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**Bank Street College &
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A PROGRESSIVE PHILIPPINE SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN: PROPOSAL AND
PRESENTATION FOR PROSPECTIVE PARENTS

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Abstract

This independent study presents a philosophical framework for a proposed elementary school in the Philippines, the Philippine School for Children (PSC). It summarizes the major contributions of a family of theorists: Piaget, Dewey and Vygotsky and applies their theories to the development of PSC. The study also includes a description of several features of a progressive classroom for kindergarten and grade one.

The content of the study serves as a basis for the presentation of a progressive approach to education to prospective parents. Possible questions from prospective parents are raised and addressed at the conclusion of the study.

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A PROGRESSIVE PHILIPPINE SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN: PROPOSAL AND PRESENTATION FOR PROSPECTIVE PARENTS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this independent study is twofold: to develop a philosophical framework for the Philippine School For Children, (PSC), an elementary school I hope to establish in the Philippines and to design a presentation for prospective parents. Initially PSC will consist of a family center for infants and toddlers and a preschool for ages four to six. The elementary grades will be added on a yearly basis. A descriptive focus for this independent study will be placed on developing kindergarten and grade one.

PSC's PARENTS

Segments of this paper will be used in a presentation to explain to the prospective parents of PSC, the rationale behind choosing progressive education as the approach of PSC. The target population of PSC is mostly professional families from the upper middle and high-income strata of Philippine society. Parents are college educated with a significant number holding graduate degrees from prestigious local and foreign universities. They are either entrepreneurs or top level managers of leading national and multinational corporations. The reason for choosing this clientele is to influence young parents who have influence in Philippine society. They are also more apt to consider a new approach to education. The vision is for PSC to be a prototype alternative school from which other educators from the public and private sectors can learn. In order to widen its impact, PSC's target population will be encouraged to cooperate with PSC to

support the programs of Interact Pamilya Foundation which supports preschool education for disadvantaged Filipinos. In order to remain faithful to the ideals of progressive education PSC, once financially stable, will move toward supporting a scholarship program to enable the admission of disadvantaged Filipinos to PSC.

PRESENTATION FOR PROSPECTIVE PARENTS: SETTING AND ACTIVITIES

The presentation for prospective parents will be held in a grade one classroom that epitomizes a vibrant constructivist setting. I will start it with an experiential activity that will demonstrate the need for change. The presentation will include a brief lecture and viewing of an audio-visual tape of a progressive classroom showing children engaged in several typical grade one activities. The presentation will involve the parents by having them write and share their experiences with their own education and their hopes and expectations for their children from an educational institution. The parents will be encouraged to participate in some of the physical knowledge activities to experience first hand the differences of the progressive approach. They will also be invited to manipulate the materials especially the blocks. A transparency with two columns will be used to magnify the difference between the traditional and progressive approaches.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PRESENTATION:

By the year 2000, save for unseen currency problems, the Philippines will achieve "tiger cub" economy. However, economic growth does not necessarily lead to lessening the gap between the rich and the poor. We will still experience divergence not only between the rich and the poor but between upland and lowland Filipinos, Christian and

Muslim, landowner and tenant, household owner and house-helpers. We will still see the preferential development of certain regions and sectors, limited laws and limited public education to preserve the environment, the assault on the Filipino family because of overseas employment, a propensity to be loyal to one's family, relatives and province instead of to the nation. We will still see the goals of government in the hands of inefficient politicians. On the positive side we can look up to endeavors of volunteerism, cooperation and initiative among certain segments of society (Liwag, 1995). We have a rich humane culture but the Filipino and the Filipino family has to examine its role in promoting social responsibility. It is true that women are attaining more important roles in the building of the nation but machismo, the culture's double standard of morality, is still prevalent. The Catholic Church still plays a significant role in spiritual and moral development but it has to address the problem of overpopulation.

The Philippines today is undergoing critical problems in education. One third of students drop out before completing grade six. These children never achieve functional literacy. Just recently, Filipino students did poorly in an international test on mathematics and science. Father Nebres (1997) of the Ateneo University spoke "about improving the learning environment to lessen the number of dropouts" (p.5).

The majority of our poor cannot yet avail themselves of quality education. As a result, their performance in college admission tests lags behind those coming from the urban and more affluent sectors of our society. Our country has not been able to utilize optimally the graduates of our educational institutions for national development. There is a lack of qualified students majoring in science, technology and education. Consequently, the dream of the Filipino for access to quality education and for its

graduates to contribute significantly to national development is not heading steadily to fulfillment (Licuanan, 1998).

How do we address these problems? Let us go down to our level, our selves, and thereby help to address the problems of our community and perhaps of our province and perhaps of our nation. Let us begin with ourselves. I ask you, what do you want for your children? What do you want from a school? What do you hope for your children? When you were a student what was most successful for you in your learning? Who was your favorite teacher and why? How did you feel about your schooling in general? (You can spend several moments to jot down your comments which we will go back to later). At the end of this presentation, I hope you will have grappled with the answers to these questions. I hope that the answers will also stir us to think of the educational needs of our less privileged children.

In her address as the new president of Miriam College, Dr. Patricia Licuanan (1997) spoke about the hidden curriculum, the

unintended shaping of values and behavior through the psychological processes of reward and punishment and role modeling or the imitation of significant adults such as teachers and administrators. For instance, conformity and submissiveness are taught by systematically rewarding politeness, civility and obedience and ignoring or actually punishing curiosity, critical thinking, initiative and assertiveness by using fear, disapproval, and imposition of authority. One might ask how differences are handled on campus, how schools deal with student, faculty and staff dissent or protest? Do we sincerely respect people's right to speak out and express what they believe in? If we do not, how then can we develop active and responsible citizens who are willing to solve problems and right the wrongs of society? If through the hidden curriculum, our schools teach conformity and submissiveness, how then can we expect the products of our schools to explore the unknown and break new ground in science or

entrepreneurship or service or any area of endeavor. How will they dare take the road less traveled by and make a difference? What does the hidden curriculum in our schools teach about work ethics, standards and accountability? About social responsibility and involvement? How does it develop self-confidence and self-esteem? What kind of role models are we to the students whose lives we influence? (p.7)

What do you think of these issues? What are your thoughts and feelings about them? Can you connect the questions she raised with the things you jotted down earlier about your thoughts on education for yourself and your children? (Give them time to discuss their thoughts and feelings).

Today, I will share with you a commitment of PSC which has to do with actualizing your dreams and hopes for your children, as well as addressing the issues raised by concerned parents and educators like Dr. Licuanan, by introducing progressive education for the preschool and elementary grades. It is an educational reform. To achieve this educational reform we have to focus on how children learn and how teachers teach. To understand where we are going I would like to start with a brief history of progressive education.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

(From hereon, the content for the presentation will be culled appropriately from the various aspects of progressive education).

We go back as far as Plato, who in his treatise, The Republic, advocated that children be removed from their parents and placed in schools run by the state so that their utmost potential will be realized. Plato wanted to train specialists in his philosophical ideals to train these children so that they participate in the meritocracy that Plato believed

as the ideal society. He wanted the children to be away from the destructive influence of their biological parents. Luckily, the ideas of a man called Comenius, who believed in the early education of children under six years of age by their mothers gained more acceptance than those of Plato. Comenius looked at the family as the chief source of educating children, like that of a gardener tending her young tree. Early childhood education programs first supplemented the training at home. Later, preschools assumed a more dominant role as home education became ineffective for later schooling and in preparing children for a more complex world.

There are three major streams of educational thought: romanticism, cultural transmission and the cognitive-developmental/ constructivist/ progressive schools of thought which influenced educational objectives and experience, meaning how and what is taught in the classroom.

Representing the romantic period is Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) known as the father of early childhood education. He and his followers believed that human beings are born innately good and if they are allowed to grow with the slightest interference with the unnatural environment the children's basic goodness will naturally unfold to its fullest potential both educationally and morally. He wanted the growth of children to be free from restrictions from adults and the environment as a whole. Rousseau was very child-centered and believed that children thought differently. The role of the teachers was permissive and passive as they observed and facilitated the growth and creativity of children. Other popular names associated with this thinking are Freud and Gesell.

Representing the cultural-transmission view is John Locke (1632-1704) who

believed that human beings are born with a "blank slate," or "tabula rasa." Those holding this position believe that knowledge comes from information outside of the individual through the senses. Other proponents are Thorndike who postulated punishment, reward and practice as influencing learning. Thorndike was also one of the pioneers of the educational testing movement. Other proponents include B.F. Skinner who theorized that learning is the response to stimulus and Engelman who advocated programmed learning that was rigidly structured, work-oriented and very academic. It stressed the acquisition of language skills especially for disadvantaged children. The behaviorists and the environmentalists fall under this category. In this stream of thought, the teachers are the sources of information and values to the children. At present, our preschool and elementary education in the country is still dominated by the cultural transmission view. This means that the goal of primary education is to prepare children for the demands of an academic classroom rather than to promote the wholistic development of the intellectual, social, moral and affective aspects children.

Deriving from the aforementioned theorists we have the following characteristics of the traditional approach to education as categorized by Brooks & Brooks (1993).

Emphasis on instruction, reinforcement, coercion, obedience

1. Stress is on the acquisition of basic skills. The curriculum is compartmentalized.
2. Teachers strictly follow a fixed curriculum. They expect short and simple answers to their questions. They teach "complexity as previously categorized historical eras, mathematical algorithms, scientific formulas, or pre-established genres and classes" (Brooks & Brooks, 1993, p.6). With this approach, success seems to be equated with covering the curriculum instead of understanding. Gardner stated (cited in Brooks

and Brooks, 1993)

I contend that even when school appears to be successful, even when it elicits the performance for which it has apparently been designed, it typically fails to achieve its most important missions. Evidence for this startling claim comes from a by-now overwhelming body of educational research that has been assembled over the last decades. These investigations document that even students who have been well-trained and who exhibit all the overt signs of success--faithful attendance at good schools, high grades and high test scores, accolades from their teachers--typically do not display an adequate understanding of the material and concepts with which they have been working (p.3).

3. The activities are based substantially on textbooks and workbooks. In our Philippine schools, this is more pronounced since portions of books are copied and given to the children to take the place of textbooks. This occurs in all subjects. Consequently, the learning is further narrowed down to the selected portions by the teachers who tend to teach only from these selected portions of the textbooks. This procedure increases the chance of giving only one view to students of a complex issue. For example, in the study of American history, the one-sided view of Christopher Columbus as the discoverer of the New World eliminates a discussion of the oppression of the native Americans. In the trial of Andres Bonifacio, only the version of Aguinaldo, was given credibility for a long period of time. The writings of our national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, El Felibusterismo, and Noli Mi Tangere were not allowed readings in Catholic universities and colleges for a long, long time. Finally, the appearance of the mimeographed texts in black ink on brown paper is not appealing to children.
4. Teachers look upon students as "blank slates" onto which they engrave facts.

Traditional educators contend that there is a fixed world that the students must learn to understand and therefore the ability to show how much mastery the students can parrot of conventionally accepted understandings of public science knowledge or social arbitrary knowledge is of utmost importance. Our elementary students can recall that the “tamaraw” and the Philippine eagle are distinctly our own. There is not much information beyond this. The construction of new knowledge in terms of conservation of these animals and other valuable parts of the environment is not given as much value.

5. Teachers are didactic in their method of teaching, giving data to students. Traditional schools have looked upon learning as repeating what the teachers have said in quizzes, tests and oral summaries. The thinking behind this mimetic activity is the belief that when students are trained to repeat information from the teachers then the students have learned. Memorizing what the martyrs “GOMBURZA,” stand for is an example. The expression of the learning can be gauged through tests that consist of multiple choice and short answer tests. The final validation of the learning are the grades. In a short answer test students can name Gomez, Burgos and Zamora as the three martyrs representing “GOMBURZA,” but more significantly, what ideals did they die for? What were the influences in their lives that shaped their characters? Since the aim is for readiness training for upper elementary grades, the priorities are listening to and obeying the teacher. For kindergartners this means learning colors, shapes, numbers and letters through lessons and worksheets.
6. Teachers search for accurate answers to confirm student understanding. Not much value is placed on questions from students. Moreover, when the teachers ask

questions, they usually want to know if the students know the right answer, instead of helping the students think through the intricate issue. The discovery of the Philippines by Magellan, the Spanish, Japanese and American occupation and all the names and dates that are thrown at students are interesting to know but the development of a deeper understanding of these events and dates are not given enough emphasis for further research by the students. The movement that was “KKK is another example. To this day I remember what the letters stand for more than what the movement stood for. This emphasis on right answers prevents students from taking risks which may lead to more profound thinking. Moreover, students tend to raise their hands only when they are sure of the answer. I have observed this happening in one of our elite schools where the teacher states a declarative statement with a fill in the blank at the end which she expects students to answer. For example, in a grade one classroom where the children were studying family composition, the teacher started by stating, "A family consists of..... and the students raised their hands to give the answers. “The head of the family is.....and again the students raised their hands to give the answer. The teacher prepared pictures of different family members and led the discussion about the characteristics of a family. It was the teacher who integrated and summarized the conclusions of the characteristics of a family. The children’s participation was mainly in completing the teacher’s sentences.

7. Evaluation of student learning is validated mainly through testing. Teachers exert a lot of energy preparing students to take tests by memorizing formulas, public science knowledge and historical dates and names. Memorizing Jose Rizal’s “Ultimo

Adios,” is not as important as understanding his role in the revolution and his choice of a peaceful strategy in fighting the Spaniards. This stress on performance brings about little retention over time whereas stress on learning brings about long-term understanding. Since students fall back on strategies mainly to finish projects and to pass tests they cannot apply what they were supposed to have learned after several weeks or months.

8. Students usually work alone. They spend a considerable amount of time laboring on worksheets, workbooks and ditto sheets which require low-level skills instead of higher-order reasoning.
9. There is preponderance of teacher talk. Teachers use the lecture method to impart the knowledge and expect students to repeat what they heard. Just recall a classroom where the teachers blast off questions like, “What is our national flower?” “What is our national fish?” And the children as a group call out, “sampaguita,” “lapu-lapu.” A research was done regarding the flow of communication and in the traditional classrooms, most of the arrows pointed to or away from the teachers. Student initiated-questions and student-to-student interactions are atypical according to Flanders & Goodlad (cited in Brooks & Brooks, 1993). In the traditional school, the learner is expected to be passive, to absorb without question the prescribed curriculum through drill and rote exercises. How many of you remember how we were asked to memorize the entire catechism word for word? Fortunately, Vatican II has improved the teaching of religion, but there is still a preponderance of absolute obedience without much benefit of discussion of the “whys” of the tenets of our Catholic faith.

10. The relationship of children with teachers is marked by dominance. Children who ask many questions are considered, “pilosopo.” Teachers, supported by parents, believe that children should not ask questions that will place teachers in an embarrassing position. “Nakakahiya.” This authoritarian rule by the teachers hinders the children’s construction of morality. This concept will be explained in detail when we discuss the Piagetian theory.
11. Teachers enforce silence and children are compelled to comply. It is interesting to note that in an environment where language development should be encouraged, rules stifle this; we demand silence among students many times of the day.

From the cultural transmission approach we will now move to individuals who offered an alternative to the two aforementioned worldviews.

Representing the cognitive-developmental/ constructivist/ progressive ideology are John Dewey and Jean Piaget. They believed that knowledge does not come from direct biological maturation or from what we learn directly from the environment but from what the person does inside of him as he interacts with the physical world and its people. Lev Vygotsky is another major theorist in progressive education.

John Dewey (1859-1952) articulated the chief principles of his educational philosophy as follows: the goal of education is to promote the continuing growth of the children’s intellectual and social skills as well as to advance children’s interests in their environment. Dewey believed that children do not learn at the same rate and in the same way. Since children are not yet capable of abstract thinking, learning should focus on activities that engage the children’s natural interests. The goal of individual growth requires a respect for childhood and its immaturity, immaturity which is actually a

requirement for growth. The activities of children are valuable in themselves, for their own sake, without reference to later adult life, otherwise children would always be considered deficient adults. Dewey considered the incoming students as possessing several assets not only in the three R's but interest in communicating, in finding out things and in working. The role of the teachers is one of directing children's interests toward worthwhile results. He opted for active exploration of the environment, and related experience to learning. He emphasized cooperation and the growth of children to their highest potential. Most notable among his achievements was his emphasis on the importance of social interaction in the classroom as a way of preparing children as citizens of a country. Dewey viewed the school as the microcosm of society, stressing the interdependence of individuals in society. He believed that it is in the school that children will learn the necessary intellectual and social skills that would prepare them as participating members of a society. Dewey envisioned schools as the vehicles through which social, intellectual, cultural barriers can be removed. It is through Dewey that we give credit to a democratic education.

The constructivist theory of Piaget (1896-1980) best expresses the cognitive-developmental theory and has been highly influential in progressive education. Piaget revolutionized psychological and educational thought. How do children think? This is how Piaget explained how children construct knowledge and intelligence itself: from interactions with the environment, children construct mental structures of their experiences. This is called assimilation. Through assimilation children make sense of their world by synthesizing new experiences from their previous understandings or mental structures. Children constantly assimilate new experiences into their existing

mental framework. Before long children encounter an object, or a relationship, or an event that is not quite like anything they have encountered in the environment before. They experience a disturbance, a disequilibrium, because the experience demands change. It does not make sense to them. They experience a conflict in trying to balance the new structure with the old structure. The children then accommodate the new experience by constructing a different mental structure to accommodate the new experience. Finally, this resistance to change and the need to change is resolved as they achieve an intellectual balance, an equilibration, which brings them to progressively higher levels of understanding. It is the disequilibrium that motivates or spurs children to find a solution. It is at the point of equilibrium that conceptual change occurs. This is the point where children learn. I will give you several examples.

A child's construction of a new concept: Gloria meets cats in her community regularly. From her observations, she is able to organize a mental category or idea built on similarities of cats. She can recall this category when she needs to. One day, Gloria sees a squirrel for the first time in the zoo. She places the similarity of the squirrel with her category of cats. Out of curiosity, she approaches the squirrel and it runs and then later stands on its hind legs. She has never seen a cat this way. She recognizes a difference and her cat category is no longer sufficient. She therefore forms another category like that of a funny cat that can stand on its hind legs in her mind. The squirrel can now fit this category. She has reached a solution that is satisfying to her mental framework and is compatible with her experience. When Gloria finally learns the name of the funny cat as "squirrel" from her teacher she can fit this into the new mental framework she initially created. Although her teacher supplied the name, the

construction of the preliminary understanding was Gloria's (Labinowicz, 1980). This is what we mean by a child being able to construct knowledge. (Furthermore, the teacher's offer of the name "squirrel" exemplifies Vygotsky's notion of working in the zone of proximal development).

This same process occurs when Belen's experience with water is limited to drinking water, water in the shower and in the kiddie pool. What happens when she experiences water from the sea for the first time? Again this will lead to structural changes in the way she thinks about water. The same is true of the process involved in differentiating guava from atis. At different periods of development, children experience various aspects of the world and are thus able to construct more complex understandings. Belen in this example knows that the taste of seawater is unpleasant. Later on she will understand that it is salty. As a high school student she will comprehend the chemical concept of salinity and at a further stage of development she might examine how salt solutions conduct electricity or how the power of the waves and tides she saw at sea can be generated as a source of usable energy. This is an example of how our understandings of our experiences and our ability to accommodate disparate information lead to more complex thinking (Brooks, & Brooks, 1993).

In 1945 the influence of the progressive approach as an alternative to either the romantic and the cultural transmission worldviews was at its height. It was the dominant educational ideology in preschool education according to Cremin (cited in Zilversmit, 1993). What were the repercussions of Piaget and John Dewey in educational practice? In contrast to the traditional approach we have the following characteristics of the progressive approach as categorized by Brooks & Brooks (1993):

Emphasis on construction, interest, autonomy, cooperation

1. Stress is on accentuating big ideas. The curriculum presents the big picture, the totality of the subject matter.
2. Teachers actively encourage their students to ask questions. Teachers present the complexities and possibilities of the world that extol and facilitate the construction of knowledge. Teachers ask students to take part in the search for understanding, to appreciate uncertainty and tentativeness in the acquisition of knowledge and to inquire responsibly. Duckworth (cited in Brooks and Brooks, 1993) describes this aptly: " I propose situations for people to think about and I watch what they do. They tell me what *they* make of it rather than my telling them *what* to make of it."
3. Activities are based largely on primary sources of data and manipulative materials. For example, in a lesson on how shoes are made children go to a small shoe factory in Marikina where they experience shoe making first hand.
4. Teachers value the thinking of students regarding their emerging concepts about their environment. Progressive teachers encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning, to be autonomous thinkers, to generate unified understandings of concepts, and to pursue and search for answers to vital questions. Students are inspired to follow their interests within a broad curriculum.
5. Teachers interact with the students in a less authoritarian way, helping the students reconcile their concepts about their growing knowledge of their world.
6. Teachers implement their belief in the active participation of students in the development of curriculum. Therefore, they base their planning of subsequent lessons from the students' perspectives and on their current understanding of

concepts.

7. Evaluation of students' learning is interconnected with teaching. Teachers observe the students at work, their exhibits and portfolios as a means of assessing them. Instead of looking for what students can repeat, teachers look for what students can create and demonstrate.
8. Students are primarily engaged in collaborative learning. Students are usually assigned tasks in twos or in groups of four or whichever grouping is appropriate for the task. The children present their work together.
9. The relationship between teachers and children is distinguished by cooperation and autonomy which promotes the children's construction of morality. Power does not reside mainly with the teachers.
10. In place of silence, there is movement and activity where children are able to reveal their true selves.

PROPOSAL FOR PSC-A PROGRESSIVE APPROACH

Where is PSC in all this? What kind of a school will it be like? It will reflect the characteristics of the progressive approach. We first start with the educational aims of PSC.

- The goal of education is the development of the cognitive, social, emotional, moral and personality aspects of children within the context of Philippine culture. This general goal includes the following specific aims which initially are patterned after the goals of Bank Street formulated by Biber, Shapiro and Wickens (cited in Zimiles, 1987).

- To promote active inquisitiveness, experimentation and discovery as children explore their world.
 - To foster socialization and meaningful involvement with peers and adults in play and community activities including opportunities for social and moral decision-making.
 - To strengthen children's competence in the various academic fields.
 - To help children regulate their experiences through the creative use of their intellectual skills.
 - To give support to children as they struggle through the various phases of development
 - To encourage the development of individuality, autonomy and creativity.
 - To promote the integration of children's thoughts, feelings and actions.
 - To encourage the development of social responsibility, forming judicious judgments and implementing actions.
 - To cultivate imagination, to support "the having of wonderful ideas," by Duckworth (cited in Perrone, 1991).
- PSC will be an active member of its community, connecting with the families and other neighborhood organizations.

PSC bases its philosophical framework, its educational worldview, on a family of theories. This family includes the work of Dewey and Piaget, followed by Vygotsky, and Freud. In terms of how society can best educate its children, De Vries & Kohlberg

(1987) summarized Piaget's thought about this by arguing that "an individual's right to education should not be limited to acquisition of subject matter and reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, but must necessarily extend to nothing less than the totality of intellectual, moral, and affective development" (p.18-19) and "Full development of the personality in its most intellectual aspects is indissoluble from the whole group of emotional, ethical, or social relationships that make up school life" Piaget, (cited in De Vries p. 19).

We also give credit to Freud who theorized the psychosexual development of the individual and the effects of the formative years in adult life as well as the influence of emotion in rational thought.

Another member of our family of theorists is Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist, whose main contribution is how he looked at behavior and learning within a specific social and cultural context. To him social activity and cultural practices are sources of thinking. The higher sources of thinking are first learned through relationships with other people and then later internalized by the children as mental processes with ongoing influence from the sociohistorical context. In other words, children's thinking and learning reflect the culture of their province. Vygotsky believed that human beings can alter their responses to stimulus in their environment through various "mediating links." He stressed the importance of the use of tools and signs which individuals use to navigate their environment. Foremost among these tools is language. Children use language to govern their thinking and their actions. Language is also the link between the children and their sociohistorical world. As children learn to talk, the meaning of the words represent the rich history of the children's culture. Culture brings about differences in

thinking. Children alter the environment by the way they behave and this behavior predicts the outcome of future behavior. What happens to children as they develop is linked to what happens in the social and cultural spheres of their community. The pattern of intellectual behavior of a certain culture varies from that of another. How children think is dependent upon the pronounced or major thinking activities of their culture. This is the reason why PSC would like to involve the parents in the development of our educational objectives.

Vygotsky, unlike Piaget, underscored the importance of instruction and learning as moving development forward. Consequently, we temper Piaget's discovery learning which emphasized the child's ability to construct her own intelligence and learning with that of Vygotsky's assisted discovery where more experienced community members support development of ideas in the child. The sociohistorical environment includes all the significant people and events surrounding children in their particular culture which becomes the source of the children's thinking and behaving. According to Vygotsky

Any function in the child's cultural development appears twice, or on two planes. First it appears on the social plane, and then on the psychological plane. First it appears between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child as an intrapsychological category. This is equally true with regard to voluntary attention, logical memory, the formation of concepts, and the development of volition. We may consider this position as a law in the full sense of the word.....Social relations or relations among people underlie all higher functions and their relationships genetically. (cited in Berk, p.12)

To Vygotsky, schooling aids children to develop and master their thoughts. He is known for his emphasis on the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (cited in Watson & Konicek, 1990) which means that when the children are on the brink of learning

something new, teachers can give the support or scaffolding for learning. More specifically, Berk (1995) defined the ZPD as "the hypothetical, dynamic region in which learning and development take place. It is defined by the distance between what a child can accomplish during independent problem solving and what he or she can accomplish with the help of an adult or more competent member of the culture" (p.5). Vygotsky also described how the private murmurings of children are signs that the children are about to learn or embark on a new thought. Therefore children should not be interrupted or told to keep quiet. Children use private speech to govern their minds and use it to solve problems. Have you seen instances of this? The teacher giving the name "atis" to the child who has formed another mental category in her mind for this fruit, that is not quite like guava because of its lumpy texture, is an example of this.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OF PSC

This portion of our discussion will be devoted to some of the distinctive features of our school following the examples of Cuffaro (1995) and De Vries & Kohlberg (1987).

PSC, INTEREST and ACTIVE EDUCATION

I will explain some selected concepts that are crucial to understanding the classroom practices of PSC. Interest is the most essential factor that triggers the constructive process. As adults we are able to do something that is not interesting to us but even then we are slowed down and do not become as productive. With children, interest is essential. Without interest the children would not assimilate or accommodate new experiences. Therefore, the burden is on teachers to provide activities that will

intrigue children and will lead them to figure things out remembering that following children's interest is the best focus.

According to Piaget, children develop their intelligence up to seven years mainly through acting on objects. Therefore, education must be active. Active includes the common meaning of physical movement and manipulation of objects if it leads to constructive mental activity. Running is active but, unless it is purposeful, does not fall into this category because it does not lead to mental construction. Play does.

De Vries and Kohlberg (1987) stated that "intriguing situations do not include lectures, repetition in drills, programmed instruction, audio-visual or teacher demonstrations. Programmed instruction does not lead to inventing. They are not active enough. Similarly, "experiments" in which children follow prescribed procedures do not offer the best opportunity for them to exercise their reasoning through experimentation" (p. 25-26). I will describe a blowing activity to you to show what active education is and how it promotes learning.

In a blowing activity, for example, if the child tries to move a straw across the floor by blowing it with another straw, he finds out that he has to blow in the middle at a right angle to make it go straight. As a function of where one blows relative to the center of the straw, it turns more or less to the right or to the left, sometimes turning a complete 360 degrees. As the child sees how the straw reacts to different actions, he structures spatial and logical relationships. How this happens can be seen more clearly in the following description of a blowing activity. After giving each child a straw, Ms. Ellis showed them a box containing several of each of the following items: Kleenex, round Tinker Toys, popsicle sticks, straws, empty cans (frozen orange juice and one-pound coffee cans), marbles, and small blocks. She said, "Can you find something that you can blow across the floor?" This question prompted the children to look at objects with their "blowability" in mind and to think, at some vague, intuitive level, about considerations such as the following: Is the object's weight relevant? Is its shape important? Are both important? How can we find out? Kamii & De Vries (cited in De Vries & Kohlberg, 1987, p. 73).

Kamii and De Vries stated that these questions demonstrate how children build logico-mathematical relationships during a physical-knowledge activity as they structure specific contents. In this blowing activity, children have an opportunity to come up with at least three categories-"things that *never* move" (a block),"things that *always* move" (a Kleenex, marble, straw, and popsicle stick). "things that *sometimes* move" (an orange juice can and tinker toy which move only when they are in a certain position). In addition, the children may notice that certain objects move by sliding, certain objects move by rolling, and still others (such as straw) move in both ways. The children can classify how their blowing affects the movement of the straw. For example, blowing in the middle and blowing on other parts of the straw produce different results. With this classificatory structure the child can conclude that the only way to make the straw go straight is by blowing in the middle (cited in De Vries & Kohlberg, 1987). Note that what children are classifying are their own actions on objects and the reactions of the objects. Compare this activity with a mere question and answer between traditional teachers and their students about the qualities of what can be blown and not blown by a straw. It is a very forceful way of teaching children about phenomena.

PSC and PLAY

What do you feel children love to do the most? What are they most interested in? Play. We consider the different forms of play at various levels of development, a vital component of our school program.

Symbolic play is important for the development of representational thought. When children are able to represent a piece of wood for an iron that means they are advancing in representational thinking. To be able to represent one object for another is a

step to reading, math, and science. The children's pretense or pretend play are the children's thoughts. It is their language to express their feelings and thoughts that they cannot explain any other way because of their limitations in logic and language. Vygotsky considered fantasy play as within the ZPD and an excellent means of bringing the child forward to higher forms of thinking. Vygotsky (cited in Berk, 1995) claimed that,

[P]lay creates a zone of proximal development in the child. In play, the child always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behavior; in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself. As in the focus of a magnifying glass, play contains all developmental tendencies in a condensed form and is itself a major source of development (p.52).

Playing with blocks is one of the most creative activities that children can engage in. Through block building children are able to integrate their learning in mathematics, language, art, social studies and the other academic fields. It is a tremendous medium for peer interaction. It links children with their larger community. Pretend play also is an outlet for stressful experiences for children. As children participate in dramatic play they can correct their negative experiences and emerge as the victor. Reading can also have this effect. In the book Where the Wild Things Are, by Maurice Sendak, the child conquers his nightmares by befriending and overpowering his enemies. He is also able to resolve his conflict with his parents regarding the punishment for his mischiefs. (Show the book and the last page. Encourage parents who have read the book with their children to make comments). (At this point the parents can go to the building blocks and if there is time they could work on one motivational statement).

PSC will use group games with rules to bring about sociomoral, intellectual and

personality development among the students. In achieving the goal of a game the participants in the game experience interdependence, opposition and collaboration among the players. In games, children construct their own moral judgments about what is good and necessary as they relate to others.

In games, therefore, the child finds conditions in which he can willingly adapt to society. Children thus have the opportunity to exercise autonomy in freely regulating their actions with others in relation to rules. They experience the consequences of failing to follow a rule when others protest and the game comes to a halt. They can then decide whether to change their behavior or, with the teacher's help at first, change the rule. This leads to dawning awareness of the necessity of collective agreement to the continuation of a mutually satisfying experience. In a game, the child thus has the possibility of creating in part the rules and values by which he regulates his behavior. From the point of view of promoting children's co-operation, group games contribute by providing a context-a mini-society-in which children can autonomously relate to others according to rules. Interest in the game leads to interest in others. Interest in playing with others according to the rules leads to efforts to coordinate individual actions with those of others. Self-regulation thus evolves into mutual adaptation-that is, the mutual accommodation, mutual adjustment, of co-operation. Interest in the end (playing the game) brings an interest in the means (co-operation) by which to have fun in the game. Games uniquely promote attitudes of reciprocity that lead to feelings of moral necessity-the core of sociomoral development. These feelings of obligation arise, not out of obedience, but out of a feeling of personal necessity. Feelings of moral necessity about relations with others develop in games as children confront issues of fairness, individual rights, and the reasons for rules. They can practice mutual respect which is a defining characteristic of co-operation and democratic principles. (De Vries & Kohlberg, p. 121-122)

Intellectual development occurs in games because of the many opportunities for the children to decenter (meaning the ability to look at other viewpoints) as they consider the several varying perspectives of the other players.

Personality development occurs because in the course of social experiences through games children evaluate and react to social material and develop feelings of liking and disliking. There are opportunities to decenter affect as they begin to consider the desires of others and make progress in achieving reciprocity in feelings about others (De Vries & Kohlberg, 1987).

Think of all the opportunities for moral, social and cognitive development as the children play “patentero,” “gabi at umaga,” and “timbang preso.”

PSC and EXPERIMENTATION

This will be a valued activity in our school. We will adhere to intriguing activities where children are involved in spontaneous research of new truths. Children will be allowed to rediscover or reconstruct a body of correct knowledge. In our school, we will respect errors because we see them as the necessary stages children have to undergo before they reach the final correct solution. This is a revolutionary trait of Piaget's thought on education because it runs counter to common sense and the traditional approach to teaching correct facts. "Only this (spontaneous activity), oriented and constantly stimulated by the teacher, but remaining free in its attempts, its gropings, and even its errors, can lead to intellectual autonomy.....It is in learning to master the truth by oneself at the risk of losing a lot of time and of going through all the round-about ways that are inherent in real activity" Piaget (cited in De Vries & Kohlberg, 1987, p. 288). Children who are in the preoperational stage at the time they make the error, cannot correct themselves nor can they understand correction by others. This experimentation can be done individually but thrives also in cooperative learning.

PSC and COOPERATIVE LEARNING

This is the learning that occurs among children and between children and teacher. Mutual respect is the necessary ingredient for children to be able to cooperate. It also includes conflict which we welcome because of the insights conflict brings about. For example, in working on an art project to celebrate the Centennial year of our country's independence, the children are given the opportunity to experience how others react to what they plan to do and how to decide what the entire group wants to do. These opportunities help them to decenter. Social relations rouse the intelligence and bring about the conditions in which mutual accommodation can thrive. This favors the development of a critical sense and desire for evidence about what is true according to Piaget (cited in De Vries & Kohlberg, 1987). Piaget believed that cooperation allows children many occasions to see the perspectives of others and brings about the motivation to coordinate these. As they undergo various experiences in cooperative learning, they begin to realize that truth is important. It is helpful to remember that children are not usually capable of decentering until after the age of four.

Furthermore, when children's interaction with the teachers is predominantly obeying their rules, the children submit but it is mindless conformity. They are not motivated to question, analyze or examine their own convictions or construct their own reasons for following rules. The children are able to do this, however, when they cooperate in various activities with other children. We will ask teachers to lessen their authoritative roles so that children are free to question, analyze, and create their own rules. This will enable children to apply general moral rules in specific situations. The aim is for the children to regulate themselves. For example, in the beginning weeks of

school, the children can actively participate in deciding what rules they all should have and follow to bring about order in the classroom. Children have been known to contribute rules like, “take your turn,” “no hitting,” saying “I’m sorry” when they accidentally hurt another and so on. If the teachers can cooperate with the children on equal footing and collaborate with them in finding things out, the teachers' influence will lead to analysis.

This value of a heteronomous (subject to external authority) relationship with children is particularly important for us in the Philippines because of the strong authoritarian presence not only of teachers but parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles as well. We should gradually change it to one that values children more, where reciprocal esteem and mutual affection thrive. Can you remember instances of this authoritarian relationship in your own schooling? What can you remember of its effects in your own learning? If teachers practice cooperation and uphold mutual respect, the children are given the opportunity to practice exercising control over their own behavior on the basis of their own interests and judgments. "By exercising his ability to govern his own beliefs and actions the child gradually constructs internally coherent knowledge, morality, and personality" (De Vries & Kohlberg, 1987, p. 37). The need for cooperation and mutual respect is just as important for cognitive, social and moral development. An important role of the teacher is to foster social life among the children and cooperation among the students themselves. As we have mentioned, children encounter the differing desires and ideas of their peers as they are helped to decenter and to create the need and desire to coordinate with others. Piaget's view was that “children develop the intellectual coordination that eventually makes possible logical and moral reasoning through

continual efforts to adapt to one another and to collaborate in creating "rules" governing their relating" (De Vries & Kohlberg, p. 39). For Piaget, the method of cooperation included conflict situations as excellent instances in which children are especially challenged to coordinate with others and to engage in mutual adaptation. It is the attitude of teachers toward conflict that has to change. We ask them to see it as an opportunity for learning.

To further elaborate on the importance of cooperation to learning, learning to understand others begins as others show that they understand the children's inner feelings and ideas. Continuous relationships with others bring about experiences for comparison, opposition and mutual adjustment. Piaget commented:

In reality, education constitutes an indissoluble whole, and it is not possible to create independent personalities in the ethical area if the individual is also subjected to intellectual constraint to such an extent that he must restrict himself to learning by rote without discovering the truth for himself. If he is intellectually passive, he will not know how to be free ethically. Conversely, if his ethics consist exclusively in submission to adult authority, and if the only social exchanges that make up the life of the class are those that bind each student individually to a master holding all power, he will not know how to be intellectually active. (cited in De Vries & Kohlberg, 1987, p. 37)

What this implies for us Filipinos is a strong challenge to diminish the power and dominant authority we have had over our children. There has been change but the change has to be sustained and hastened. What are your thoughts on this?

PSC and the TEACHER'S ROLE

Teachers are companions and guides. Moreover teachers must be evaluators which means having a solid knowledge of the child and his mental development, a

selector and organizer of activities, a stimulator where they intervene to stimulate children's reasoning, and collaborator where they have the ability to establish a more equal relationship with children. Being companions and guides does not mean that the teachers have no role to play or that children should be left with unlimited freedom to work or play on their own. Teachers actively intervene. The teachers must organize materials and situations that will provide useful problems for the children and which will propel them to move forward. In accordance with Vygotsky's theory, Azmitia, Radziszewska & Rogoff (cited in Berk, 1995) "indicate that children's problem solving seems to improve most when their partner is an "expert" - a person especially capable at the task - who can provide new ways of approaching the situation not already within the child's repertoire" (p.20).

Teachers provide an environment that allows "children to try out, shift backward as well as forward, to create where necessary the opportunities for the kind of interaction that is essential for the assimilation of experience, the achievement of new integrations, and the resolution of conflict-in both the cognitive and emotional realms" (Shapiro and Biber, cited in Nager, 1996, p.19).

Teachers are attuned to the characteristics that the children bring to the classroom: the social, cultural, and intellectual content and abilities, the gaps, the inconsistencies, fears, and joys. The teachers construct a curriculum which reflects both their decisions about content and what children bring to that content (Cuffaro, 1995).

The PSC and the SENSE of COMMUNITY

What gives importance to a community in the classroom? Cuffaro (1995) says that "It is the sharing of activity. It is doing together, in the sharing of hopes and

aspirations, in participating toward a common end that communities are created and sustained" (p.26). It is worth noting what Dewey said about the sense of community.

A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity. These more numerous and more varied points of contact denote a greater diversity of stimuli to which an individual has to respond; they consequently put a premium on variation in his action. They secure a liberation of powers which remain suppressed as long as the incitations to action are partial, as they must be in a group which in its exclusiveness shuts out many interests. (cited in Cuffaro, 1995, p.27)

In our country, as with PSC, we should aim for a more diverse student population that will mirror our community, MetroManila. What are your thoughts and feelings about having a more diverse classroom: think about this in terms of social class, in terms of including children with disabilities, in terms of varying family life styles, in terms of ethnic background like our Muslims, in terms of children of other racial backgrounds? Class distinction seems to be our foremost barrier. For our school and country to be truly democratic, we have to address this issue.

PSC and CREATING the PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

In creating the space for children we ask ourselves the question: What would we like life to be in this classroom where we will interact daily with the children? Following our family of theories, our teachers will create a physical space that will promote

children's potential and possibilities for learning. Our teachers will arrange the classroom in a manner that will cultivate interactions that evoke and inspire the communications and interactions that nurture community. Therefore, there will be free movement and activity in the classroom not enforced quiet or silence among submissive students.

PSC and MATERIALS

For children materials are the means for learning and acquiring knowledge. For this reason, choice of materials becomes important. When our teachers choose materials they think about the learning opportunities these can offer. They ask these questions: "Do these materials offer avenues for symbolic representation? for social and language development? for solving problems? for content? for social studies? for creating community? for expression of thoughts about self and others?" To give you further a feel of the climate in our environment, teachers will ask more open ended questions like, "How can you find out? What do you think will happen if you...?" The depth and scope of a teacher's understanding of the potential of a material and where it may lead determine the quality of a child's experience with the material" (Cuffaro, 1995, p.34).

In the beginning, we will start exposing the children to structured materials like various puzzles, tot tower, lacing shapes, peg boards, matching games according to size, and color; math manipulatives, Montessori materials; tangoes, dominoes, and other games. We start with these because most children are not immediately comfortable with unstructured materials. We realize that your children are very familiar with imported toys but remembering to emphasize our cultural identity we will include "holen," "trompo," "buri bola," and "sigay." We graduate to the wooden one-inch cubes which are less structured than the puzzles, but still these are not as unstructured as the scaled

building blocks which vary in shape and size. We will stress unstructured materials because these offer more possibilities for the expression of ideas and feelings and more possibilities for language development and creative expression. Again the teachers' role here is of utmost importance because they can make the most unstructured material structured by telling children what to do

PSC, TIME AND SCHEDULING

Aware of the fluidity of children's idea of time our teachers will not rigidly adhere to a fixed time schedule. Teachers extend time if they feel that children are very involved in what they are doing as in activities that demand depth in understanding such as experimentation. This schedule also means minimizing interruptions and transitions from one activity to another to allow deeper engagement. The ideas about time and scheduling go hand in hand with certain routines that guarantee stability during the day. For example, snack and lunchtime occur with regularity.

PSC and SOCIAL STUDIES

Cuffaro (1995) stated that "It is social studies-the interconnecting of various disciplines-that gives primacy to the social individual, to learning about human effort within its spatiotemporal context, and offers opportunities to introduce and examine ideas about interdependence, diversity, change, and connectedness. The appeal of social studies lies in the possibilities it offers to view the experiences of people, past and present from diverse perspectives. Means are offered for understanding and finding meaning in the continuity of nature and the dynamic relationship between people and their environment" (p.37). Dewey said that "the ultimate significance of lake, river, mountain, and plain is not physical but social; it is the part it plays in modifying and directing

human relationships" (cited in Cuffaro, 1995).

As in the Bank Street School for Children, the core curriculum of social studies will be our emphasis. It includes the study of the people and their physical environment; community, from the family to the world; continuity, that is, communication from generation to generation through which we build upon and transform the past; meaning, through myth, religion, science, and art; values, in the systems people develop to structure individual and group behavior; change as a basic fact of life; and how people solve problems. (Bank Street School Curriculum Guide, p.4).

PSC AND SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS, READING and LANGUAGE

Science

PSC will follow a conceptual-change approach in science. The teachers start with the children's own thoughts, ideas, stories, experiences and misconceptions about the subject matter. Teachers realize that children's feelings about their misconceptions are important. They do not assail the misconceptions. The teachers expect children to resist accepting new ideas especially if these ideas are not within their immediate range of experiences. When new ideas are presented, children cling tenaciously to their old ideas. The teachers know that conceptual change does not occur right away. They consider the various barriers to conceptual change such as stubbornness of children to admit that their theories might be wrong. The teachers understand how children would change their experiments to accommodate their beliefs rather than change their beliefs to fit the result of the experiment. They have a propensity to term as magic an idea that is contradictory to their beliefs which they cannot explain scientifically. They have developmental obstacles, limited language and perception abilities especially if the children cannot touch

or see the discrepant change.

Teachers provide sufficient guidance for the children to figure out the language, rules and ways of thinking in the neighborhood of science. Furthermore, the teachers realize that the children should be within the zone of proximal development to be able to make a conceptual change. According to Watson and Koniczek (1990), this refers to the "construction zone where memory, skill acquisition, and reasoning ability affect a child's capacity to incorporate new knowledge into existing schemes of thought" (p.683). Teachers help the children question their misconceptions and personal beliefs and how these differ from experimental evidence. Before performing an experiment teachers ask the children to guess what will happen. This active participation of predicting results helps children assimilate the new knowledge. After listening and accepting all of their ideas they begin to ask the children to justify and elaborate their explanations based on experimental evidence. They ask hard questions and talk with students about the characteristics of good explanations in science. Teachers encourage students to grapple with their differing opinions and guide them to use observations from their experiments in making decisions as to which ideas make more sense. They lead students to wrestle with the weak points, discrepancies and inconsistencies in their own stories.

As the children inquire, investigate and work on the science experiment, teachers make sure the children are the active participants in extinguishing their misconceptions. Here, for example, is a discrepant event that challenges their old belief. What new explanations can the children give? Teachers give the scaffolding necessary for the children to change their initial explanations, misconceptions and stories as they view the new event to be believable, consistent, and able to withstand further testing. With these

conditions, conceptual change can occur. Shapiro (1994) stated that, "Constructivist teaching approaches focus on learners' views and efforts to consider new ways of thinking about things, for it is the learner who must do the work of integrating new ideas into his or her thinking. To help learners do so, we must begin to explore the extent to which we involve them as active agents in their own learning" (p.9).

Again we will use cooperative learning extensively since children are influenced by the ideas and feelings of their classmates. As they are able to write even using invented spelling, teachers ask children to write their predictions in journals. Writing enables children to make use of their previous knowledge and link with the new to form a hypothesis. Writing also gives them the opportunity to reflect on their thinking and to evaluate their thinking in the light of the results of their hands-on experiments.

Mathematics

Why is there so much fear of mathematics? Is it because of the way it has been taught? A classroom is not divided into two categories: those who can do math and those who cannot. Our mathematics will be based on current concrete experience. For example, to introduce children to graphs, our teachers use blocks for children to build the graph as they answer the question, "How do your shoes fasten?" Another example of a game is "Racing Dice" which involves filling out a graph by rolling a die. For learning and practicing writing numbers children use the numerical die. For learning the quantity associated with each numeral children use the dot die.

Teachers use as a guideline the "concept teaching" game of Melnick (1987) which he defines as a "self contained, concept-fostering experience which inherently contains a challenge for a child or a group of children where there is an element of chance or

"strategy building opportunity" and where the outcome is exciting enough to invite children back again and again" (p.1).

Teachers use the same tone of voice when asking or responding to a child who gives a right or wrong answer. Teachers do not praise the children who give the right answers so that all children are empowered to take risks in finding and volunteering solutions to problems. Consequently, teachers uphold trial and error as a good strategy. When children are taught to follow set mathematical methods, instead of making sense, children's idea of mathematics becomes one of learning set procedures just to arrive at the right answer. We help children to make sense of mathematics which entails acquiring mathematical knowledge from their own explorations, thinking and participation in discussion with the teachers and their peers in collaborative learning. Furthermore, children are motivated to use their own methods for solving problems. This way they feel that their intuitive ideas and strategies about arriving at solutions to problems have a real connection with mathematics. Neither is this a free for all. Teachers guide and direct the learning of students. Teachers realize the importance of finding ways to teaching mathematics where the children will feel positively toward it and care. The children will feel motivated to get engaged in mathematical problems. We use games to teach mathematical concepts because they are effective instructional tools. Earlier we discussed how games evoke spontaneous interest in children.

Finally, we keep in mind two major goals for mathematics instruction according to Cobb (cited in Kamii & Lawrence, 1990): first, "students should develop mathematical structures that are more complex, abstract, and powerful than the ones they currently possess so that they are increasingly capable of solving a wide variety of meaningful

problems. Second, "students should become autonomous and self-motivated in their mathematical activity. Such students believe that mathematics is a way of thinking about problems" (p.35).

Reading and Language

"Reading the world always precedes reading the word, and reading the word implies continually reading the world" (Freire 1983, p. 10). This quotation underlines the importance of teaching reading within the experience and culture of the reader. PSC views literacy as developmental, that learning to read and write should be treated in the same manner that we treat the learning of language with all its positive reinforcements. Oral language growth is a companion to the development of reading and writing and therefore the latter should be given all the same healthy learning conditions we give to children when they are developing their speech. In other words, learning spoken language whether it is Pangasinan, Bisaya or Waray is our first model for literacy. According to Holdaway (1979) "developmental learning is highly motivated, consistently purposeful, globally activating, powerfully reinforced both intrinsically and extrinsically, and meaningfully related to other aspects of development" (p.22). Another important concept for PSC teachers is what Vacca (1991) said that the core of the reading process is the reader's ability to construct meaning. Teachers focus on the answers to the questions: "What can help children understand what we are reading? "What can the children do and we do?" "How can we put meaning into the children's reading and their writing?" Answers to these questions help children discover what word would make sense, what sounds like language, so that they are able to read for comprehension.

At this juncture, let me talk about the changes in our educational system

concerning the use of Pilipino in MetroManila or the use of the dominant dialect in the other regions in the lower grades after which Pilipino is used. Selected subjects like social studies are now taught in Pilipino and the medium of instruction in certain subjects is Pilipino. There is a great debate regarding this change from English to Pilipino as the medium of instruction. Which side are you on in this debate? (Give time to discuss this issue).

One of the more cogent reasons why this was passed into a law is to unify our country through one language, Pilipino and not English. One of the main reasons why Pilipino was adopted is to enable all Filipinos to be able to participate in government at the local and national levels. How, for example, can we practice democracy when our citizens shy away from active participation because of their inability to speak English fluently? Although our ability to speak English is part of our history, we need to uphold our cultural identity by unifying ourselves through one language, Pilipino. There are also some problems involved in using English when both teachers and students are not fluent in its use. As a result, understanding is hampered.

When it comes to learning a language and reading, it is also more advantageous if the children speak and learn to read first in their mother tongue (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988). Once they are able to speak and read in their native language or dialect, the transfer to English becomes much easier. Constructing meaning by the child is very helpful. Our emphasis on semantic clues does not preclude the use of the other strategies such as graphophonic and syntactic clues.

PSC will use several approaches to reading. The National Research Council just recently published the results of a two-year study that supports integrated instruction.

The report as summarized by Manzo recommends that “children learn to read through explicit phonics instruction and by sounding out unfamiliar words, but it also urges daily exposure to literature and attention to comprehension. Although context and pictures can be used as a tool to monitor word recognition, children should not be taught to use them to substitute for information provided by the letters in the word. Invented spelling also received endorsement” (Manzo, 1998, p. 18). Following this study, PSC will use phonics, invented spelling and the whole language approach.

According to Routman, (1994) whole language has the following components: "Reading aloud, writing aloud, shared reading, guided reading, guided writing, independent reading and independent writing" (p.31). Although whole language includes phonics it does not overly emphasize starting with sound-letter correspondences, over learning decoding skills, blending sound into words, or over learning consonant and vowel sounds to recognize a word. The teachers' explicit instruction will consist of modeling, demonstrating, explaining, and helping children to think for themselves.

As you can see in this classroom, it is teeming with print showing all the functions of the literacy corner. It is full of letters and words and phrases and books and magazines and writing and art works of children with their written names and captions painting the walls of this room. Writing materials are in abundant supply, accessible to children and distributed around the room so that writing can be incorporated into other activities such as in the dramatic area, book corner and other learning centers. PSC will implement the, "shared book experience," a strategy invented by Holdaway (1979). This means that teachers select favorite stories of children as well as encourage the children to bring their favorite books. Moreover, children choose anything that is real and important

to them for reading and writing. From some of the selections, the teachers will enlarge the print and the illustrations. For the beginning readers the teachers will choose books that have predictable outcomes, that is absorbing and that will excite the imaginations of the children. This selection of predictable and literary books will increase the participation of the children to read along with the teachers. Routman (1994) emphasized reading aloud where she stated that "Reading aloud is seen as the single most influential factor in young children's success in learning to read. Additionally, reading aloud improves listening skills, builds vocabulary, aids reading comprehension, and has a positive impact on student's attitudes toward reading" (p.32). To introduce a new story, teachers will use the technique of previewing to help the children develop the background necessary for understanding the book. This will help the children relate new information to what they already know. As Newman stated, "We can affect our students' reading more directly by helping them develop the knowledge they need for understanding and interpreting a text before we ask them to read it" (102). After reading, the teachers conduct a discussion about the story encouraging the children to give their reactions. The teachers encourage children to make self-corrections because this means the children are actively involved in reconstructing meaning. Children can also be asked to extend the stories they have just listened to by writing, drawing, painting or using dramatic play. These extensions are important to provide because they engage the children in cognitive activity that involves speculation, judgment and evaluation.

Teachers can also use the language experience approach where the children dictate to the teachers their stories or experiences which the teachers will write for them in full view. Because the words and experiences come from the children it will be easier

for them to read the text. This approach also demonstrates the relationships among writing, speaking, listening and reading. This integration is very helpful to children.

In shared writing, the teachers will take dictations to help the children with meanings and choice of words. The teachers will encourage children to write their own stories, personal narratives and adventures. Writing journals will give the teachers the clues about the lives of the children, their skills and their learning and how different each child is. The writings of children will be placed in folders with pieces accurately dated so that progress can be assessed. The folders will be available for the parents and other children to read. Children will be allowed to use invented spelling because this is a sign of literacy development. Invented spelling follows discernible rules and is logical and can be decoded. As in the other areas of learning, all these will be accomplished in an environment that promotes risk taking, one that develops confidence.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FROM PARENTS AND RESPONSES

“What is progressive education?” “Is there anyone else doing this?”

Progressive education began in 1890 and reached its height as an educational ideology in 1945 (Zilversmit (1993). John Dewey was the Father of Progressive Education, a philosophy of change. Dewey inspired a movement to create new schools that would be democratic rather than authoritarian, that would make learning meaningful and pleasurable by focusing on the needs and interests of children. Dewey advocated a radical change in school methods, shifting from memorization and recitations to learning activities based on experience. As we discussed earlier he also envisioned a school as an institution concerned with social reform. In the 1920's and the 1930's some agreement

was reached on the definition of progressive schools.

First, progressives agreed that a progressive school was one that followed a child-centered rather than a subject-centered curriculum, a school which mobilized children's natural desire to learn. Second, they agreed that it was a school concerned with meeting the needs of the "whole child," promoting children's emotional and physical needs as well as their intellectual development. Third, there was agreement that a progressive school was one in which children would play an active role in determining the content of their education." (Zilversmit, 1993 p. 18)

According to Zilversmit within this core of common assumptions were disagreements and variations in the practice.

Progressive education is practiced more in our preschools. In the elementary grades, I can think of only JASMS and perhaps some of the schools for expatriates like the International School.

"Is it the same as Montessori?"

Piaget, Dewey and Maria Montessori all belong to the general cognitive-developmental approach. However there are contrasts between Piaget and Dewey on the one hand and Montessori on the other. Like the cognitive developmentalists Montessori believed in the progression from the known to the unknown. Montessori also believed that the child's mind is qualitatively different from that of an adult and that the mind goes through invariant stages of development. Like Dewey and Piaget, she believed that action is the means through which the child acquires knowledge, that the child is not passive but active and that the child has the competence and motivation to learn. She also emphasized the acquisition of logical and orderly thought mainly through the use of her materials on classification and seriation. While it is true that logical classification and seriation are evidence of general intellectual development, like grouping, ordering,

and comparing, Montessori's method is not the educational expression of Piaget's theories.

Montessori's professional concerns were practical and intuitive. She "was relatively unconcerned with scientific theory or with systematic logical consistency in her psychological theorizing" (De Vries & Kohlberg 1987, p. 261). Piaget and Montessori differed basically in their conceptualization of the nature of knowing and the acquisition of knowledge. Montessori believed that a child from birth to six learns through her senses. "Montessori's observations led her to the conviction that attention is the most intense with no intrusion of authority when the child is relating spontaneously to objects." Piaget believed the sensorimotor roots of thought lie in action, not in sensation. In her book, The Absorbent Mind, Montessori said that "knowledge comes totally by absorption through the senses, without even any effort on the part of the child" (cited in De Vries & Kohlberg, p. 264).

One of the most significant contributions of Montessori is the development of furniture and equipment for children according to their size. Furthermore, a basic feature of the Montessori method is the prepared environment with the materials in plain view and easy reach of the children. The materials are arranged according to purpose. The children select the materials to work with and return the materials once finished. Montessori is best known for designing these teaching materials for the training of the senses. These materials cover three areas: practical life, sensorial materials and academic materials. (Examples of each of these materials will be available for viewing): practical life (pouring), sensorial materials (the graduated cylinders) and academic materials, (sandpaper letters for the child to see and feel and a moveable alphabet to form words).

The important feature of these materials is that they are self-correcting, which means that the control of error is built into the material so that the child will be able to see for herself whether she succeeded or not. This is what is meant by auto-education where the children educate themselves because of the prepared environment.

Regarding the criticisms of Montessori's approach I will comment on the more concrete criticisms. On both constructivist and Montessori approaches the children are encouraged to discover by acting on materials whether they are right or wrong. However, her materials present one single problem with one right answer. Hence, she is criticized for the inflexible nature of learning and the inflexible structure of her materials. There is so much rigidity in following the strict rules in the use of the materials. The teachers teach the children how the task is to be carried out through demonstration. It has to be done that particular way. Our approach is that the materials are more open-ended and can be used in a variety of ways. We do not necessarily have one right answer and not try to prevent wrong answers. Montessori believed that children should repeat her exercises and do them for a long time until they have no more mistakes. In contrast, as we mentioned earlier, we believe that experimentation and constructive error is part of mental development. Another criticism is the lack of creativity, the lack of avenues for the expression of feelings through role play and dramatic play and the lack of opportunity for social interaction and consequently language development. There are a few art materials and art is very goal oriented. Because the use of the materials is very individualized, there is lack of opportunity for the children to interact with one another. There are very few social interactions. As a tribute to Montessori's contributions to education, however, Hainsock & Packard (cited in Lindauer, 1987) concluded that

"Criticisms aside, the traditional Montessori preschool program continues to provide children with opportunities for individual growth, self-education, independence, self control, and self-reliance in a warm and responsive environment" (p. 119).

"My friends and I are products of the traditional approach, and we turned out to be all right, achievers in our chosen fields of endeavor. Why should we send our children to a different kind of school?"

I will answer this question by referring to my own experiences. I, too, am a product of a traditional school. I also feel that I am an achiever. However, if I compare my traditional education with my education in Bank Street College, I will gladly go for the progressive approach in education. At a late age I decided to go back to school. My close friends could not believe the time I spent reading and coping with the requirements of the program. What propelled me to persevere in spite of all the hurdles I had to undergo?

Let me tell you that I just learned to use the computer when I started this program and started to type my papers on my own because I did not enjoy a secretary like we do here. I made tons of mistakes just learning to use the computer which made my writing of papers more difficult. I had to climb 63 steps to reach my assigned grade one class and I had to do this three or four times a day! I no longer had as good a memory as when I first took my first graduate degree. Why did I persevere? Because I enjoyed the whole process enormously.

I was excited as I learned new concepts. I can say I read 99% of all the required readings of the entire program. I felt so engaged reading all the articles, I missed my subway stops several times! I looked forward to attending my mathematics class which I

definitely abhorred in grade school and high school. I clumsily weathered my art classes where I was able to produce a portfolio! I loved my children's literature class and voraciously read all, even more, of the required reading of children's books. I fumbled and learned with the children in practice teaching!

There were more experiences. I grappled with play dough. Several classmates and I built a two story house with a staircase and four windows! I taught a child to begin to read. I observed and recorded a child for three months in different situations. I studied children at play to evaluate theories of child development experts. All throughout this process I wondered why my teachers always would throw our questions back to ourselves. I felt disappointed at the idea that I was teaching myself. But this is the wonder of it all! I actually feel I learned a lot because of the process of teaching and learning I experienced at Bank Street. The underlying positive and supportive outlook of the teachers in my academic life further motivated me to learn! I loved learning! I will continue to learn. I want to share what I learned with other educators. This is the experience PSC will offer your children. This enthusiasm for learning will fuel them to be life long learners.

“Is there a guarantee that our children will turn out as well if not better than we did with this approach?”

There is no guarantee, but based on our discussion of your expectations for your children's education, I can say that PSC will meet those expectations. Progressive education does not only mean intellectual competence but the development of the whole child. In this regard our children have all the opportunities to develop fully. With the emphasis on experimentation and autonomy and creativity, our children would have a

more meaningful education. As your own experiences reveal, the traditional patterns of early education need to be changed. What was good for us may no longer be adequate now. We are presently living in a vastly technological world where mass information is readily available through the Internet. The children have to have the critical thinking skills and awareness of others to live competently in this world. The Philippines right now needs more cooperation than competition. Those who achieve economic success should view it as a means of helping others.

“Has there been research done in the United States to prove the validity or effectiveness of this approach?”

There has been tremendous interest, dynamic inquiry, acceptance and practice of the cognitive-developmental/ constructivist/ progressive worldviews. Publications of work on these worldviews have been translated into more than seven languages. There are innumerable films, filmstrips, audio-visual presentations and tapes on this approach. Universities and colleges like Bank Street College in New York, where I studied, Wheelock in Massachusetts and Pacific Oaks in California are training teachers in this approach. Preschool and elementary schools using this approach are scattered all over the United States and other parts of the world. Head Start and the Follow Through program are the more well known public early childhood programs steeped in progressive education. Professional associations like the NAEYC and the ASCD are widely influential. Conventions are held regularly on this approach. In the Philippines, a number of the preschools have taken to this approach at various levels such as Child First and The Early Learning Center. However, this influence has not reached beyond preschool except for JASMS. This is where the PSC wants to have its impact, utilizing

the progressive approach in the preschool and particularly the elementary level.

As De Vries and Kohlberg (1987) have noted, "a child-centered program with a self-conscious cognitive emphasis appears to be more effective on the whole in promoting lasting intellectual development than either traditional nursery school (romantic) or straight didactic teaching (cultural-transmission). Also, less didactic and cognitive-developmental programs have more positive long-term effects" (387). Furthermore, "In summary, some evidence suggests that social development is facilitated by child-centered and cognitive-developmental programs, but may be negatively influenced by didactic programs" (De Vries & Kohlberg, p.388). Finally, in a study of a constructivist kindergarten program covering four schools in Illinois, the study showed that "the constructivist program succeeded in promoting complexity of thought, but also that the lack of emphasis on academics in a constructivist program leads to no less academic success in traditional terms" according to Golub & Kolen (cited in De Vries & Kohlberg, p. 391). "In comparison with children from a Montessori program, constructivist children are more advanced in social-cognitive competence" (De Vries & Kohlberg, p.397).

"Since there is no proof in the Philippines about the success of this approach, why are you taking this risk? Our culture is different from that of the United States. Do you think it will work here?"

Many of our preschools are doing one form or another of this approach. It is in the elementary level that this is not yet implemented. Based on what we know of child development, we realize that this progressive approach is still very relevant to middle childhood. Children at this phase are still at the concrete operational stage. This means

that they are capable of mental operations like combining, separating, ordering, but these operations still have to be carried out in the presence of the objects and events they are thinking about. The progressive approach meets these needs of children. These children have not yet reached the formal operational stage which is where adolescents and adults belong. Therefore, all the activities and approaches we have discussed are still appropriate at a higher more sophisticated level. It is similar to my example about Belen's experience with water over different stages of cognitive development.

To address the issue about adopting a "foreign" approach to education, this will be adapted according to our valued cultural mores and folkways. We keep in mind Vygotsky's powerful message that children are products of their social and cultural environments and to comprehend children we must deal with the social, cultural and societal settings in which they grow and develop. For example, our revered extended family system will be acknowledged in talking about family where we will encourage the children to talk to lolo (grandfather) and lola (grandmother) about their childhood experiences in their barrios during their growing years. What games did they play as children? This experience will strengthen the children's knowledge of their origins. The ubiquitous yayas (live-in child care givers) will be included in our parenting seminars since they function as parent surrogates. We will "filipinize" as much of the materials, books and activities as we can. There is a surge of publications of children's books by Filipino authors which will be available in the Filipiniana section of our school library. Realizing that you would also like your children to grow up prepared to interact with a more diverse and technological world, we would, of course, expose them to other cultures and their educational practices and materials.

What will seem as the most visible change is the active role the children will play in their learning, the more egalitarian relationship between the children and the teachers and the value we will place on children's thoughts and feelings. Furthermore, the seating arrangement will be different. Instead of individual chairs facing the front of the room, the children will sit around tables with their peers. PSC will seek to lessen the very authoritarian and traditional role of teachers. Recall what Licuanan stated about the hidden curriculum, that teaches children conformity and submissiveness. I would like to reassure you that a more egalitarian relationship does not mean less respect between the two. The school will adhere to our cherished values of respect especially to our elders. The school will introduce the practice of addressing the teachers with their first names but prefaced with Ms., Mrs. and Mr. The parents will be informed regularly about the curriculum and the parents association will work closely with management. This will bring to the fore any concerns you may have about the school. The other area where you will find a significant but welcome difference will be the heightened inquiring minds of your children. Their outlook will be that their thinking are valuable and valued by adults.

"I am concerned that my child may be learning something that I cannot support at home, or be taught in a manner that is different from the way I have been raised or the way I am raising her. Can I bridge the gap?"

One of the strengths of PSC is its commitment to parental involvement. PSC believes that families provide the social, cultural and emotional supports that children need to function well in school. Parents can contribute insights and knowledge that complement and strengthen the schools' academic and social programs. Parents are a

natural link to the communities in which the school will be located and this is important especially when the staff do not live in the neighborhoods in which they teach. Because of this the parents bring a particular vista to planning and management activities. You, parents, bring an understanding of needs and experiences of your own children that can help teachers plan culturally and socially appropriate academic programs in the classroom. Since we believe that the family and the school are the two institutions that socialize and educate and acculturate children, there has to be collaboration between the two,

“Will not our children stand out as different or weird because of this educational approach?”

No, because this approach precisely deals with a view of the latest and most scientific finding on the cognitive, social and moral development of children. The last fifty years have not seen any dramatic challenge to the basic theories of Piaget, Dewey and Vygotsky. We will just have to be more accepting and encouraging of children having inquiring minds. This approach is most sensitive to what children really are.

“What will happen to our children after they graduate from your elementary school and go to a traditional high school? Will this not produce problems? What adjustments will they have to make? How will you prepare them for this shift?”

As children grow and advance in school, the curriculum can be more formal as in high school. I would like to reiterate what Dewey stated that while "the organized subject-matter of the adult" cannot "provide the starting point," of preschool and elementary education, it still represents "the goal towards which education should continuously move." While education should be based on experience, in order to be

educative experiences, "must lead out into an expanding world of subject-matter...of facts or information and of ideas." Education had to be adapted to the needs of "individuals of various degrees of maturity" and this could not be "the same for a person six years old as they are for one twelve or eighteen years old" according to Dewey (cited in Zilversmit (1993, p. 175).

By the time children reach secondary school, they can understand the long range goals of education, and the curriculum should be less concerned with their immediate interests and more and more directed toward mastery of subject matter. It no longer has to appeal to the immediate interests and experiences of the children. Schooling could be more subject-centered in high school without wreaking havoc on their previous schooling process based on using the interests and experiences of individuals. Dewey considered subject matter as important. He described good teachers as needing to understand children but they needed first to have a deep understanding of subject matter that was always ready to be used in interaction with the pupil's present needs and capacities (cited in Zilversmit, 1993).

Remember, that as children mature they come closer and closer to being able to understand subject matter as adults did and the curriculum could become more subject-centered. At this stage children are able to think beyond what they see or perceive through their senses. They are now beginning to become formal thinkers with the capacity to consider oral statements and logical statements rather than just concrete objects. They can think about abstract concepts. They are capable of understanding the symbolic equations of algebra, appreciating literary criticisms and the use of metaphors in literature. They often get engaged in spontaneous discussions on ethics, philosophy,

and religious beliefs in which abstract ideas like justice and freedom are discussed. The children have grown and therefore can meet the challenges of more adult education. Even before they reach high school, at about the sixth and seventh grade, PSC would have incorporated some of the traditional curricula. Also, remember that at this age, about fourteen years, they are in the formal operational stage of cognitive development of Piaget. As adolescents they acquire the ability to think logically and abstractly, and they are able to apply their newly mastered higher level cognitive functioning to various problems of life. Consequently, they would be able to make the adjustments. We would also prepare them about the differences they may encounter in high school such as a difference in methodology in terms of more lectures and more tests. A visit to the school and conversations with the prospective teachers will be beneficial.

“Just in case it does not work for my child in the elementary years, what will be my problems transferring her to another school?”

With your involvement as a parent and with our program of involving parents regarding our curriculum, there is a slim chance that your child will not make it through our grade school. In the rare case that you will have to transfer, there will be a certain adjustment your child has to undergo especially in the manner of teaching. Recall the differences between a traditional and a progressive approach to education and those would be some of the adjustments your child will have to undergo. We would like to reassure you that we will be preparing your child for the changes and that we will, with your permission, talk with the future teacher of your child so that she will understand where your child is coming from and hence help facilitate the adjustment.

“I am interested in placing my child just for the preschool. Will he have enough

academic preparation when he goes to Ateneo?" (Ateneo is a traditional school run by the Jesuits. It is considered one of the best schools in the country and it is very difficult to get in).

Yes, progressive education does not mean a neglect of the basic curriculum requirements of an elementary school. I expect our graduates to be self starters in learning and their experiences with us to be critical thinkers will keep them in good stead at the Ateneo. Their extensive exposure to literature will also help them excel.

"Is this an experimental school? We do not like our children to be the "guinea pigs."

No. As we have discussed, progressive education has been practiced and enriched for many years. Play and child autonomy have been accepted as educationally valid. This means that up to about six years of age, children cannot accommodate easily to the structure of teacher-directed academic work. This is the reason for the continued drive towards the progressive approach rather than the traditional approach to education.

"Will I need to hire a tutor for my child to keep up with this school? Will there be homework?"

No. For those children who may need the normal extra help now and then, the homeroom teacher can give the help. If ever homework is given starting the primary grades, it will not be a drudgery but again will emphasize construction and not drills, copying or repetition. The input of parents regarding homework will also be considered.

"Are you sure that the academics or the three R's will be learned thoroughly with this approach?"

Yes. All those subjects will be learned at the proper time and in a most challenging, engaging and fun way. (Refer to my text on science, reading and mathematics).

“Does this approach cater to a specific social class?”

No, this approach is applicable for all levels of society. The program of the Interact Pamilya Foundation is geared toward offering this particular approach to our disadvantaged children. We will encourage our parent association to support this program until PSC is financially capable of providing financial assistance and scholarships to our disadvantaged children to enter PSC.

“Do we have enough trained teachers to teach this way?”

A progressive school needs new services, different kinds of facilities and new teachers. There are a number of Filipino graduates from the progressive universities in the United States. There are about fifteen graduates from Bank Street itself. I have worked with five of these graduates in my previous school. I have also worked on establishing a contract with Bank Street to help us establish the school. This would mean hiring some US trained teachers to work with PSC. My plan is to hire a Filipino teacher trained locally or abroad to act as an assistant teacher for a year with the Bank Street teacher as her mentor. This Bank Street teacher will be oriented to Philippine culture and will live with a Filipino family. These steps will lessen the gap between the two cultures. We will also conduct intensive training programs for all our teachers on the philosophical framework of PSC from which educational practice will flow. I and my former principal, Dr. Emy Liwag, a developmental psychologist graduate from the University of Chicago and currently a professor at the Ateneo de Manila University, will create and implement this training program. Curriculum development and the role of the teacher will be a major area of the training program. PSC has the latest books and materials for the training of teachers.

“How will the school be able to afford all the materials that are needed since it sounds like a very rich environment?”

It is a very rich environment, but the richness will come mostly from the works of children. Paintings of children will cover our walls. Their sculptures and their block constructions in and outside the classrooms will dot the environment. We will give emphasis to the use of natural materials and less of the commercially available ones.

“I am a busy mother and so is my husband. Will this school take a lot of our time?”

For your child to have a fruitful experience from PSC, it will take some time from you. It will be good time spent. We would like to influence parents to start thinking that the job of educating does not belong solely to the school. Parents are as important to children's academic success as educators. We would like to assure you that we will be sensitive to your needs and will consider your available time, work schedules and individual preferences as we plan with parents the most appropriate parent involvement activities. You can discuss with us your particular limitations and we will try to work with them. However, your involvement is important and desired.

“I am not a working mother. I would like to be active in my son's school. Will your school allow me to visit and be active?”

Definitely. We like our parents to be involved. The parents will be given time to organize themselves into an association that will collaborate closely with the school. You can participate in many activities during the year that we will be planning together such as social events, field trips, exhibits, yayas day, grandparents day, to name a few. There will be parenting workshops for parents and the yayas. Parents can volunteer as resource persons. You will be invited to participate in the development of policy and curricula.

“My mother is wary of this new school? How can I convince her of this bold decision to enroll her favorite grandchild in a school such as yours?”

Invite her to visit the school with her favorite grandchild. We will work with the child in the presence of the grandmother so she will have first hand experience of what we have discussed about progressive education this morning. Lola will also have the chance to observe the other classes and experience progressive education live. We will spend sufficient time with her to answer all her questions.

In ending this presentation I would like to share with you the credo of Lucy Sprague Mitchell, the principal founder of the Bank Street College of Education. “We hope to imbue students with an experimental, critical, ardent approach to their work and to the social problems of the world. If we can do this, we are ready to leave the future to them.”

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