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AN APPROACH TO CURRICULUM
DEVELOPMENT IN NINTH- AND TENTH-
GRADE ENGLISH AT AMELIA HIGH
SCHOOL AMELIA, VIRGINIA

Eleanor C. Reid
Longwood University

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This thesis has been read and approved by the following examiners:

Foster B. Gusham

Edgar M. Johnson

Helen L. Page

August 18, 1966

AN APPROACH TO CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
IN NINTH- AND TENTH-GRADE ENGLISH
AT AMELIA HIGH SCHOOL
AMELIA, VIRGINIA

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts in Education
Longwood College

by Eleanor C. Reid
August, 1966

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The need for a curriculum guide in English at Amelia High School has existed over a long period of time. At the time of this writer's employment in September, 1955, the principal gave only one directive which in any way might limit the teacher's own freedom of choice within the prescribed textbooks for her assignment of eighth- and tenth-grade English: "Begin where the children are." It was explained that students of Amelia High School came, for the most part, from rural homes of limited economic and cultural resources and that, in the past, only a very small percentage--perhaps five per cent--of its graduates had entered college.

Classes were sectioned in order to accommodate scheduling problems for students, but homogeneous grouping of any kind was considered by the administration to be undemocratic. Two teachers devoted full time to the teaching of English, and English classes over and above the teaching load of these two were assigned to teachers whose primary teaching responsibilities were in other fields more or less related to English. Departmental organization as usually understood did not exist, although certain deference was shown to the junior- and senior-English teacher, who had seniority.

The year's work on each grade level was divided into two semesters--one labeled "Grammar" and the other, "Literature"; and promotion in grades nine through twelve was on a semester basis. Failures in the

fall semester were more frequent than those in the spring--a condition caused partially, at least, by a rather prevalent (and perhaps realistic) belief among many students, "I like literature--I can get it, but I can't get grammar." Failure during the regular school year necessitated the student's repeating of the course either in summer school or in the subsequent school year.

In the summer of 1956 or 1957, three of the teachers of English held an informal conference--perhaps two hours in length--and decided tentatively upon certain areas in grammar which would be given emphasis in each grade level. Other than that, however, each teacher was expected to operate with relative freedom and independence. Such was the state of planned curriculum development in English--or lack of it--at Amelia High School until, in the latter part of May, 1965--ten years, several Sputniks and other spacecraft, two superintendents, two principals, and numerous frustrations (for both students and teachers) later, the principal of the school requested that the two full-time teachers of English cooperate in the formulation of an English curriculum for Amelia High School--the project to be completed during a month of extra employment in the summer. The assignment was carried out, but at its conclusion both teachers were aware that short advance notice, limited resources, and lack of adequate time for thorough investigation or reflective thinking all combined to restrict the real effectiveness of the product.

Realizing a personal need for more thorough planning in the assigned areas of ninth- and tenth-grade English and for an elaboration of the "skeleton" curriculum as devised in 1965, the writer has continued during the past year to consult various sources of up-to-date

professional information in an effort to bring her own teaching assignment within the pale of current curriculum practices in well-established school systems in various parts of the country. This thesis is a result of that study.

CHAPTER II

SETTING

Amelia High School, a public-utility educational facility, had an enrollment in 1961-62 of 262 students distributed among the grades as follows:

Grade 9-97

Grade 10-96

Grade 11-97

Grade 12-72

The school is located in the centrally-located village of Amelia Court House, Virginia, whose population was reported in 1960 as 270. The location of Amelia County (population in 1960, 1,713, about half of whom are white and the other half, Negro)--approximately thirty-five miles south-west of the state capital, Richmond, and only recently bypassed by a new four-lane highway--makes it relatively convenient for some of the large-corporate concerns to industrial plants in that area, but at least ninety per cent of the students of Amelia High School are children whose parents derive their principal income from dairying, tobacco-farming, or lambasting, or from activities somewhat related to the agricultural and lumber industries, respectively. The parents are from homes where the 24-hour periods are engaged in such occupations as teaching, the ministry, insurance, banking, or other business enterprises.

CHAPTER II

SETTING

Amelia High School, a public county educational facility, had an enrollment in 1965-66 of 262 students distributed among the grades as follows:

Grade 8--57

Grade 9--56

Grade 10--39

Grade 11--58

Grade 12--52

The school is located in the county-seat village of Amelia Court House, Virginia, whose population was reported in 1960 as 800. The location of Amelia County (population in 1960, 7,815, about half of whom are white and the other half, Negro)--approximately thirty-five miles southwest of the state capital, Richmond, and only recently by-passed by a new four-lane highway--makes it relatively convenient for some of its wage-earners to commute to industrial plants in that city, but at least ninety per cent of the students of Amelia High School are children whose parents derive their principal income from dairying, tobacco farming, or lumbering, or from activities somewhat related to the agricultural and lumber industries, respectively. The others are from homes where one or both parents are engaged in such occupations as teaching, the ministry, insurance, banking, or other business enterprises.

The county Court House, with its spacious lawn and monument to the Confederate Dead, dominates the view in the central part of the village, but nearby are the post office, the drug store, several grocery stores, a small department store, the barber shop, a hardware store, a small variety store, the bank, a law office, a beauty shop, a shoe shop, two or three appliance stores, and two or three insurance offices. Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal churches are located in the village, but membership ranges downward from 362 in the Amelia Baptist Church to about fifty in Christ Church Episcopal. Many of the students enrolled in Amelia High School attend churches outside the village where the membership is very small.

Bus transportation to and from Richmond is rather conveniently scheduled, but most of the travel to Richmond and all of that to other nearby points--Petersburg, Crewe, Blackstone, Farmville, and Powhatan--is necessarily done by private means. A passenger train which formerly operated between Danville and Richmond served Amelia, but that was discontinued several years ago.

Most of the recreational activities in the community are related in some way to the school program--chiefly interscholastic sports. A private club with golf course and swimming pool is available to a few of the students whose parents maintain membership in the club, but for movies, bowling, skating, or other forms of entertainment and recreation, the students must go outside the county, since there are no local facilities to meet these needs.

It is to this local situation, then, as described in the preceding paragraphs, that the problem of curriculum construction must be addressed.

Amelia High School is a far cry from the ideal high school envisioned by Dr. James B. Conant--a high school of sufficient enrollment to insure a graduating class each year of at least one hundred persons.¹ As in the case of many similar secondary schools, its prescribed units in English are designated simply as English 8, English 9, English 10, English 11, and English 12. One elective course--World Literature--is offered to seniors whose previous work in English has been of above-average quality. Amelia High School is not likely to expand significantly in either enrollment or teaching personnel within the foreseeable future. It remains a small rural high school preparing its students for college, for business school, for technical school, for the workaday world, and, above all, for citizenship in a democracy. Herein lies not the plight, but the opportunity, of the teacher.

Within the over-all picture, there have occurred four major changes pertinent to curriculum development, especially in the field of English.

First, there has been--since Sputnik I--a significant increase in the number of Amelia High School graduates who have entered college. In fact, a high point was reached in 1964, when more than fifty per cent of the June graduates entered college. Thirty per cent of the 1965 graduates were accepted in colleges of their choice, and approximately twenty per cent of the 1966 graduates are currently expecting to enter college. Practically all who have entered college have been able to maintain their academic work in a creditable manner; and some, upon their graduation from college, have assumed positions of leadership, responsibility, and influence--not only in Virginia but in other states as well.

¹James B. Conant, The American High School Today (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959), p. 77.

Because of the dearth of opportunities for business and professional growth within Amelia County, a great many graduates of Amelia High School have moved elsewhere; but those who have remained within the county are established as respected citizens and are making worth-while contributions to community development.

A second change has been the elimination, approximately five years ago, of the promotion-by-semester plan in English. The year's work is no longer divided into "Grammar" and "Literature," but all phases of the subject are unified within each grade level as eighth-, ninth-, tenth-, eleventh-, and twelfth-grade English. Promotion is on an annual basis, then, and depends upon the average of the grades for the two semesters.

The third change has been brought about by the decision by the present administration in 1965 to group English students homogeneously, depending upon their stated goal--college or non-college. Occasional scheduling problems have prevented perfection in making these class assignments, but on the whole it has been possible to carry out the student-goal concept of homogeneous grouping.

The fourth and most radical change--a program of individualized developmental reading--is so broad in scope and offers such opportunities for improvement that a rather full discussion is given here.

In 1966, Amelia County qualified under Title I of Federal Aid to Education for a summer instructional program to be designated as "Operation Catch-Up" and to be administered in the interests of educationally deprived students--especially children of kindergarten age and those students in grades 1-11 whose records showed below-average achievement in the language arts. One of the two local centers was established at Amelia High School.

In a seven-day workshop prior to the beginning of the summer program, teachers were given an intensive course of instruction in methods of instruction in remedial reading by two consultants from the McGuffey Reading Clinic, University of Virginia. Never before had funds been available for supplementary teaching materials at Amelia High School, but financial aid under the Title I program has made possible the purchase of a wide assortment of up-to-date materials, selected by the reading specialists, for an individualized developmental reading program suited to the needs of the summer students and appropriate also for use throughout the regular school year.

Here at last has appeared a bright ray of hope to relieve the frustration of teachers who had recognized intuitively that many of the high school students--especially in the non-college group--were, in varying degrees, lacking in ability to perform satisfactorily in high school subjects for which only one text in each course was selected to serve all students, regardless of goal or ability. Not even homogeneous grouping had relieved the problem of wide ranges of difference in reading ability among students within each class.

In the summer workshop, teachers were instructed in various methods of diagnostic testing to ascertain the approximate reading level and instructional level of any student: an informal reading inventory, basic sight word lists, standardized achievement tests. Heretofore only scores from standardized IQ tests administered in the fourth grade had been available, together with those from the Iowa Silent Reading Test in the seventh grade and from the Differential Aptitude Test in the eighth grade. Even if these test scores had been entirely satis-

factory from a diagnostic point of view, it would still have been an instructional task requiring super-human ability to cope with the problem of adjusting the single basic text in each subject area--especially a literature text--to the needs of many widely different students who, by the time they reached high school, might already be reading one or more years below grade level.

As diagnostic procedures have revealed deficiencies in various phases of the pupils' ability and preparation, it has been possible for the teacher to concentrate on the correction of these specific deficiencies by the assignment of appropriate high-interest, low-difficulty materials designed to strengthen a wide variety of skills in reading comprehension and rate, vocabulary development, spelling, and study skills.

Prominent among the remedial materials available are various grade-level units of the SRA Reading Laboratory² which enables students, after placement determined by proper diagnostic testing, to proceed independently in a multi-level, developmental reading program based on the premise that each student can progress successfully within the bounds of his own individual capacity and rate. Comprehension and vocabulary skills are built into the program so that the need for direct classroom instruction by the teacher is eliminated. This feature enables the teacher to provide, then, for use of the laboratory materials by individual students, small groups, or an entire class as the need may arise. A most commendable feature of the program is that students respond

² Don H. Parker, SRA Reading Laboratory (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1963).

well to it and apparently take pride in checking their own work, recording their own scores, and maintaining a day-by-day check on their own progress.

The SRA Reading Laboratory provides not only for reading improvement through its "Power Builders" (for comprehension and vocabulary development) and "Rate Builders" but also for direct training and practice in listening and note-taking skills. This phase of the program is not only a boon to the classroom teacher who labors to capture and maintain the attention of her students for instructional purposes but also a significant contribution to the education of citizens in a democracy, the very survival of which depends in large measure on responsible reaction to the spoken word.

Practice materials other than the SRA Reading Laboratory are also available, and especially attractive is the wide assortment of appealing books for recreational reading. These books, designated by the reading consultants under the term HILD (high-interest, low-difficulty) materials, have met a vital need on the part of many students of Amelia High School who have on numerous occasions felt defeated by library books which, if sufficiently interesting to teen-agers, were too difficult to provide real enjoyment. Especially heartening to the teacher during the summer program has been the change on the part of many students from "Do I have to make a book report?" to "May I get another book?"

The changes described above have all helped to bring about a situation which much more nearly provides the setting and the practical means by which a teacher can respond positively to the instruction given several years previously, "Begin where the children are."

CHAPTER III

GOALS

It will be the purpose of this study to set forth, with appropriate explanatory comments, a cumulative, sequential curriculum in English to meet the needs of ninth- and tenth-grade students--both college-bound and non-college bound--of Amelia High School. The first step in carrying out this purpose will be to set up pertinent goals.

There sometimes exists, especially on a local level in a small-school situation, the tendency to oversimplify the goals of teaching English. It is necessary to crystallize, as has been done by John S. Lewis and Jean C. Sisk, major objectives which serve as a basis of mutual understanding between the teacher and the lay public:

1. To develop in students such competence as they are able to achieve in the use of the English language, including the ability to express their thoughts clearly in sentences and paragraphs and to convey exact meanings through discrimination in the choice of words.
2. To develop competence in those reading skills necessary for the performance of school tasks and for the use of reading an instrument of personal enlightenment and enjoyment.
3. To teach students how to write simply and effectively.
4. To teach students to listen attentively and analytically.
5. To help students evolve standards of appreciation that will lead them to choose the best among books and periodicals, radio and television programs, stage and motion picture drama.

6. To give students practice in critical thinking, gathering and examining factual data, evaluating accurately, and organizing ideas for clear presentation to others.
7. To provide students with the opportunities for creativity on the level of their individual capacities.¹

For the fulfillment of her students' best interests as well as for the renewal of her own inspiration--which at best is sometimes taxed, to say the least, the teacher must herself be constantly aware of more precise details within these major items and must keep her horizons broad and comprehensive. To this end, a statement of goals formulated by the Commission on the English Curriculum of the National Council of Teachers of English is presented:

1. Cultivation of Wholesome Personal Living

- A. Sense of values.
- B. Perspective on oneself and one's time.
- C. Extension of experience so as to be good company for oneself as well as good company for others through such habits as continued personal reading of high quality and skill in social letter-writing and conversation.
- D. Ability to use the cultural resources in one's community, including the library, radio, television, motion picture, theater, and public platform.
- E. High degree of competence in the basic skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
- F. Intellectual curiosity and creativeness (so far as possible) in all four of the language arts.
- G. Capacity for logical and critical thinking in expression of ideas and in acceptance or rejection of ideas of others.
- H. Personal integrity in thought and expression.
- I. Intelligent consumption of goods and services because of sensitivity to the denotation and connotation of words; that is, sales resistance without becoming a nuisance as a purchaser;

¹John S. Lewis and Jean C. Sisk, Teaching English 7-12 (New York: American Book Company, 1963), pp. 43-44. (Adapted)

emotional discount for unsubstantiated superlatives in advertisements and sales talks; alert attention to "small print" in contracts, guarantees, and cautions on how to use a product.

2. Development of Social Sensitivity and Effective Participation in Group Life

- A. Sensing values in the current scene and their relation to the contributions of past and future.
- B. Recognition of the dignity and worth of every individual.
- C. Control of one's prejudices so as to avoid giving offense or blocking important group action.
- D. Skill in the language arts of persuasion, cooperative planning, discussion, and decision.
- E. Recognition of the social and psychological factors involved in communication with people of different backgrounds.
- F. A sense of responsibility for critical (as well as imaginative) reading and listening in order to understand and appreciate elements in American culture and in that of other nations.

3. Linguistic Competence Necessary for Vocational Efficiency

- A. Following and giving directions.
- B. Keeping up with technical knowledge in one's occupation.
- C. Maintaining effective interpersonal relationships: employer-employee, employee-employee, employer-public, employee-public.
- D. Developing needed skills in business letter-writing, in persuasion and exposition, and in techniques of interviewing.²

²Commission on the English Curriculum of the National Council of Teachers of English, The English Language Arts in the Secondary School (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956), pp. 44-45. (Quoted in this thesis from Geneva Hanna Pilgrim, Learning and Teaching Practices in English (New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education [No date given]), pp. 79-80.)

CHAPTER IV

SCOPE OF THE ENGLISH PROGRAM

The scope of the English program in a small rural high school will, of necessity, be limited by several factors--especially the lack of elective offerings; but perhaps the situation at Amelia High School is not so completely bleak as Dr. James B. Conant might fear when he states the following:

The enrollment of many American public high schools is too small to allow a diversified curriculum except at exorbitant expense. The prevalence of such high schools--those with graduating classes of less than one hundred students--constitutes one of the serious obstacles to good secondary education throughout most of the United States. I believe such schools are not in a position to provide a satisfactory education for any group of their students--the academically talented, the vocationally oriented, or the slow reader. The instructional program is neither sufficiently broad nor sufficiently challenging. A small high school cannot by its very nature offer a comprehensive curriculum. Furthermore, such a school uses uneconomically the time and efforts of administrators, teachers, and specialists, the shortage of whom is a serious national problem.¹

By the adaptation of carefully selected units of instruction, it seems possible to provide subject matter in English characterized by variety and interest which can enrich the preparation of high school students beyond the point of minimum essentials. The problem is to set up a sequential and cumulative program tailored to meet the needs of both college-bound and non-college-bound students.

¹Conant, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

In its report, "The English Language in American Education," the special Modern Language Association Committee on Trends in Education defined as follows the scope of English for the college-bound:

The work for college preparatory students should stress the special abilities in English expected of students in higher education, such as the ability to organize and report on a fairly extensive investigation, to follow and take accurate notes on a lecture, and to read with discrimination literary and technical works of mature thought. It should also stress a basic understanding of the forms of language and literary communication, as well as the development of linguistic habits. The student should, for example, be able not only to read well but also to discuss what he reads in the usual terminology of literary analysis, and not only to write an English sentence but also to discuss it in the accepted vocabulary of English grammar.²

The Committee on English of the College Entrance Examination Board is even more direct in its recommendation "That the scope of the English program be defined as the study of language, literature, and composition, written and oral, and that matters not clearly related to such study be excluded from it."³

On the other hand, the special committee of the Modern Language Association describes as follows English for non-college students:

The basic abilities to clarify and communicate thought in straightforward spoken and written English and to gain meaning readily through listening and reading are needed by high school graduates in college and out.
 . . . The work in English for students who are not going to college should stress, first, the fixing of habits desirable in the student's personal out-of-school life, such as the habit of using libraries and reading for pleasure and knowledge even when not urged to by

²Committee on Trends, Modern Language Association, "The English Language in American Education," Issues, Problems, and Approaches in the Teaching of English, ed. George Winchester Stone, Jr. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1961), p. 150.

³Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board, Freedom and Discipline in English (New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1965), p. 13.

a teacher; and second, any special linguistic skills needed in the vocation which he intends to enter. . .for example, the student who plans to be a secretary should be sure to develop the ability to spell and punctuate correctly and to copyread what he has written.⁴

In order that the writer's idea of the scope of the program may be made clear, each segment of the subject matter--language, literature, and composition--will be presented separately. However, it should be understood that, insofar as possible at the instructional level, compartmentalization of subject matter should be avoided.

Language

Only a few short years ago it would have been relatively easy to decide upon a course of action with regard to the language phase of the English curriculum. Quite glibly the teacher might have repeated with a few variations the language instruction which had been the basis of her own preparation one brief generation ago. Quite neatly could she have pieced together parts of speech, conjugations of verbs, declensions of pronouns, and prescriptive rules, rules, rules, for this and that--formal instruction in what is now labeled "traditional grammar." Language research in recent years, however, has enlarged and enriched the concept of language in high school to include not only grammar but also studies in the nature of language itself.

Grammar

Not only has the field of language been enlarged, but modern scholarship in the field of linguistics has brought teachers of English face to face with some disturbing challenges about the effectiveness of instruction in "traditional grammar."

⁴Committee on Trends, op. cit., p. 150.

As a representative of a profession committed to the instruction of twentieth-century youth--conditioned in every other facet of existence to expect academic excellence and scientific accuracy--the English teacher of today, regardless of personal preferences, cannot afford to disregard the findings of research, nor can she fail to familiarize herself with the "new English" so that she can establish and maintain a policy that will command respect within the profession and among her students as well.

Of course, it is only fair to state that a great deal of the current controversy over the content of English stems from various definitions of the term "grammar" plus the human tendency to insist on a clear-cut dichotomy--an "either-or" situation. Furthermore no advocate of either the traditional or the "new" grammar has minimized the necessity for guidance in the choice of expressions of standard usage in both speech and writing. Assuming that the reader of such an exposition as this will already be familiar with the various shades of meaning of the terms, the writer will refer simply to the three major designations as found in current professional literature: traditional grammar, structural grammar or linguistics, and transformational grammar.

What are the findings of research, then, that threaten to unseat traditional grammar, and what are the facts which make it unwise to make a clean-cut, radical change from traditional to structural or transformational grammar?

In answer to the first question, the following statements (the essence of which may be found in various current publications) are quoted:

- (1) On one matter research is clear. Students do not learn to write better by drilling in grammar exercises or learning prescriptive rules about formal grammar. Summaries of research on the relation of the knowledge of formal grammar and the ability to write have been accumulating for more than twenty-five years. They have been reported in the Encyclopedia of Educational Research in the editions published in 1941 and 1960.⁵
- (2) Research reveals that a knowledge of classificatory grammar has little measurable effect on the ability to express ideas accurately or precisely in writing or speaking. Grammatical errors are individual matters and are best attacked through individual instruction. Children and adolescents improve their sentences by having many opportunities, with the guidance of the teacher, for structuring their own thoughts into their own sentences.⁶
- (3) In view of the widespread agreement of research studies based upon many types of students and teachers, the conclusion can be stated in strong and unqualified terms: the teaching of formal grammar has a negligible, or, because it usually displaces some instruction and practice in actual composition, even a harmful effect on the improvement of writing.⁷
- (4) The study of grammar of any kind in isolation as a distinct discipline is of little value in helping students to learn to speak and write well. Especially the memorization of grammatical rules is not helpful in improving language skills. When grammar is taught, it should be functional. Inducing the rules from what one knows of usage is much more effective than trying to learn proper usage from a set of rules.⁸

⁵Mary Elizabeth Fowler, Teaching Language, Composition, and Literature (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1965), p. 131.

⁶Ingrid M. Strom, "Research in Grammar and Usage and Its Implications for Teaching Writing," Bulletin of the School of Education, Indiana University, vol. 36, September, 1960, p. 14. (Quoted in this thesis from Fowler, p. 131.)

⁷Richard Braddock et al., Research in Written Composition [a summary of findings based on an evaluation of 485 studies] (Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1963), p. 37. (Quoted in this thesis from Fowler, p. 131.)

⁸Leonard H. Clark, Raymond L. Klein, and John B. Burks, The American Secondary School Curriculum (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), p. 196.

- (5) The Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English in 1936 recommended that "all teaching of grammar separate from the manipulation of sentences be discontinued. . .since every scientific attempt to prove that knowledge of grammar is useful has failed."⁹

In view of these rebuffs to formal grammar taught in the traditional manner, one must be prepared also to answer the question, "But what about students who are going to college?" Again quotations are in order:

- (1) Nor is knowledge of technical grammar tested to any appreciable degree on college entrance examinations throughout the country, though such examinations are frequently cited to justify the teaching and testing of grammatical principles. Colleges and universities are interested in students' command and use of English. A recent study of 142 placement tests [David M. Litsey, "Trends in College Placement Tests in Freshman English," *English Journal*, Vol. 40, No. 5 (May, 1956)] reveals that only about 2 per cent of the items on college tests deal with problems in technical grammar, such as the identification of parts of speech, clauses, and phrases. Eighty-six per cent of the tests include no items on technical grammar. Almost eighty per cent of the items measure actual use of grammatical forms along with spelling and punctuation, a gain of fifteen per cent from a similar survey twenty years earlier. Where it is economically possible, institutions recognize the need for evaluating the writing of applicants and use an essay examination either as all or part of the test. Clearly the colleges believe that the emphasis in evaluation should be placed on ability to use English.¹⁰
- (2) Many teachers still hold misconceptions about college placement tests. Neither College Entrance Examination Board tests nor the tests given by individual institutions place emphasis on the ability to classify grammatical constructions. What they do stress is ability to distinguish poor constructions from good ones; those institutions that require compositions also emphasize the ability to compose coherent sentences in thoughtful, coherent paragraphs.¹¹

⁹"Grammar as Method," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, ed. Walter S. Monroe (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), p. 457.

¹⁰Walter Loban, Margaret Ryan, and James R. Squire, Teaching Language and Literature, Grades 7-12 (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1961), p. 585.

¹¹J. N. Hook, The Teaching of High School English, 3rd Edition (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1965), pp. 317-318.

One may conclude, then, that the trend is not to displace grammar, as it is traditionally defined, from the modern curriculum, but rather to shift emphasis in two aspects of the subject: method of instruction to the functional approach, and purpose of instruction to excellence in recognizing and producing effective composition.

The following justifications commented upon by the Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board will provide a framework within which grammar may be rightly included in the curriculum, considered in the light of current scholarship:

.....

2. Grammar study makes possible easier communication between teacher and student. The teacher . . . is indeed helped if he can use the convenient terminological shorthand that grammars provide. . . .If teaching is properly timed, if grammar is introduced when there is a real need to name language components, this benefit may certainly be gained in short order. . . .

3. Grammar study is necessary as preparation for the study of foreign languages. . . . It is not unreasonable to maintain that familiarity with one mode of analysis makes the learning of similar modes of analysis somewhat easier. . . . A knowledge of English grammar provides a base from which to move, and it becomes more important as the position of foreign-language study in the schools constantly grows stronger.

4. Grammar study is a good discipline. . . .Grammar well taught is not training for the exercise of memory but training in perception and in relation, for a teacher cannot expect students to use grammar toward the improvement of their reading and their writing unless he constantly relates it to these activities.

. . .The study of grammar can help him [the child] to master this unquestionably valuable dialect ["edited English"] for use alongside his own as the occasion demands. Given certain aspirations, he may even want to relinquish his own dialect in favor of "edited English." . . .Grammatical analysis makes it possible to familiarize the student with structure not in his own dialect. . . .Again, grammatical analysis is a short way to systematic understanding of the discrepancies between casual syntax and formal syntax. . . .

. . . An intelligent study of grammar reveals surprising and interesting things about the orderliness of what the child has learned in a nonorderly way--his own language. . . . Ideally, then, though too rarely in practice, the study of grammar has great intrinsic value and intellectual appeal, aside from practical benefits.

. . . Since grammatical study can be both illuminating and useful, it should ordinarily be made a part of the curriculum in such a way as to exploit its potential usefulness. This means that learning the names of grammatical elements should coincide with the use of those names in meaningful activity, not in drill for the sake of drill; that complexities of syntax should be identified and their functions made apparent as they are encountered, as well as in anticipation of such encounters; that constant application rather than yearly review should be the means of keeping grammatical knowledge and terminology active; that in the upper years of secondary school, the knowledge of grammar should be persistently employed to increase the student's awareness of options in his own writing and his sensitivity to the options taken in the literature he reads.¹²

With this clarification of the status of traditional grammar, the question still remains, "Why would it be unwise to make a clean break with the traditional and substitute structural and/or transformational grammar instead?" The fact is that these approaches to the scientific study of language, as scholarly as they are, are still in a relatively formative stage of development, and there has not yet occurred a complete meeting of minds among the experts. Therefore, this writer is in agreement with Miss Jean C. Sisk, supervisor of high school English in Baltimore County Public Schools and author of a methods book already cited in this thesis, who, in an address before the English Institute held at Longwood College in the summer of 1965, resolved the dilemma by advising secondary teachers, "Teach all three." This injunction obviously cannot mean that the teacher should increase her burden by teaching all three types of grammar either concurrently or consecutively; Miss Sisk does mean, in the opinion of this writer, that the

¹²Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-30.

teacher of today's secondary students should be sufficiently familiar with all three kinds of grammar that she can choose features from one, two, or all three which will contribute to her purpose of acquainting students with the workings of their native language and of helping them to acquire ease and fluency in clear expression. It appears that there are certain advantages which each type can contribute toward this end:

Traditional grammar--nomenclature familiar to all students.

Structural grammar--the concept of orderliness; syntax; and, in a few cases, improved nomenclature (e.g., pattern rather than clause); the relationship of punctuation to pitch and juncture (omitting confusing complexities).

Transformational grammar--variety of expression through the combination of various structures.

This eclectic approach to the teaching of grammar is a welcome relief to a teacher who is sometimes hard pressed to explain the intricacies of grammar so that it will always meet the demand of students to "make sense."

The Nature of Language

Such a wealth of fascinating information about language is now available that, if attention is directed to this area, the student will no longer have grounds for the question, "Why do we have to have this same old stuff again?"--a cry heard all too often (and not without justification) in the traditional English classroom.

The English Curriculum Committee of Portland, Oregon, has planned a sequence of study with areas of emphasis given primary attention in each grade as follows:

Ninth grade: syntax, the nature and development of
language

Tenth grade: lexicography and meaning

Eleventh grade: linguistic geography and dialect

Twelfth grade: history of the English language; the
nature of correctness in language

This plan has been adapted for use in Amelia High School, with perhaps one major difference: instead of delaying until the eleventh year the study of linguistic geography and dialect, a deliberate effort is made, when the unit on the nature of language is introduced in the ninth grade, to establish the concept stated by Dr. Henry Lee Smith in the film "Dialects of the U. S.": "All standard speakers of the language are correct." Thus it is hoped that such a study can, as early as possible, dispel the notion too frequently expressed by some students about a person whose speech may differ slightly in pronunciation or vocabulary from their own, "He's different--he talks funny," the implication being that "different" speech is not "correct." Also, placement of the topic at this level helps to answer the question which invariably arises during the initial discussion of language in general, "Why do people talk differently?" From this study it is possible for the student to gain an appreciation of language for its cultural as well as its utilitarian value, as suggested earlier.

Although at Amelia High School the study of the nature of language is patterned primarily after the units included in the Portland Curriculum Guide, Mary Elizabeth Fowler's chart contains essentially similar information in an attractive, easy-to-read format and is therefore included here.

BASIC CONCEPTS ABOUT LANGUAGE: A SEQUENTIAL PROGRAM ¹³

Concepts about language

Language is a symbolic process.

Learnings:

There are many nonverbal or non-linguistic "languages."

Verbal symbols (words) stand for things and ideas.

Language is a system of agreements about meanings.

One word may stand for many things or meanings.

Meanings grow through metaphorical extension.

All languages change; change is normal.

Learnings:

Languages grow through the addition of loan words and other vocabulary changes.

Languages change through the influence of social, political, and economic events.

Assignments and Activities

A study of nonlinguistic systems of "language" and the way sounds, colors, visual symbols, and gestures symbolize meaning: animal language, insect, fish, and other communication systems, codes, signal systems, visual symbols (road signs, advertising symbols, clothes, uniforms, pins).

Study of the symbols of mathematics and science.

Words such as tree, house, animal, or man may stand for many different kinds of entities.

Study of different kinds of things words may stand for: animal, bird, flower, tree.

Common words may acquire metaphorical meanings, such as body terms like head, foot, toe, hand, heart.

A study of word origins and shifts in meaning of loan words and borrowings from American Indians, and French, Spanish, Dutch, and German immigrants.

A study of functional shift, or the way words shift their form classes: words used as different parts of speech (ball, fire, run, set, strike).

A study of the shift of levels of usage according to situation: formal and informal standard, colloquial, slang, and substandard.

A study of the processes by which new words are added to the language: coinages, compounds, analogy, erroneous utterances, portmanteau words, and others.

¹³Fowler, op. cit., pp. 66-68.

Concepts about language

Assignments and Activities

Study of changes and words added from new inventions and social movements: machines, aviation, atomic and electronic inventions, wars, changes in government.

Study of loan words in English from Latin, Anglo-Saxon, Danish, and Norman French.

Study of changes in the form and structure of the language characteristic of English from Anglo-Saxon times to the present.

Study of changing usage, of amelioration and pejoration, of shifts of status from slang to standard.

Words acquire meanings from varied sources.

Learnings:

Meanings develop through experience; individuals may have different meanings for the same words.

The meanings of words are determined by their context; contexts may include gestures, tones of voice, silence.

Structure and word order determine meanings.

Papers on "What _____ means to me" (school, camp, homesickness, fear, Christmas); "An experience that changed the meaning of the word _____ for me";

"A word that caused misunderstanding"; "My picture of a (cowboy, Texan, Southerner, Irishman, _____)

Exercises in slanted writing, associating words with other favorable or unfavorable words.

Study of shifts of meaning of commonly used words and expressions: freedom, democracy, socialism, liberal.

Study of ways in which gestures, intonation, and facial expressions determine the meaning of words or sentences.

Student-written political speeches providing both favorable and unfavorable contexts for the same name.

Students work with lists of words from the four form classes, arranging them into sentences with different meanings suggested by different orders: (man bites dog; dog bites man).

Concepts about language

Language shapes thinking.

Learnings:

Words affect the way we feel about things.

Words are used at different levels of abstraction.

Generalizations lead to uncritical thinking.

Words are used to group and classify; classifications shape thinking.

Spoken language is different from written language; spoken language is of primary importance.

Learnings:

Written language cannot fully convey the speaker's intonation and gestures.

Language has order, structure, and pattern.

Assignments and Activities

Study of emotional associations for words: denotations and connotations, name calling, euphemisms, loaded words.

Study of word magic and verbal taboos.

Constructing abstraction ladders.

Study of abstract and concrete words; general and specific words.

Examination of sweeping generalizations about women drivers, blondes, teen-agers.

Study of stereotypes which influence thinking and feeling about people, ethnic groups, races.

Study of the sound symbols (phonemes) represented by many written symbols (graphemes); e.g., s has 33 different spellings.

Study of the relationship of punctuation symbols to the tones, pauses, and inflections of spoken language.

Listening to the sounds of poems, plays, and fiction read aloud.

Practice in reading passages in several different ways to convey different meanings: anger, sorrow, pleading, irritation.

A study of grammar and syntax, of the relation of word order to meaning, of varieties of sentence patterns and their possible modifications.

Concepts about language

Language is used for different purposes.

Learnings:

- Factual language attempts to record, explain, or convey information.
- Judgments indicate the way the speaker evaluates things, people, and situations.
- Inferences state conclusions inferred from situations or words.
- Emotive language attempts to affect the feelings of listener or reader.
- Directive language is used to influence others to act.
- Language is used both literally and figuratively.

Language changes according to the sex, education, home and social environment, occupation, and social and economic status of the speaker.

Assignments and Activities

- Writing statements of fact or judgment and distinguishing between them. Analyzing news media and TV for both kinds of language.
- A study of poetry, drama, fiction, or persuasive writing for emotive language.
- Discussion of pledges, vows, oaths, and other statements designed to influence behavior.
- Study of cartoons, ads, and mass-media sources to analyze inferences intended or desired.
- Study of literal and figurative language in literature, mass media, and everyday speech.
- Analysis of literal and figurative use of the same words: cool, blast, hot, star, doll, ball.

- Words, expressions, and language characteristic of the sexes: description of a dance, a ball game, a school, as a boy and a girl would describe it.
- Writing paragraphs or bits of dialogue illustrative of the usage of different educational levels.
- Usage studies focusing on shoptalk, usage characteristic of different social and occupational groups.
- The special languages of the family, the neighborhood gang, the teen-age crowd, the club group.
- Study of readings and recordings illustrating dialect and regional speech.
- Study of different forms of address, greetings, familiar and polite society idioms, and folk usage.
- Study of variations of language of the same individual in different situations: family, school, informal groups, business meetings, formal gatherings.

Literature

Fortunately, the debate over the inclusion of literature in the secondary school curriculum was resolved many decades ago. However, there remain to be considered problems of purpose, content, and method, each of which varies within a local situation.

If the ultimate goal of the teaching of literature is to be realized--namely, to encourage the student to cultivate the habit of reading informational and recreational literature of high quality after he has left the direction of the teacher in the schoolroom--then it is extremely important to follow the admonition, "Begin where the children are." It is at this point, perhaps, where the distinction between college-bound and non-college-bound students becomes most meaningful, as well as most desirable for instructional purposes. It is here that the teacher can be of most lasting help in meeting the needs of both groups of students. However, it is highly essential to provide different approaches, different subject matter, different techniques--which, in the case of some, may even need to be of a remedial nature.

Every student deserves to learn the pleasure available through reading a good book, but extreme care and good judgment must be exercised by the teacher who in her enthusiasm for literary art may be tempted to give the student too much, too fast. By all means, the college-bound student needs to be challenged to read as many of the classics--old and modern--as he can; he needs also to learn techniques of analysis which will be of help to him when he reaches college. But a democracy depends for its survival on the literacy of its entire

populace; therefore, the English teacher has a sober responsibility to lead and guide the reading choices of all her students rather than in any way to jeopardize the desire on their part to read informational and recreational literature.

It is in the area of choice of content that one recognizes the danger against which the College Entrance Examination Board's Commission on English warns: to permit textbooks to dictate curriculum.¹⁴ This is a pitfall especially prevalent where a single anthology for each grade is in use, as is the case at Amelia High School. It is because of this fact that an effort is currently being made there to develop, by degrees, a collection of classroom sets of choice paperback selections in order to supplement, enrich, and make more flexible the content of the literature area in English.

Perhaps it would be wise in this connection, in view of textbook adoptions to be made in the future, to consider the suggestion of Gertrude Stearns:

First of all, the teacher should make sure that the anthology contains a large proportion of recent and contemporary material, much of it American. Since we know that only a small number of the pupils in such a school (or any high school, for that matter) are going to college, and since college requirements no longer stress the classics exclusively, it is wise to choose a basic book which will have value for everyone. Instead of having an anthology of classics and supplementing it with modern material, let the anthology be chiefly modern, and supplement with classics where necessary. ¹⁵

¹⁴Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board, op. cit., p. 46.

¹⁵Gertrude B. Stearns, English in the Small High School (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1950), p. 239.

As stated earlier in this thesis, supplementary materials of a remedial nature have not previously been available at Amelia High School; however, an ample supply of such reading material is now on hand to be used to meet the needs of those students for whom a regular anthology is just too difficult.

In addition to textbook content, one must also consider the matter of the mass media as a phase of the literature program. In fact, The American Secondary School Curriculum states the issue rather strongly:

No modern youth can be considered well educated until he has learned to use mass media intelligently. Secondary-school curricula must allow much time for units in the use of newspapers, periodicals, radio, television, and moving pictures, even at the expense of reducing the amount of instruction in the classics.

. . . Instruction in the use of mass media is a necessary extension of the study of literature. Its purpose is to establish standards of taste and to foster critical judgment of all literary forms. Boys and girls need to know how to select, interpret, and appreciate these forms just as much as they need to know how to select, interpret, and evaluate novels, poetry, and other literary forms--more so, because the mass media cannot be avoided, and so boys and girls who appreciate them improperly do so at some peril.

The techniques for establishing high standards of taste and critical interpretation and evaluation of any work of art, certainly of any literary art, are basically the same. Although there is no accounting for taste, tastes can be changed and created, and the English teacher's job is to create good taste and to change poor tastes into better ones. To do so is difficult, but it must be done. We cannot hope to raise boys' and girls' critical judgment by retreating to the safety of Scott, Eliot, and Shakespeare. Taste is made in the market place, and boys and girls must learn to make their choices there.

. . . The American people cannot afford to let our schools neglect what may be the most pertinent subject matter of our times.¹⁶

¹⁶Clark, Klein, and Burks, op. cit., pp. 202-203.

The matter of approach to the teaching of literature (separate and apart from individual instruction in basic reading for remedial students) occupies a prominent place in professional books and periodicals. Three chief types of organization prevail: chronological-historical survey, thematic approach, and study of literary types. Each has its advantages. The chronological-historical survey is characterized by simplicity and clarity; the thematic approach seems to offer possibilities of correlation with the needs of the adolescent as he seeks identity and takes his place in society; the study of literary types forces the student to look upon literature as verbal art.

In addition to determining the most effective way of appealing to the interests of adolescent boys and girls, it seems wise to consider, also, the relative ease with which the individual teacher can handle the subject matter. In the experience of this writer, ninth-grade material lends itself more naturally to the thematic approach, while tenth-grade material can better be treated in the study of literary types. The study by literary types seems compatible, also, with the emphasis during the tenth-grade on structure in the language phase of the English program. In either case, it is a matter of emphasizing the one and subordinating--but not excluding--the other.

Again The American Secondary School Curriculum has a pertinent statement:

The best approach to the teaching of literature is a multiple approach. Philadelphia's 1960 GUIDE TO THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE offers a particularly fine example of a sane approach to the study of literature.

When your purpose is:

To acquaint the class with a classic or a type of literature (for example, fable, fairy tale, tall tale) which is part of their heritage

or

To have the entire class enjoy a reading or listening experience and the discussion which follows

or

To provide an opportunity for group guidance through literature

THEN DO HAVE THE ENTIRE CLASS READ OR LISTEN TO THE SAME STORY OR POEM.

When your purpose is:

To encourage the development of the reading habit

or

To give opportunity for meeting individual needs, abilities, and interests

or

To raise the level of taste in each individual

THEN GUIDED INDIVIDUAL READING SHOULD BE USED.

When your purpose is:

To correlate the reading with experiences and activities of interest to the pupil

or

To combine general class reading and guided independent reading

or

To provide for individual differences within a common class project

THEN USE THE UNIT APPROACH.¹⁷

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 201-202.

Composition

Perhaps no other phase of the English program has come under more direct attack from all quarters than that of composition, both written and oral, but primarily the former. The other two segments of English content--language and literature--have been targets of discussion, but the discussion has been contained for the most part within the teaching profession itself. Such is not the case with composition. Parents, educators, employers in the business, scientific, and industrial world--all join to pose the question, "Why can't high school graduates write better?" Even the graduates themselves, when asked after a semester or two in college what they had discovered to be their greatest need, show remarkable unity in their replies--"I wish I'd had to write more."

The Conant Report has given impetus to what English teachers probably had already realized either consciously or subconsciously:

Recommendation 6: English Composition.

The time devoted to English composition during the four years should occupy about half the total time devoted to the study of English. Each student should be required to write an average of one theme a week. Themes should be corrected by the teacher. In order that teachers of English have adequate time for handling these themes, no English teacher should be responsible for more than one hundred pupils.

To test the ability of each student in English composition, a schoolwide composition test should be given in every grade; in the ninth and eleventh grades, these composition tests should be graded not only by the teacher but by a committee of the entire school. Those who do not obtain a grade on the eleventh-grade composition commensurate with their ability as measured by an aptitude test should be required to take a special course in English composition in the twelfth grade.¹⁸

Dr. Conant does not confine composition to a single group, such as the college-bound, but intends the recommendation to be applied to all.

¹⁸Conant, op. cit., pp. 50-51.

The Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board recognizes some implications of Alfred North Whitehead's theory of cycles, as expressed in his essay entitled "The Rhythmic Claims of Freedom and Discipline":

In composition the early years might concentrate on what, in the best sense, is creative writing--not writing aimed to create artistic forms of works of art, but writing aimed primarily at expression, at discovery of the self and the world. The next stage might concentrate on the discipline of form--on those matters of arrangement, logic, and conventional correctness that make up the body of most books on composition. And in the third stage, which in Whitehead's cycle is a return to freedom, teachers might promote the comprehensive view of composition which combines the pleasure and freedom of the first with the instruction and discipline of the second. This third stage should witness the development of style, as the first stage witnesses the development of invention, and the second of methods of arrangement and form.¹⁹

Recognizing, then, both the spiraling nature of composition and the inequalities of interests, abilities, and attainments among students within any classroom, the teacher is faced with the problem of finding a means by which the two elements may be blended. One such helpful sequence has been developed by Miss Jean C. Sisk for use in the schools of Baltimore County. The plan--in terms of levels of difficulty--is included in the following pages.

¹⁹Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

A WRITING SEQUENCE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL²⁰

Difficulty Level One

Related Assignments and Activities

Skills and Abilities

Paragraphs

1. Ability to write a single paragraph, with a topic sentence that expresses a basic idea, with several concretely expressed sentences that develop this idea, and with a "clincher" sentence
2. Ability to write a short anecdote or summary using chronological order
3. Ability to write a simple explanation, using relevant examples and details in order of execution

1. Informal friendly letters (to be mailed to an actual recipient) containing narration of personal experience.
2. Narrative summaries of historical events, plots of stories, newspaper articles
3. Brief biographical or autobiographical sketches, chronologically arranged
4. Humorous personal experiences in the form of anecdotes
5. Book reports of one paragraph--one report based on a topic sentence stating the reader's general reaction to the book and developed with illustrations, another report summarizing the plot or major points made by the author, and a third explaining the kinds of readers who might like or dislike the book. (These three can be combined into a longer report by students of higher ability.)
6. Explanations of processes that may be described in chronological sequence ("How a Bill Becomes a Law"; "How to Change a Tire"; "How to Make a Cake")
7. Paraphrases of reference material
8. Plans for dramatizations, skits, radio or TV programs
9. Summaries of discussions

²⁰Lewis and Sisk, op. cit., 329-337.

Sentences and Diction

1. Control of basic simple sentence patterns in writing
2. Elimination of fragments and run-on's
3. Ability to use natural word order in sentences
4. Use of concrete vocabulary
5. Use of descriptive verbs when appropriate
6. Use of single word and phrase modifiers in proper position for clarity
7. Elimination of trite words and expressions
8. Use of appropriate transitional words for narration and explanation
9. Use of proper sequence of simple verb tenses in narration, summarization, and explanation

1. Writing sentences using basic sentence patterns
2. Revising sentences taken from students' themes for concreteness of vocabulary and natural and clear word order
3. Revising paragraphs to improve coherence by placing tense from past to present or vice versa, improving or providing appropriate transitional expressions
4. Supplying the "exact" word for blanks inserted in sentences taken from students' themes (to improve diction)
5. Supplying synonyms for words underlined by the teacher on students' themes
6. Supplying topic sentences for paragraphs of narration or explanation
7. Supplying clincher sentences for paragraphs of narration or explanation
8. Writing one-sentence summaries
9. Finding examples of different simple sentence patterns in newspapers and magazines
10. Making sentence outlines based on reading notes
11. Making topic outlines using prepositional phrases or nouns or combinations of these two
12. Revising fragments and run-on's taken from students' themes

Difficulty Level Two

Related Assignments and Activities

Skills and Abilities

Paragraphs

1. Ability to write several connected paragraphs of narration and summary
2. Ability to write paragraphs of dialogue
3. Ability to write a short narrative containing dialogue
4. Ability to write explanations of processes that do not follow a chronological order
5. Ability to write paragraphs in the order of importance
6. Ability to write a paragraph description of a place or person that is based on a single dominant impression, with a topic sentence stating the controlling impression and the concrete details and illustrations arranged in order of effectiveness

1. Letters of inquiry or request
2. Friendly letters describing incidents and conversations
3. Factual reports based on library sources and/or observations
4. Statements of opinions supported by verifiable factual data, arranged in order of effect or importance
5. Reproductions of conversations, real or imaginary
6. Features for the school paper or class based on humorous dialogues
7. "Short short" stories--with setting giving a dominant impression, dialogue, and narration
8. Written directions for school or community contests; for traveling from one place to another, for playing a game
9. Letters to foreign "pen pals" explaining the schools here, the kind of entertainment Americans can teenagers enjoy
10. Single-paragraph impressions of actual persons, or of characters in a story or television series
11. Descriptions of settings based on actual observation and emphasizing only one characteristic or quality of the place

Sentences and Diction

1. Experimentation with changes in word order for variety and emphasis
2. Use of compound elements to eliminate repetition
3. Use of compound sentences for variety and elimination of repetitive ideas
4. Use of transition words and expressions appropriate to dominant-impression descriptions
5. Experimentation with different levels of diction in dialogue
6. Use of the active voice of verbs in narration and description
7. Understanding of the "emphatic" positions within the sentence

1. Revising sentences with misplaced modifiers
2. Revising sentences to place greater emphasis on a particular word or idea by shifting its position
3. Substituting single word for phrase modifiers
4. Revising repetitious writing by using compound elements, compound sentences, appositives, and pronouns
5. Experimenting with changes in verb tense or voice to test effectiveness
6. Practicing various simple devices for getting humorous effects in stories or dialogues-- exaggeration, broad parody
7. Finding examples (in newspapers, magazines, or books) of sentences with various introductory modifiers and expressions
8. Supplying appropriate transitional expressions in paragraphs of narration, explanation, conversation, order of importance.

Difficulty Level Three

Skills and Abilities

- Paragraphs
1. Ability to write a short reportorial paragraph, with most important details first and with proper facts in the lead
 2. Ability to write a paragraph revealing and analyzing one's feelings or reactions
 3. Ability to write a descriptive paragraph of a place, using spatial sequence for arrangement of details

Related Assignments and Activities

1. Articles for the school paper reporting a class happening of interest to the student body
2. Articles for the community paper reporting a school event of general interest
3. Descriptions of places based on actual observation and developed in such a way as to show spatial relationships

4. Ability to write a paragraph of opinion, with reasons to support the opinion subdivided and arranged in order of importance
5. Ability to write paragraphs of comparison and contrast
4. Accounts of personal reactions to settings or people that produced exaggeratedly pleasant or unpleasant reactions
5. Comparisons of two different places that produced reactions of contrasting kinds or of two different books by the same author
6. Announcements of coming events for the school paper or public address system
7. Letters of complaint describing in detail the reasons for one's dissatisfaction
8. Letters of appreciation, including some reasons for one's gratitude
9. Descriptive sketches in the form of settings for dramatizations
10. Reactions to an event or a piece of literature that produced a strong emotional response
11. Answers to essay questions requiring generalizations backed up with illustrations, examples, details arranged in order of importance
12. Reviews recommending a book or movie
13. Letters of sympathy, apology

Sentence and Diction

1. Ability to write balanced and periodic sentences
2. Ability to write complex sentences that indicate various kinds of relationships
3. Elimination of repetitive sentences
4. Elimination of redundancies in words and expressions

1. Supplying transitional expressions in practice material from which these have been omitted
2. Finding examples of transitional expressions in newspaper articles, selections from anthologies; identifying these expressions with basic organizational pattern of the selection
3. Revising sentences containing trite expressions and redundancies

- 5. Use of transitional words used in paragraphs showing spatial relationships, expressing opinions, or describing comparisons and contrasts
- 6. Correct use of parallel structure in sentences
- 7. Use of similes or metaphors to clarify or dramatize comparisons
- 4. Developing balanced topic sentences to introduce paragraphs of contrast
- 5. Developing periodic sentences to emphasize the importance of an idea
- 6. Revising paragraphs containing too many similarly constructed sentences
- 7. Finding examples of various sentence types in reading materials
- 8. Experimenting with expressing related ideas in compound and complex sentences; evaluating the effectiveness of each in various contexts
- 9. Making outlines in preparation for writing or as a way of retaining what is read; varying the structure in successive outlines to practice parallel structure
- 10. Revising sentences taken from students' themes to eliminate faulty parallelism
- 11. Taking notes on sensory observations and impressions; organizing these in parallel form preparatory to making an outline for a descriptive essay
- 12. Finding examples of similes and metaphors in advertisements

Library studies
 24. Study of research reports
 13. Periods and paragraphs of literary materials
 14. Comparisons and contrasts of events, activities or books by different authors
 12. Questions to questions and responses
 15. Paragraphs of various qualities

Skills and Abilities
Difficulty Level Four
Related Assignments and Activities

Paragraphs

1. Ability to write paragraphs showing cause and effect relationships
2. Ability to write a paragraph of persuasion, using inductive or deductive reasoning
3. Ability to write a paragraph describing a moving object
4. Ability to write a paragraph of extended definition
5. Ability to write several consecutive paragraphs of expository narration, comparison and contrast, description, opinion, or reaction

1. Letters to the editor of the school or community paper, attempting to convince readers that a particular point of view is more sensible than another
2. Speeches setting forth one's qualifications for a school office
3. Factual reports or papers, using details and illustrations to back up generalizations and statements of opinion and following a general-to-specific or a specific-to-general sequence
4. Description of games, emphasizing the quality of the players' movements
5. Descriptions of a parade from the point of view of a stationary spectator
6. Answers to essay questions requiring extended definition, support of generalizations, inductive or deductive reasons, expository narration, or explanation of cause and effect relationships
7. Factual reports explaining processes of a complex nature
8. Analyses of mood, style, or point of view in a literary selection
9. Essays of personal opinion
10. Precis and paraphrases of literary material
11. Comparisons and contrasts of several articles or books by different authors
12. Reactions to quotations and epigrams
13. Paraphrases of famous quotations

Sentences and Diction

1. Use of devices that contribute to conciseness in diction and sentence structure
2. Understanding and use of the function of various conjunctions in expressing subtle relationships
3. Elimination of jargon, sentimental references, unnecessary words, overblown language
4. Use of several devices to achieve emphasis within sentences
5. Effective use of various grammatical constructions for variety and emphasis

1. Supplying topic sentences and transitional devices for ditteed materials from which these have been omitted
2. Supplying outlines to show development of topic sentences
3. Supplying transitional sentences between paragraphs
4. Expressions of various relationships (causal, conditional, temporal, spatial) with different conjunctions; evaluating for clarity and emphasis
5. Revising material containing jargon, sentimental references, other weaknesses of diction
6. Rewriting an emotional account of an event in an objective way
7. Expressing a one-sentence reaction to a current book, movie, or dramatic news event by imitating the sentence structure of a well-known critic or news analyst
8. Finding examples of different ways to achieve emphasis in sentences
9. Finding examples in current periodicals of different levels of diction

Difficulty Level Five

Related Assignments and Activities

Skills and Abilities

Paragraphs

1. Ability to write paragraphs with no expressed topic sentence
2. Ability to develop several consecutive paragraphs of contrast, comparison, argumentation, opinion, definition and explanation, narration, description, dialogue, cause and effect, inductive or deductive reasoning
3. Ability to write a paragraph of classification and division
4. Ability to select the appropriate types of paragraph developments for a variety of purposes and topics
5. Ability to develop several connected paragraphs using a combination of structural patterns

Sentences and Diction

1. Use of all types of transitional words and devices between words, sentences, and paragraphs
2. Experimentation with use of figures of speech of all kinds
3. Understanding and use of all ways to achieve economy in writing
4. Command of all basic sentence patterns
5. Use of transitional words for paragraphs of classification and division

1. Answers to essay questions requiring a variety of structural patterns or combinations of patterns
2. Short library paper (1,500-2,000 words) requiring use of primary and secondary sources, direct observations, and personal inquiry, submitted with note cards, outlines, and bibliographical data
3. Critical analyses or reviews of literature
4. Developments of a topic sentence, using several different types of organization and evaluating them for effectiveness
5. Letters to colleges requesting information, applying for admission
6. Experimenting with factual and "emotional" treatments of the same topic

1. Rewriting material containing trite figures of speech
2. Supplying figures of speech in practice exercises
3. Rewriting material to make it more concise
4. Writing one-sentence summaries of plots, themes, arguments
5. Imitating the sentence structure of contemporary writers
6. Supplying transitional expressions for paragraphs of all types

Many a student groans with dismay at the thought of composition. Invariably, the uppermost question is, "What do I have to write about?" His own direct experiences seem commonplace and trivial to him.

Fortunately, it is at this point that the integrated nature of English can be brought to bear most effectively. For full impact, composition--the third phase of the tripod of language, literature, and composition--leans for support on the legs of the other two--language and literature. Just as methods of analysis in language provide techniques for understanding the structures of thought of others, so also this analytical approach works to enable the student to structure his own expressions with clarity and fluency. Just as a study of the nature of language helps the student to understand the workings of his language, so this knowledge provides subject matter for expository compositions in which he demonstrates his understanding by the choice of vivid and appropriate language. Just as literature, the artistic composition of skilled writers, is a subject matter rich in information and enjoyment, so it becomes for the student a springboard in the development of his own skills in writing by providing both setting and pattern. Here is the opportunity to make English the balanced, well-rounded, and non-segmented whole that it by nature is.

One word of caution for the secondary teacher is necessary: keep compositions short. Sauer quotes Arthur Mizener, who at the Yale Conference on the Teaching of English several years ago, said, "The single paragraph of five or six sentences raises all the problems of a longer composition."²¹ Sauer himself continues:

²¹Edwin H. Sauer, English in the Secondary School (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1961), p. 87.

Certainly it gives instruction in organizing and shaping a single thought. For the first year or two composition in the secondary school, in grades seven and eight, that is, ought to be limited to very short pieces, chiefly to paragraphs. The teacher must insist that in each paragraph a single, clear, orderly thought must be presented to the reader. This is enough at first. As a matter of fact, the colleges would be very happy if only paragraph writing were accomplished in all of the students who come to them.²²

The matter of evaluation of work in composition poses another dilemma for many teachers. Aside from the sheer burden of such a bulk of subjective material submitted for judgment, there is still the problem as to the amount of correction to be made on student papers and the kind of grade to be given.

The Commission on English states: "Even the most cursory reading should be accompanied by the marking of errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and diction. Sometimes corrections should be supplied, more often only the need for them indicated wherever faults occur that the student will be required to correct."²³ Sauer cautions as follows:

Unless you are working with very advanced students on the highest grade levels, don't try to mark every error on every paper. Some teachers prefer to concentrate on one or two kinds of error per theme. A paper all covered over with the reader's marks can be woefully discouraging, particularly to the student who is trying hard for the first time. Concentrate on one or two difficulties and let the student work for a paper or two to correct these. When he does, he will see that he has accomplished something, and you can go on to something else. But when you mark every single blunder, he is overwhelmed by the number of mistakes and gives up trying.²⁴

²² Ibid.

²³ Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board, op. cit., p. 98.

²⁴ Sauer, op. cit., p. 93.

Gertrude Stearns suggests the use of a simple system of correction marks for composition--a system which appears adequate and yet capable of expansion if the need should arise:

Correction Marks for Composition

Misspelled words: Underline. It is not necessary to write "sp" in the margin.

Wrong choice of words: Underline and write "W" above the word.

Errors in punctuation: Checkmark at point of error.

K { Awkward construction. Needs to be rephrased in order to read better. Make line extend far enough to indicate extent of passage which needs correction.

S { Definite error in sentence structure. Sentence must be rewritten.

¶ Begin a new paragraph here.

No ¶ Do not begin a new paragraph here.

? Something seems to be wrong here. Use this for all kinds of odds and ends of errors. Train pupils to ask if they do not see what is wrong.

See me { When a matter requires more explanation than can be given by the above symbols, or the error spreads over a large area, make a note for the pupil to call the matter to the teacher's attention so that individual explanation and instruction can be given.²⁵

The kind of grade given varies among individual teachers. Stearns recommends the use of

. . . two grades on composition work: one for content and the intangible qualities such as interest, understanding, suitability of treatment, and the achievement of objective; and one for mechanics and usage. A grade like $\frac{B+}{D-}$ will encourage a pupil who had a good

²⁵Stearns, op. cit., p. 213.

idea and expressed it in an interesting fashion but had trouble with his spelling and punctuation. The teacher can record a C in her book, but such a mark on the paper would give the pupil no hint that his good idea had been recognized and appreciated. Similarly, a mark of C will take care of the distressing situation which B+ arises when a painstakingly correct paper appears, without a spark of interest or effort in its composition.²⁶

Sauer, at the other extreme, firmly states: "Avoid the wishy-washy practice of one grade for thought and one for grammatical correctness. If the composition is successful, all parts of it serve one another-- the paper is a successful whole."²⁷

A congenial blend of these widely divergent systems of grading has been achieved by Paul B. Diederich, whose score sheet came into the hands of this writer through Mrs. Dorothy B. Schlegel, of the Longwood College English Department. (An item-by-item interpretation of the score sheet may be found in the NEA publication edited by Arno Jewett, Improving English Composition, 1965, on pages 96-97.)

Insofar as possible, this score sheet approaches, it seems an objective grade of subjective material. Further, although it implies that skilled writing is culminated in an organic whole, yet it provides the student with a clear picture of his area or areas of need. A copy of the score sheet is given on the next page.

A SCALE FOR GRADING ENGLISH COMPOSITION

1--Poor 2--Weak 3--Average 4--Good 5--Excellent

SCORE

GENERAL MERIT

1. Quality and development of ideas 1 2 3 4 5

2. Organization, relevance, movement 1 2 3 4 5 x 5

3. Style, flavor, individuality 1 2 3 4 5

4. Wording and phrasing 1 2 3 4 5 x 3

MECHANICS

5. Grammar, sentence structure 1 2 3 4 5

6. Punctuation 1 2 3 4 5

7. Spelling 1 2 3 4 5

8. Manuscript form, legibility 1 2 3 4 5 x 1

Total grade _____ %

REMARKS

(Developed by Paul B. Diederich. Improving English Composition, Jewett and Bish, eds. National Education Association, 1965.)

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CHAPTER V
THE MASTER PLAN

In setting up the detailed plan for English instruction in the ninth and tenth grades of Amelia High School, the writer has followed, in general, suggestions made by Gertrude Stearns in English in the Small High School. According to Mrs. Stearns,

Pupils have two types of needs which must be satisfied in an adequate educational program. Basic needs are items that will actually be used by all pupils, whatever their needs, interests and abilities may be. Special needs are items of importance to some pupils, but not to all. Often a large number of pupils will exhibit the same need, but it cannot be called basic unless it is actually common to all.

The English program must be divided into basic phases and special phases, in order to satisfy those needs.¹

The writer has, in the local situation, equated the special needs as those of the college-bound section (which frequently includes a few of the more able students of the non-college-bound group) but has provided for any necessary strengthening of these students' basic needs by including these items in the master plan as "Areas of General Interest." Instruction in the basic needs, then, is available to both college-bound and non-college-bound students.

Mrs. Stearns includes in the basic phases of English the following:

1. Ability to speak good colloquial English
2. Ability to read simple prose
3. Ability to write simple, colloquial prose of no great length
4. Ability to listen to and understand non-technical and non-literary speech
5. Growth in maturity of personality and judgment²

¹Stearns, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

²Ibid.

The special phases--to be undertaken only by those who can do so with pleasure and profit--Mrs. Stearns lists as follows:

Grammar
 Punctuation
 Correct Usage
 Remedial Reading
 Literary techniques
 Style
 Theories of plot construction
 Development of theme
 Versification
 Figures of speech
 The older English classics
 The more difficult and mature modern works
 Literary history and biography
 Rhetoric
 Development of style in writing
 Study and practice of different forms of writing
 Creative writing
 Debating and more formal public speaking
 Dramatics³

Mrs. Stearns suggests the following allocation of items of needs for various kinds of students:

1. College preparatory (not necessarily brilliant)
 - All of special phases except correct usage and remedial reading
 - No. 5 of Basic Phases (growth in maturity of personality and judgment)
 - Any points in nos. 1-4 of Basic Phases that they need or have time and interest to work on.

2. Brilliant pupils not going to college
 - No. 5 of Basic Phases especially
 - As much of Special Phases as they need or enjoy
 - Grammar if they are interested (or if local tradition insists that they ought to study it. They can do it, all right, but there's no real reason why they should!)
 - Special emphasis on:
 - Modern literature of advanced type
 - Creative writing, both for development of own style, and to increase appreciation of what they read
 - Dramatics
 - Debating and public speaking

³Ibid., pp. 67-68.

3. Average pupils not going to college
 - Nos. 1-5 of Basic Phases
 - Correct usage
 - Punctuation
 - Any other Special Phases that they need or enjoy
 - Creative writing in order to increase appreciation
 - A very little grammar, for recognition purposes, such as:
 - Subject and predicate
 - Verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs
 - Sentence sense

4. Slow learners
 - Nos. 1-5 of Basic Phases (according to ability)
 - Correct usage
 - Punctuation, taught incidentally, with only a few simple points emphasized
 - Remedial reading (if necessary)
 - Creative writing for self-expression and appreciation (no study of technique)

5. Retarded pupils
 - Nos. 1 and 2 of Basic Phases on a very simple level
 - Nos. 4 and 5 of Basic Phases at pupil's own level
 - No. 3 in very limited amounts and on a very simple level
 - Usage
 - Remedial reading
 - Assistance in simple punctuation⁴

An effort has been made to incorporate these suggestions, as well as ideas from other works cited, in the culmination of this thesis study-- the master plan, which follows immediately.

⁴Ibid., pp. 69-70.

THE MASTER PLAN

GRADE 9	MINIMUM ESSENTIALS	AREAS OF GENERAL INTEREST	AREAS FOR SPECIAL GROUPS
<p>R E A D I N G</p>	<p>Practice in techniques of reading</p> <p>Word recognition: Sight (configuration clues) Context clues Phonetic analysis Prefixes and suffixes Dictionary use Recognition of idioms</p> <p>Comprehension: Following Directions Locating Information Finding Proof Remembering significant details</p> <p>Critical skill: Distinguishing fact from opinion</p> <p>Rate: Adjustment of rate to purpose</p> <p>SQ3R Method of Study</p>	<p>Reading (Chiefly narrative) Short Stories (of adventure) Legends, Fables Narrative poems Selected portions from KJV Bible (Stories of Joseph, Ruth, etc.) Simple plays Biography and autobiography Newspaper reports and sports stories</p> <p>Parallel Reading: One book per grading period--choice depending upon an interest field chosen by student</p> <p>Reading materials for students in need of remedial instruction--available in SRA Reading for Understanding SRA Reading Laboratory <u>Be a Better Reader Series</u> (Nila Banton Smith) <u>Specific Skills Series</u> (Barnell-Loft) <u>Reader's Digest Reading Skillbuilders</u> <u>Unit Lessons in Reading Series</u> (McCall-Crabbs) (and others)</p>	<p>Practice in analytical skills in reading: Drawing inferences</p> <p>Basic figures of speech: simile, metaphor, epithet, personification, hyperbole</p> <p>Special reading: Longer narrative poems Ballads Myths An easy Shakespearean drama (e.g., <u>A Midsummer Night's Dream</u>) A novel (First section--"One Boy's Life"--from <u>David Copperfield</u>)</p> <p>Parallel reading: Additional book or books each grading period--chosen preferably from list of books recommended for college-bound students</p>
<p>W R I T I N G</p>	<p>Introduction to tools of grammar: Sentence sense Subject and predicate Paragraph development Topic sentence Clincher sentence Word choice Mechanics: Capitalization Punctuation Spelling</p>	<p>Writing for fluency (Chiefly narrative) Friendly letters Paragraph relating an incident Factual writing: Minutes of club meeting Report of some school event (sports or club) to school paper</p> <p>Development of use of vivid words</p> <p>Personal error chart</p> <p>Personal spelling list</p>	<p>Punctuation of conversation</p> <p>Summarizing</p> <p>Outlining of expository writing</p> <p>Paragraph of description Preparation of factual and slanted headlines Creative writing: A 5-paragraph theme involving both narration and description Class edition of school paper Preparation of a scene from novel or play for class dramatization Verse forms: limerick, quatrain</p>

GRADE 9	MINIMUM ESSENTIALS	AREAS OF GENERAL INTEREST	AREAS FOR SPECIAL GROUPS
S P E A K I N G	<p>Practice in correct usage</p> <p>Practice in adjusting speaking voice to size of room and audience</p> <p>Oral reports to teacher about books read</p> <p>Introduction to basic skills of parliamentary procedure</p>	<p>Conversation groups</p> <p>Relating incidents</p> <p>Discussing books of mutual interest</p> <p>Committee planning</p> <p>Making announcements about school-sponsored events</p> <p>Participation in class quiz programs and word games</p> <p>Practice in recording own voice on tape</p> <p>Participation in class and club meetings:</p> <p>Makes a nomination</p> <p>States a motion</p> <p>Presents secretary's minutes</p> <p>Presents treasurer's report</p> <p>Makes a committee report</p>	<p>Choral reading</p> <p>Dramatization of scenes from novels or plays</p> <p>Explanation of posters containing names of products derived from mythology</p> <p>Panel discussion</p> <p>Individual presentation of short prepared talks (about language)</p> <p>Discusses the question</p> <p>Presides over a class or club meeting</p>
LISTENING	<p>Courteous attention to speaker-- teacher, student, assembly speaker</p>	<p>Development of listening skills</p> <p>TQLR Formula (Tune-in, Question, Listen, Review)</p> <p>SRA Listening Skillbuilders</p> <p>Listening to Study Skills Records</p> <p>Listening to records of good literature, especially humorous poetry</p>	<p>Taking of notes on lectures by assembly speakers</p> <p>Reporting on radio or TV newscasters</p> <p>Listening to records of the changing English language</p>

GRADE 10	MINIMUM ESSENTIALS	AREAS OF GENERAL INTEREST	AREAS FOR SPECIAL GROUPS
R E A D I N G	<p>Continuation of Reading Skills developed in Grade 9</p> <p>Skills used in consulting sources of information--dictionaries and other reference works</p>	<p>Reading for Information Encyclopedias Assorted reference books Magazines and newspapers Dictionaries Vocational guides</p> <p>Reading for Enjoyment Short stories--some of purely "escape" nature; some which involve the solving of personal problems of interest to teenagers Short plays A modern short novel Some Arthurian legends in prose Some modern essays of the "chatty" or humorous type</p> <p>Parallel Reading: One book per grading period--an assortment of types</p>	<p>Reading for appreciation of literary skill Study of types of literature The short story--including a Poe selection The drama--<u>Julius Caesar</u> The novel--<u>Silas Marner</u> Biography and autobiography The essay (using supplementary material not available in text) The literary ballad--"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" Lyric poetry (including selected Psalms from KJV Bible) The literary epic--"Gareth and Lynette"</p> <p>Study of terms used in analysis: characters, protagonist, tragic hero, tragic flaw, plot, climax, atmosphere, local color, theme, suspense, style, rhythm, stanza, blank verse, rhyme, parallelism, soliloquy, flashback, point of view, etc. Figures of speech: alliteration, onomatopoeia, anachronism, apostrophe Versification: blank verse, ballad form Parallel Reading: Additional book or books for each grading period (including information on Renaissance drama)</p>
W R I T I N G	<p>Basic understanding of syntax</p> <p>Variety of sentences: simple, compound, complex, compound-complex (Combinations of <u>patterns</u>) Emphasis on subordination</p> <p>Variety of structures (Transformational grammar) Introductory participial phrase Introductory adverbial clause Appositive construction Prepositional, infinitive, and gerund phrases Restrictive and non-restrictive adjective clauses Punctuation skills appropriate for the above</p>	<p>Writing (Chiefly factual and expository) Friendly letters, social notes Simple business letters Explanation of a process Directions for reaching a destination Letters to editor of school paper Theme based on investigation of a vocation: description of career, requirements, opportunities, etc. Development of ability to choose precise words</p>	<p>Transitional expressions Creative writing: Character sketch Paragraphs developed by comparison or contrast, reason Paragraph describing an abstract quality or a belief Paragraph explaining some phase of language development: Loan words, neologisms, processes of change in meaning, etc. Evaluation of movies, TV programs, etc.</p>

GRADE 10	MINIMUM ESSENTIALS	AREAS OF GENERAL INTEREST	AREAS FOR SPECIAL GROUPS
S P E A K I N G	Practice in standard usage Techniques in oral reading Phrasing Emphasis Word stress Pitch variations Pause	Conversation groups Committee planning Oral reading of passages giving information pertinent to class discussions Announcements about forthcoming school events Introductions: Social--one person to another Group--a speaker to an audience	Panel discussions Arranges and participates in interview Individually prepared talks (about vocation) Recitation of favorite passages of poetry Dramatization of scenes from <u>Julius Caesar</u>
L I S T E N - I N G	Courteous attention	Continuation of skills begun in English 9 Listening to humorous poetry	SRA Listening and Note-Taking Skillbuilders Listening to recordings of great literature, especially scenes from <u>Julius Caesar</u> Listening to selections from "A Thousand Years of English Pronunciation"

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