be chosen and can then be applied to the teaching of secondary school youth.

In writing this report the author used the procedure of reviewing published literature in the field of teaching occupations in high schools available at the Kansas State College, Ottawa University, and Topeka Public libraries.

In his research the author found that no courses in occupations were actually taught until the beginning of the twentieth century. Since World War II there has been an added emphasis placed in high schools upon occupations courses and upon occupational information offered to groups and individuals through various other means. Total enrollment in occupations courses exceeds

150,000 and every state, with the sole exception of Nevada is listed as having occupations courses in some of its schools.

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Several conclusions can be drawn from the research studies evaluating the results of teaching occupations in high schools. Several research projects successfully proved that courses in occupations measurably increased the range of occupations in which students were interested. It was found that the occupational choices of ninth-grade students who had had both a course in occupations and individual counseling included nearly twice as many different occupations as did the choices of students who had received individual counseling without the course and the choices of students who had received neither.

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