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# An Analysis of a Pre-Student Teaching Experience in the Preparation of a Social Studies Teacher

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AN ANALYSIS OF A PRE-STUDENT TEACHING  
EXPERIENCE IN THE PREPARATION  
OF A SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER

A Field Project  
Presented to the  
Department of Educational Administration  
and the  
Faculty of the Graduate College  
University of Nebraska at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Specialist in Education

by  
Franklin Wayne Ellis

June, 1970

UMI Number: EP74042

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Accepted for the faculty of The Graduate College of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Specialist in Education.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years the growing realization of the importance of education has brought about much criticism of teacher education institutions and their practices and procedures in pre-service training from those within the profession as well as from those without. The particular need appears to be for a kind of pre-service program which will provide for the development of skills, understandings, and attitudes in order to make it possible for beginning teachers to realistically and successfully cope with the teaching situations they will face.

Although opinions vary on specific points of emphasis, most educators generally agree on the importance of laboratory experiences throughout the pre-service program. A continuous blending of the theoretical and the practical is vital as the prospective teacher moves toward the ultimate assumption of the actual responsibility of directing the learning activities of pupils. As early as 1948, the report of the Sub-Committee of the Standards and Surveys Committee of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education stated that it had been known for some time that active participation in meaningful situations was essential to effective learning. The committee decided that the time had come to recognize that direct contacts with such teaching-



learning situations should not be limited to the period known as "student teaching."<sup>1</sup>

There are several areas which might be studied, either independently or in relation to one another, prior to student teaching before the novice teacher is asked to experience them all simultaneously. Some of these areas are observations of classrooms, working with routines in classrooms, participating in activities which enhance one's understanding of children, making plans for teaching, and experiencing school-community relations. A particular emphasis has been placed on the need for more direct, supervised, professional contacts with children prior to the student teaching experience.

In accordance with this need, the pre-student teaching experience which was the subject of this study was brought about. Juniors in elementary education at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, pre-student teachers, were placed in the various elementary schools one day per week for a period of four consecutive weeks to teach portions of regular social studies units. The college students were in the classroom during the social studies class, a period ranging from 20 to 60 minutes per day but usually averaging 30 minutes per day.

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<sup>1</sup>The Sub-Committee of the Standards and Surveys Committee, School and Laboratory Experiences in Student Teacher Education, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Oneonta, New York, 1948, pp. 90-98.

The college students were to help in the making and presentation of instructional materials, bulletin board materials, lesson plans; use audio-visual aids; assist on projects, demonstrations, field trips; and work with individuals, small groups, and the entire class. This pre-student teaching experience was designed, not as an observation experience, but to provide these elementary education students with the opportunity to work directly with elementary children in the classroom prior to student teaching.

## I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this study was to analyze a pre-student teaching experience in social studies in terms of its preparation for and relevance to the actual student teaching experience, as viewed by the pre-student teacher.

Objectives of the study. Of prime concern in this study was the analysis of a survey of some selected pre-student teachers and their pre-student teaching experience in terms of general information, specific pre-student teaching experiences, and an over-all evaluation and suggestions by the pre-student teachers. Secondly, it was assumed that an analysis of the findings of the survey would be helpful in suggesting possible changes for improvement in the pre-student teaching experience in order to make it more meaningful and relevant to student teaching.

The objectives to be achieved in this study include the presentation and analysis of the findings of a pre-student teacher survey based on a pre-student teaching experience in terms of general information; specific pre-student teaching experiences, i.e., planning for teaching, classroom instruction, and non-instructional duties; and an over-all evaluation and suggestions for improvement by the pre-student teachers. Also to be presented is an analysis of the findings of the total pre-student teaching experience survey in terms of its preparation for and relevance to the actual student teaching experience as viewed by the pre-student teacher. A further objective to be achieved is the recommendation of changes and improvements in the procedures of the pre-student teaching experience subsequent to the findings of the study.

Significance of the study. The expressed need for more direct contacts with children prior to student teaching is one common to educators and teachers alike. Research has shown that educators at all levels generally agree on two points concerning the over-all pre-service program: "first, that student teaching is the most valuable of all educational experiences prior to the first teaching assignment; and second, that general education courses and subject matter courses are deemed too theoretical and lacking in practical application."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Lawrence A. Lemons, "Education Courses," NEA Journal, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., October, 1965, p. 26.

I. N. Berlin feels that teacher training institutions could do more in helping prospective teachers form more realistic expectations of the actual teaching situation.<sup>3</sup>

Swartz and Richardson found in a survey of first, second, and third year teachers that "Prior to student teaching there are too few contacts with children to see how methods and procedures are applied;" and that "Methods courses are too unrealistic; they do not portray the teaching situation as it actually exists."<sup>4</sup> Along this line, Dr. Stratemeyer believes . . . for every course and idea there should be some sort of direct contact or experience to supplement knowledge and understandings.<sup>5</sup>

In accordance with this need, this pilot project was brought about largely as an outgrowth of a doctoral dissertation presented to the University of Nebraska by Dr. Robert L. Ackerman of the University of Nebraska at Omaha and directed by Dr. O. W. Kopp of the University of Nebraska. In

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<sup>3</sup>I. N. Berlin, "Unrealities in Teacher Education," Professional Reprints in Education from the College Division of Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., Columbus, Ohio, December 19, 1965, n.p.

<sup>4</sup>Evelyn Swartz and Donald C. Richardson, "The Real World of the Beginning Teacher: A Study of the Attitudes and Opinions," an interview study conducted at the request of the National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards for its Nineteenth National Conference, New York City, June 22-25, 1965, pp. 2-3.

<sup>5</sup>Florence B. Stratemeyer, "Relating the Several Parts of the Teacher-Education Program," Teacher Education for a Free People, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Oneonta, New York, 1956, p. 231.

this study on the identification of the professional problems of first year elementary teachers and on the recommendation of experiences that ought to receive emphasis in the pre-service program in order to minimize or alleviate such problems, the expressed desire for more direct contacts with children prior to student teaching was prevalent. This pilot project was designed, not as an observation experience, but to provide pre-student teachers with the opportunity to work directly with elementary school children in the classroom and was patterned after a similar experience supervised by Dr. Max Poole of the University of Nebraska.

Following three years of operation of the program, it was felt that an analysis of the experience would be helpful in revealing possible changes and improvements in the procedures in order to make it more meaningful and relevant to student teaching. It was also hoped that any benefits accrued by the study would be greatly appreciated not only by the analyzers but by future pre-student teachers as well.

## II. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

In order to assure a common understanding of the meanings of the various terms that appear in this study, the following terms are defined:

Pre-student teachers are those elementary education students who have completed some of the professional education requirements of their pre-service program but who have

yet to begin their student teaching.

Classroom teachers are those who have completed all the requirements of a certified pre-service program and who are presently teaching.

Cooperating teachers are those classroom teachers who have volunteered to participate in this experience, allowing one or more pre-student teachers to come into their classrooms and work with the children.

Pre-service program is the total program of preparation for elementary teaching.

### III. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The limitations of this study were imposed by the purpose, the sample, and the instrument. The purpose of this study has been limited by analyzing the pre-student teaching experience only in terms of its preparation for and relevance to the actual student teaching experience, as viewed by the pre-student teacher. No effort was made to examine this experience in terms of relevance to the liberal or professional classwork phase of pre-service training, only to the student teaching experience itself.

The study was further limited through the sample in that no effort was made to analyze this experience through the eyes of cooperating teachers, elementary principals, or

teachers of teachers, only through the eyes of those pre-student teachers who were presently student teaching, and then after only four weeks of the student teaching period.

The limitations inherent in the instrument were that the questionnaire was not subjected to detailed laboratory research techniques in order to determine its objectivity or validity; and further, that the findings of the survey were assumed valid solely on the honesty and competency of the respondents.

#### IV. PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

The following procedures were carried out in the development of this study:

Review of Related Literature. Of primary importance to this study was a thorough examination of the literature on prospective teachers' experiences with children in the classroom prior to student teaching. A great deal of related literature concerning contacts with children in the classroom during and following the student teaching period was also studied. Such related findings were included only as they were pertinent to the objectives of the study and only as they indicated the potentiality of lending themselves to specific pre-student teaching experiences.

Selection of the Sample. It was felt that those college students who had most recently participated in the

pre-student teaching experience and who were presently student teaching would be the most likely sources of objective and critical information on the relevance of the pre-student teaching experience to the student teaching experience. Accordingly, those college students who took part in the pre-student teaching experience in the spring of 1969 and who were doing their actual student teaching in the fall of 1969 were asked to describe, via the questionnaire, in what manner, if any, the previous experience assisted them in their student teaching experience. The questionnaire was administered approximately four weeks after the college students had begun their student teaching.

The Questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire was to analyze the pre-student teaching experience in social studies, as viewed by the pre-student teacher, in terms of its preparation for and relevance to the actual student teaching experience. Part I dealt with general information relating to the pre-student and student teaching experiences, e.g., grade level, number of children in the class, number and frequency of school visitations. Part II enumerated the specific experiences the pre-student teachers might have had, appraised their evaluation of these experiences in terms of relevance to student teaching, and questioned if they did not have these experiences in pre-student teaching, did they feel that having encountered them would have helped them in their



present student teaching assignment. Part III asked for an over-all evaluation of the pre-student teaching experience and for any suggestions the pre-student teachers might have for improving it.

Following suggestions and recommendations from the advisory committee, the questionnaire was drafted in its final form, relatively easy to read and complete and comparatively free of ambiguous meanings. The questionnaire was administered to the sample at their respective student teaching seminars on campus at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Findings of the Study. Following an analysis of the completed and returned questionnaires, the findings of the pre-student teacher survey were considered. Recommendations were then made for changes and improvements in the procedures of the pre-student teaching experience in order to make it more meaningful and relevant to student teaching.

## V. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine the value of the pre-student teaching experience in social studies in terms of its preparation for student teaching, as viewed by some selected student teachers. Chapter I introduces the project and discusses the need for such an analysis, the limitations imposed upon it, the objectives to be achieved in the study, and the procedures that guided it. Chapter II is a

review of the related literature. The third chapter details the initiation of the project and the project procedures.

Chapter IV presents the findings of the pre-student teaching experience survey as revealed in the participants' responses to the questionnaire. Chapter V summarizes the study and details the findings and recommendations of the writer.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There is an abundance of literature supporting the place and value of laboratory experiences in teacher education programs, beginning with John Dewey's "laboratory point of view"<sup>6</sup> at the turn of the century and coming to the many experimental programs of this decade. Although most of the studies to date have dealt specifically with student teaching, educators realize the value of professional laboratory experiences prior to this period. The National Education Association Instructional Service recorded the following recommendations in its "Imperatives for Preparation of Teachers for the Elementary Schools" report:

1. Many types of experiences carefully planned and gradually introduced throughout the teacher preparation program are essential to develop teaching competencies and a concern for teaching and for children.
2. If teachers are to have qualities of leadership, creativity, resourcefulness, flexibility, understanding, warmth, and humility, they must have opportunities to work directly in the school and the community.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>John Dewey, The Relation of Theory to Practice in Education, The Association for Student Teaching, Bulletin No. 17, State College of Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa, 1962, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>National Education Association Instructional Service, "Imperatives for Preparation of Teachers for the Elementary Schools," National Education Association, Washington, D.C., May, 1964.

One of the chief conclusions of the work of the Commission on Teacher Education of the American Council of Education as reported by Karl W. Bigelow as early as 1946 was:

Special attention should be given to enabling prospective teachers to study children, schools, and communities at first hand--not merely to observe them, but to work with them with some appropriate degree of responsibility. Such opportunity should begin fairly early in the preparatory program and be continued in complementary relation to a variety of classroom experiences . . .<sup>8</sup>

Providing concrete classroom experience, either through observation or participation has been one of the most common innovations in teacher education programs during recent years. The impetus for such efforts typically seems to have been to add a dimension of meaningfulness to what the undergraduate student learns.<sup>9</sup> Although opinions vary on specific points of emphasis, most educators generally agree on the importance of laboratory experiences throughout the pre-service program.

Of primary importance to this study was a thorough examination of the literature on prospective teachers' experiences with children in the classroom prior to student teaching. A great deal of related literature concerning

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<sup>8</sup>Karl W. Bigelow, "Better Teacher Preparation," Association of American Colleges, Bulletin 32, May, 1946, p. 189.

<sup>9</sup>Donald L. Barnes, "Changing Emphasis in Teacher Education," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XI, September, 1960, pp. 343-44.

contacts with children in the classroom during and following the student teaching period was also studied. Such related findings were included only as they were pertinent to the objectives of the study and only as they indicated the potentiality of lending themselves to specific pre-student teaching experiences.

#### I. PRE-STUDENT TEACHING LABORATORY EXPERIENCES

James Conant says the importance of student teaching in teacher preparation programs is generally accepted.<sup>10</sup> In order that this student teaching experience might not be an intending teacher's first direct contact with children in the classroom, and in order to enhance the student teaching experience along with the over-all proficiency of the beginning teacher, educators are striving to provide the pre-student teacher with as many direct experiences with school children as possible.

Such direct experiences with children for prospective teachers, relatively early in teacher preparatory careers and under direct and responsible guidance, are designed to serve a number of purposes:

- (1) To extend the basis upon which students and their advisors could check the wisdom of tentative vocational choices;

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<sup>10</sup>James B. Conant, The Education of American Teachers, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., New York, 1963, pp. 59-60.

- (2) To enable the students to comprehend and judge better for themselves the theoretical formulations that were being presented in class;
- (3) To sensitize them to the uniqueness of individual human beings and communities and help them to guard against using mechanically generalizations regarding either; and
- (4) To develop in them feelings of ease, security, and competence in real situations.<sup>11</sup>

While many such experiences must, of necessity, be supervised by instructors of teacher education courses as a part of a planned program of child study, other direct experiences with children may also be considered prospective growth activities for prospective teachers. These might include such things as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA, YWCA, youth centers, summer playgrounds, and baby sitting.

Observation of exceptional children and of "normal" children at all educational levels is also considered a desirable experience by most educators. However, observation, though beneficial, is not in itself a practical application and must be combined with learning through doing.

J. Lloyd Trump and Dorsey Baynham recommend that practical or work experience in school should begin when the student enters college. They suggest a five year preparation

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<sup>11</sup>Merle L. Borrowman, (ed.), Teacher Education in America, Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York, 1965, pp. 239-41.

program is essential with students spending five to ten hours per week as school clerks during their first two years, graduating then to the instructional assistant during the third and fourth years of the program. The fifth year would find the student being gradually inducted into the role of the professional teacher. Trump and Baynham conclude that such a program will provide for learning by doing and will enable students to transfer theory to practical situations.<sup>12</sup>

In a study at Indiana University in 1953, Dilley found that "student teachers who had had many previous direct relations with children seemed to experience more success in their student teaching than did those who had had few direct relations previously."<sup>13</sup>

Another interesting study on the induction into teaching at the pre-service level was done from the point of view of the teachers' role functions. The results of this study led the authors, Allen and Seaberg, to see the professional preparation of teachers as a progression through a series of four developmental levels of planned experiences: Readiness (background and general education),

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<sup>12</sup>J. Lloyd Trump and Dorsey Baynham, Focus on Change: Guide to Better Schools, Rand-McNally, Chicago, Illinois, 1961, p. 150.

<sup>13</sup>Norman E. Dilley, "Problems of a Group of Student Teachers in Elementary Education with Implications for the Improvement of Teacher Education at Indiana University," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Indiana University, 1953.

Exploratory (first teaching contacts with children), Student teaching in depth, and Internship.<sup>14</sup>

A study at the University of Kansas provided for a laboratory period to parallel a methods course. The units were designed to coincide in time and sequence but with a minimum of duplication in order to achieve an ordered blending of the theoretical and the practical.<sup>15</sup>

John Meier advocates "microtraining," implying that the procedure called microteaching serves as an example of the systematic application of microtraining to the improvement of preservice teacher education. Microteaching is essentially an opportunity for either preservice or in-service teachers to develop and improve their pedagogical skills with a small group of pupils (three to seven) by means of brief (three to seven minutes) single-concept lessons, which are recorded on videotape for reviewing, responding, refining, and reteaching. An effort is made to analyze the many aspects of a teacher's performance, to ferret out those most amenable to change, and to concentrate on their perfection one at a time.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Arthur T. Allen and Dorothy I. Seaberg, "Teachers-in-the-Becoming," The Elementary School Journal, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, Vol. 64, No. 6, March, 1964, pp. 332-38.

<sup>15</sup>Paul C. Burns and Robert W. Ridgway, "A Laboratory for Prospective Teachers," University of Kansas Bulletin of Education, School of Education, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, Vol. 16, No. 1, November, 1961, pp. 25-26.

<sup>16</sup>John H. Meier, "Rationale for and Application of Microtraining to Improve Teaching," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XIX, Number 2, Summer, 1968, pp. 145-55.



Haberman similarly finds real, though scaled-down, experiences of some value in programs of teacher education. He suggests the "minicourse," a limited set of specific teacher behaviors that translate a particular principle of instruction into practice. The essential criteria of minicourses include (1) instructional importance, (2) behavioral specificity, (3) relevance to practice, (4) relation to theory, and (5) evaluation based on change in instructional behavior.<sup>17</sup>

Many additional experiences and studies recommended by educators may have future bearing on programs of teacher preparation. One interesting and realistic innovation is that of "team learning," a part of the teacher education program at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, since 1956. Team learning, not to be confused with committee work, group projects, etc., stresses learning and the learner. The emphasis is not on the project itself but on the outcomes and behavioral changes in the prospective teacher because of the project.<sup>18</sup>

Guggenheim feels that programmed instruction has implications for the education of teachers as well as for

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<sup>17</sup>Martin Haberman, "Minicourses: The Prevention and Treatment of Curricular Rigor Mortis in Programs of Teacher Education," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XIX, Number 4, Winter, 1968, pp. 438-441.

<sup>18</sup>Donald T. Graffam, "Why Not Team Learning?" Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XV, Number 3, September, 1964, pp. 291-92.

school curriculums, stating that teacher education students need to be aware of the many types of programming, their uses and their shortcomings.<sup>19</sup>

Gliessman and his associates believe it is no longer necessary to strive for situations in teacher preparation that will be identical or equivalent to those to be found in the real classroom. They believe with the advent of the new media and materials, analogous or mediated situations can now be created. Accordingly, the "stimulus film," a brief, problem-centered, open-ended film, was developed. Such a film portrays a separate, realistic problem in classroom learning or teaching and may be used as a stimulus for such activities as teacher-led class discussion, small group discussion, role playing, or independent study. While the authors agree that, in some ways, actual involvements in the sights, sounds, and smells of the classroom is an experience for which there is no adequate substitute, they also feel, however, that observation or participation cannot be an end in itself. They believe the real goal is that of developing teachers who are problem solvers.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Fred Guggenheim, "Curriculum Implications and Applications of Programmed Instruction," The School Review, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill., Vol. 73, Number 1, Spring, 1965, pp. 60-61.

<sup>20</sup>David Gliessman, et al., "A Medium for Problem Solving in Teacher Education," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEFS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XIX, Number 1, Spring, 1968, pp. 71-77.

Because of time, transportation, and the increasing number of prospective teachers, audio-visual equipment is playing an ever expanding role in teacher preparation programs. At Hunter College, student teachers' performances are recorded on kinescopes so they can later observe and more objectively evaluate their teaching performance.<sup>21</sup> Tape recordings are similarly being used to expose problems in student teacher performances, assess their causes, and further their solutions.<sup>22</sup>

Using close-circuit television observation of public school classrooms in place of part of the actual in-person observations is a satisfactory solution to the problem of providing many and varied observational experiences for prospective teachers at San Jose State College.<sup>23</sup> The use of type scripts as a similar type of observational experience has indicated that they are useful when studying the content

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<sup>21</sup>Herbert Schueler and Milton J. Gold, "Video Recordings of Student Teachers--A Report of the Hunter College Research Project Evaluating the Use of Kinescopes in Preparing Student Teachers," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XV, Number 4, December, 1964, pp. 363-64.

<sup>22</sup>Deborah Elkins and Thelma Hickerson, "The Use of the Tape Recorder in Teacher Education," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XV, Number 4, December, 1964, p. 433.

<sup>23</sup>John C. Woodward, "The Use of Television in Teacher Education," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XV, Number 1, March, 1964, pp. 56-60.

of interaction but are by no means a substitute for a real classroom observation.<sup>24</sup>

At General Beadle State College, Dr. Grassell and his staff, believing that teachers "teach as they are taught," have incorporated into their professional education courses media (TV, tapes, etc.) and procedures (grouping, remedial work, etc.), just as the prospective teachers will have to utilize them when they begin teaching. This type of program is in place of, for example, leaving the operating and use of audio-visual equipment solely to the audio-visual class or leaving grouping to a bare mention with no contact or experience with it. Dr. Grassell supports these experiences by stating that the teachers of teachers should practice what they preach.<sup>25</sup>

The Ford Foundation has encouraged a special group of new experiments in teacher preparation known as "Break-through Programs." While the schools involved each pursue their innovations independently, certain criteria must be applied to procedures. These include: (1) a liberal education for the teacher; (2) an extended scholarly knowledge

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<sup>24</sup>Marvin A. Brotzman, "Typescripts as 'Observational Experience' for Prospective Teachers," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XVI, Number 4, December, 1965, pp. 466-68.

<sup>25</sup>E. Milton Grassell, "Improving Professional Education Courses," Improving College and University Teaching, Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, Oregon, XIII, Number 4, Autumn, 1965, p. 201.

of the subject or subjects to be taught; (3) the development of insights into child psychology, the learning process, and the meaning and purpose of education, through seminars in which these concerns are brought into relation with the problems experienced by beginning teachers; and (4) acquiring the art of teaching through carefully guided apprenticeships or internships. A key element running through this set of common characteristics is that both liberal and professional education are the sine qua non in the education of a teacher.<sup>26</sup>

## II. EXPERIENCES DURING AND FOLLOWING THE STUDENT TEACHING PERIOD

Although most of the studies to date have dealt specifically with student teaching experiences, many of these activities could conceivably lend themselves to the pre-student teaching period. Experiences within the classroom, such as classroom routine and clerical duties, help the prospective teacher develop a better understanding of the over-all operation of the classroom. Activities such as preparing exhibits and bulletin boards and operating audio-visual equipment similarly help to broaden the would-be teacher's conception of the classroom and the teaching-learning process.

Extra-classroom activities, such as playground and cafeteria duty, first aid, hall monitoring, provide further opportunity for direct contacts with children. Work experiences

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<sup>26</sup>James C. Stone, Breakthrough in Teacher Education, Jossey-Bass, Inc., San Francisco, 1968, p. 13.

are similarly acknowledged to be of some value as an activity for prospective teachers even though any benefits or abilities gained cannot be directly measured.

Experiences in the community are also emphasized in teacher preparation programs as educators strive to abandon the concept of the school as an isolated agency in society and to direct their efforts toward helping the intending teacher understand what is involved in building effective community relationships both as a teacher and as a citizen of the community.<sup>27</sup>

These experiences are being provided for teachers-in-training in many ways. Some schools are leaning toward a teacher-aid type of program. Although many use graduate students, mothers, and adults other than mothers, some are recruiting their teacher-aids from near-by colleges and universities. Buena Vista, a suburb of Saginaw, Michigan, recruits juniors, seniors, and graduate students from near-by Central Michigan University, in an intern-extern program that brings them competent teacher-aids and helps to train future teachers at the same time.<sup>28</sup>

Still other schools are experimenting in five year programs which provide a gradual induction into the teaching

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<sup>27</sup>The Sub-Committee of the Standards and Surveys Committee, Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>28</sup>Joseph G. Barr, "Student Interns - An Aide to Teachers," School Management, Management Publishing Group, Greenwich, Conn., November, 1964, p. 70.

process. Oregon, for example, has developed a teaching internship which is that phase of the professional education of a teacher which, through long-term field work, develops a trainee's capacity to assume and carry on professional activities. Through part-time, extended, day-by-day experience, the teacher in training is given the opportunity to carry continuous teaching responsibilities and to meet actual problems in the schools. This internship concept has been praised by participants as the most valuable experience provided by teacher education institutions to develop the competencies needed to perform the complicated task of teaching.<sup>29</sup>

The Detroit Public Schools - Wayne State University Elementary Team Internship Pilot Program provides for four student interns (who have already completed an initial experience in student teaching) to a team with one teacher-director in charge of two classrooms. The student interns are present in the classroom 80% of a full school week or the equivalent of four out of five days for one semester. This program gives promise of offering the student a transitional experience from role playing to role assuming in the real world of the teacher.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>William T. Ward and Joy Hills Gubser, "Developing the Teaching Internship Concept in Oregon," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XV, Number 3, September, 1964, pp. 252-61.

<sup>30</sup>E. Brooks Smith, et. al., "Toward Real Teaching: A Team Internship Proposal," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XIX, Number 1, Spring, 1968, pp. 7-16.

Other programs proposing similar five year plans which could conceivably lend some of their tenets to pre-student teaching experiences include the Arkansas Experiment,<sup>31</sup> POINT in Washington State,<sup>32</sup> and MAT (Master of Arts in Teaching).<sup>33</sup>

Gardner and Henry feel that many teacher education programs are far from ideal, that they continue to provide student teaching as the single clinical experience subsequent to professional course offerings. While internships are growing in popularity at the graduate level and in five year plans, these authors feel there is similarly an important place for this at the undergraduate level. One variation of the internship, developed by Central Michigan University, provides for two years of alternate teaching-study experiences after a two year base of general education.<sup>34</sup>

Another variation at Colorado State College calls for college seniors to work one-half day for a school year

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<sup>31</sup>David R. Krathwohl, "Study of the Arkansas Experiment in Teacher Education," The Future Challenges Teacher Education, 11th Yearbook, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1958, pp. 115-22.

<sup>32</sup>Vern B. Archer, Roy A. Edelfelt, and Herbert Hite, "POINT Points the Way," NEA Journal, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., October, 1965, pp. 29-30.

<sup>33</sup>Harrison Gardner and Marvin A. Henry, "Designing Effective Internships in Teacher Education," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTE, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XIX, Number 2, Summer, 1968, pp. 177-186.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.



at a contracted sum of \$500; the other half day is spent on campus completing the required course work. Students who pursue this program are not required to complete student teaching.<sup>35</sup>

An experimental program at Oberlin College, designed for graduate students and gifted children,<sup>36</sup> seemed to meet with some success in the community and could conceivably be developed into a similar type of summer session for undergraduate elementary education majors as either a pre- or post-student teaching experience.

A similar program which may have implications for elementary education teachers is "microteaching" at Stanford University.<sup>37</sup> The possibilities of microteaching, a real, though scaled-down teaching experience, have just begun to be explored, but it may not be premature to say that it could conceivably find a place in elementary teacher preparation programs, possibly as a pre-student teaching experience.

In summary, it is evident in these and other studies there is a need for more direct, supervised experiences with

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<sup>35</sup>Gardner and Henry, loc. cit.

<sup>36</sup>Frank Laycock, "The Gifted as Pupils for Student Teaching: An Exploration at Oberlin College," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XV, Number 4, December, 1964, pp. 428-30.

<sup>37</sup>Dwight W. Allen and Richard E. Gross, "Microteaching," NEA Journal, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., December, 1965, pp. 25-26.

children and that these experiences should be provided prior to student teaching as well as during and after that period. As Dr. Ned Flanders puts it:

The point is that much of what is learned in education courses is neither conceptualized, quantified nor taught in a fashion that builds a bridge between theory and practice. Education students are only occasionally part of an exciting, systematic exploration of the teaching process, most infrequently by the instructor's example.<sup>38</sup>

As previously stated, educators are generally in agreement on their recommendations for more student teaching in teacher preparation programs and more direct contacts with children prior to student teaching. The trend toward expanding the student teaching experience is in evidence as more and more colleges and universities extend this activity to full days, longer periods, and to two experiences in two semesters.

The providing of more direct contacts with children, prior to student teaching and under professional supervision, often presents a problem because many classroom teachers, administrators, and school systems are reluctant to have novice teachers in their classrooms. At the college and university level, facilities, time, and opportunity are too

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<sup>38</sup>Ned A. Flanders, "Intent, Action, and Feedback: A Preparation for Teaching," The Journal of Teacher Education, NCTEPS, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., XIV, Number 3, September, 1963, p. 251.

often lacking. Until all educators, at every level, come to understand and assume more responsibility toward each other as well as toward their profession, a shortage of direct contacts with children prior to student teaching will undoubtedly continue.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PROJECT STUDY

This project was in keeping with the recommendations of educators that teachers-in-training be given more opportunity for direct, supervised contacts with children. For these pre-student teachers, it was a first hand experience with children in a classroom situation, an opportunity to observe growth and developmental characteristics of children, and an opportunity to apply college classroom theory to an actual situation. It was an instructional type of project where the pre-student teachers had an opportunity to use audio-visual aids, make instructional materials, lesson plans, and bulletin board materials that would actually be seen and used by children. It provided for planning with professional teachers and for follow-up of that planning; it was an orientation to the role of professional teacher.

For the professional classroom teacher, it was felt this association with a novice teacher would be a professional growth experience. It should have helped the classroom teacher see better her strengths and weaknesses through the college student's "imitation" of her. This type of experience should also have helped the cooperating teacher to better identify objectives in a specific area, in this case, social studies. The project paved the way toward the merging of ideas, materials, and patterns in seeking the best

possible methods and procedures with a particular group of children, and it freed the classroom teacher to spend more time with individuals and small groups.

As the first step in the implementation of this project, permission was obtained from the Superintendents of Schools of District 66, Millard, and Omaha to use various elementary schools within each district for the initiation of the project.

Next was the orientation of the teachers to the project, their responsibilities to the college student, the children, the community, and the school district. Volunteers were called for among those teachers who would be willing to have one or more pre-student teachers come into their classrooms and work with the children. Cooperating teachers were selected by the individual elementary principals on the bases of teaching skill, understanding of children, organizational ability, maturity, and their potential contributions to the project and project participants.

Juniors in elementary education at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, pre-student teachers, were to be placed in the various elementary schools one day per week for a period of four consecutive weeks to teach portions of regular social studies units. The college students were to be in the classrooms during the social studies class, a period ranging from 20 to 60 minutes per day but usually averaging 30 minutes per day. Some cooperating teachers would have one

pre-student teacher each in their classrooms; others would have two pre-student teachers each in their rooms, but their time would not be corresponding. The college students would not be there to observe but to actually work with children.

The college juniors were assigned to their respective cooperating teachers on the basis of available times during the school day and grade preferences. Transportation convenience was also considered in assigning the pre-student teachers to their respective elementary buildings.

Prior to the actual pre-student teaching experience, most of the college student groups were invited to their respective schools where they were greeted by the elementary principal and his staff. They were briefly introduced to the elementary curriculum in general and to the social studies curriculum in particular and were given information concerning the school district, the community, the school building, the number of children, teachers, and classrooms, pupil-teacher ratio, etc. The college students were told that all of the materials and facilities of the school would be made available to them, and that they could feel free to consult with their cooperating teachers or the principal should any problems arise.

The college students were further informed that during this experience they would be considered a part of the professional staff and would be treated as such. Correspondingly, they should assume a sense of responsibility for the

school, the community, and the school district. This would include such things as arriving promptly, being prepared for class, letting the school or cooperating teacher know if they would be absent, having a neat and clean appearance, displaying good conduct both in and out of the classroom, etc. In complying with these responsibilities, the pre-student teachers should also fulfill their obligations to the cooperating teachers and to themselves. In the classroom, of course, the pre-student teachers would have a primary responsibility to the children.

Following this brief introduction to the project, the college students were given some ideas by their respective cooperating teachers so that when they returned to begin the actual pre-student teaching experience they would be prepared to work with a group of children. These ideas included such things as bulletin board suggestions, demonstrations, movies and other audio-visual materials, art projects, or a lesson plan on a particular subject such as an event or a famous man pertinent to whatever the class was studying at that time in social studies.

The project was originally designed for the pre-student teacher to be present in one social studies class per week, averaging 30 minutes per class, for a period of four weeks, but many, with their cooperating teacher's permission, came earlier, stayed later, and/or came other days during their free time.

This project was first initiated in the spring semester of 1967 and had been in operation three years at the time of the writing of this study. Although to date, the participants in the experience had been enthusiastic in their approval of it, it was hoped that an analysis of the project at this time would be helpful in revealing possible changes and improvements in the procedures of the project in order to make it more meaningful and relevant to student teaching.

Accordingly, a questionnaire was designed with the purpose of analyzing the pre-student teaching experience in social studies, as viewed by the pre-student teacher, in terms of its preparation for and relevance to the actual student teaching experience. Recommendations of the advisory committee along with suggestions from the initiators of the original project were utilized to develop a questionnaire which was relatively easy to read and complete and comparatively free of ambiguous meanings. The questionnaire was administered to the pre-student teachers at their respective student teaching seminars on campus at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

The sample was selected as those college students who took part in the pre-student teaching experience in the spring of 1969 and who were doing their actual student teaching in the fall of 1969. It was felt that this particular group who had most recently participated in the pre-student teaching experience and who were presently student teaching would be the most likely sources of objective and critical information



on what manner, if any, the previous experience had assisted them in their student teaching.

Following an analysis of the completed and returned questionnaires, conclusions were drawn concerning the conduct and merit of the pre-student teaching experience, and recommendations were made for changes and improvements in the procedures of the experience. The information obtained from the questionnaires and the findings of the analysis of the pre-student teacher survey are presented in Chapter IV.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE DATA

In Chapter II, a number of ideas were advanced concerning the value of professional laboratory experiences both prior to and during the student teaching period. Of prime concern was the noting of activities which already had or could conceivably lend themselves to specific pre-student teaching experiences. However, most of the experiences reviewed were presented through the eyes of cooperating teachers, elementary principals, and/or teachers of teachers. Further, these experiences were related, in many cases, either to the liberal or professional classwork phase of pre-service training or to the problems of the first year of professional service, i.e., the beginning teacher. This study may well then be unique, at least in terms of those experiences here reviewed, in that it attempts to analyze a specific pre-student teaching experience in social studies in terms of its preparation for and relevance to the actual student teaching experience as viewed by the pre-student teacher.

Chapter IV will present and discuss the data obtained from a survey of some selected pre-student teachers and their pre-student teaching experience in terms of general information, specific pre-student teaching experiences, and an over-all evaluation and suggestions for improvement by the

pre-student teachers. Of the 37 eligible respondents in the sample, a total of 33, or 89.1 per cent, questionnaires were returned and/or were usable in the analysis of the pre-student teacher survey.

#### I. GENERAL INFORMATION.

Table I, pages 38-39, shows the characteristics of the pre-student and student teaching experiences as revealed in Part I of the questionnaire, General Information. More than half of the questionnaire respondents, 57.0 per cent, had their pre-student teaching experience in the first, second, and/or third grades, with 34.1 per cent reporting a pre-student teaching experience in the fourth, fifth, and/or sixth grades. In the student teaching experience, 48.6 per cent of the pre-student teachers occupied first, second, and/or third grade positions, and 45.9 per cent occupied fourth, fifth, and/or sixth grade positions.

Slightly over four-fifths, or 81.7 per cent, of the pre-student teachers reported an average room size of between 22 and 33 pupils during the pre-student teaching experience, with 15.1 per cent having had between 34 and 37 pupils. None reported having 38 or more pupils.

The average room size during the student teaching experience was reported as slightly over half of the respondents, or 51.3 per cent, having had 22 to 33 pupils. Nine pre-student teachers, 27.2 per cent, indicated between 34 and 37 pupils

in their rooms, and 15.1 per cent reported 38 or more pupils.

More than three-fifths, or 63.6 per cent, of the pre-student teachers reported their schedule of classroom visitations as once per week for four consecutive weeks, and a corresponding 60.6 per cent found appropriate this frequency of classroom appearances. Five pre-student teachers, or 15.1 per cent, indicated the frequency of classroom visitations should be two visitations per week for two consecutive weeks, and 6.0 per cent felt there should be four consecutive daily visitations. Of the pre-student teachers who reported a differing opinion on the number and frequency of classroom visitations, as indicated by "Other" on the questionnaire, the overwhelming majority expressed a desire for more visitations per week and/or an extension of the visitations over a longer period of time.

In response to Item 5-b of the questionnaire, page 39, 69.6 per cent of the sample reported the number of classroom visitations sufficient, and 30.3 per cent indicated there should have been more visitations. Not one of the pre-student teachers expressed a desire to lessen the number of classroom appearances.

Twenty-three, or 69.6 per cent, of the pre-student teachers visited their respective schools more than the prescribed number of times, and 30.3 per cent did not. The vast majority, 93.9 per cent, preferred the pre-student teaching experience to be ungraded.

TABLE I  
CHARACTERISTICS OF PRE-STUDENT AND  
STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCES

Item	Number	Per Cent
1. Grade or grades of pre-student teaching experience		
a. Kindergarten	3	8.5
b. One	5	14.2
c. Two	11	31.4
d. Three	4	11.4
e. Four	5	14.2
f. Five	3	8.5
g. Six	4	11.4
h. Other	0	.0
	<u>35*</u>	
2. Number of pupils in pre-student teaching room		
a. 18-21	1	3.0
b. 22-25	8	24.2
c. 26-29	10	30.3
d. 30-33	9	27.2
e. 34-37	5	15.1
f. 38 or over	0	.0
3. Grade or grades of student teaching experience		
a. Kindergarten	1	2.7
b. One	7	18.9
c. Two	6	16.2
d. Three	5	13.5
e. Four	7	18.9
f. Five	8	21.6
g. Six	2	5.4
h. Other	1	2.7
	<u>37**</u>	

\*Total is more than 33 since some had pre-student teaching experience in more than one grade.

\*\*Total is more than 33 since some had student teaching experience in more than one grade.

TABLE I (continued)

Item	Number Per Cent	
4. Number of pupils in student teaching room		
a. 18-21	2	6.0
b. 22-25	2	6.0
c. 26-29	6	18.1
d. 30-33	9	27.2
e. 34-37	9	27.2
f. 38 or over	5	15.1
5-a Pre-student teacher classroom visitations		
(a) Once per week for four consecutive weeks	21	63.6
(b) Other	12	36.3
5-b Number of classroom visitations sufficient or should have been more or less		
(a) Sufficient	23	69.6
(b) More	10	30.3
(c) Less	0	.0
6. Degree to which frequency of classroom visitations was appropriate		
a. One visitation per week for four consecutive weeks was appropriate	20	60.6
b. There should be two visitations per week for two consecutive weeks	5	15.1
c. There should be four consecutive daily visitations	2	6.0
d. Other	6	18.1
7. Visited school more than the four prescribed appearances		
a. Yes	23	69.6
b. No	10	30.3
8. Pre-student teaching experience should be graded (A, B, C) or ungraded		
a. Graded	2	6.0
b. Ungraded	31	93.9

## II. SPECIFIC PRE-STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCES

The data reported in Part II of the questionnaire, Specific Pre-Student Teaching Experiences, is presented in Table II. Each of the items listed contained three parts, the first being a statement of a specific experience the pre-student teachers might have encountered during the pre-student teaching period. Part a then appraised the pre-student teachers' evaluation of this experience, if they had it, in terms of relevance to student teaching; Part b questioned if they did not have the experience in pre-student teaching, did they feel that having encountered it would have helped them in student teaching. The pre-student teaching experiences itemized in Table II were broken down into three specific areas: Planning for Teaching (pages 43-44), Classroom Instruction (pages 45-46), and Non-Instructional Duties (page 47).

Planning for Teaching. Of the ten items in this particular area, all were experienced by at least some of the pre-student teachers, and six items were encountered by no less than 60.6 per cent of the respondents. Twenty-nine, or 87.8 per cent, of the pre-student teachers' responses proved "Developing a lesson plan" to be the most frequently encountered activity. In descending order the next most frequently encountered experiences were "Using audio-visual equipment," "Developing instructional materials other than bulletin board

materials," "Developing bulletin board materials," and "Using a teacher's manual."

Nine pre-student teachers, or 27.2 per cent, had an opportunity to construct their own test or quiz, and the same number had the opportunity to administer a test or quiz, either their own or someone else's. Only five, or 15.1 per cent, of the pre-student teachers had an opportunity to participate in a field trip, and only five took part in a demonstration.

The vast majority of pre-student teachers rated the experiences they had encountered as Very Helpful or Somewhat Helpful. Only five of the sample checked three items as of Little Help, and none checked any experience as of No Help. Of those who had not encountered these specific pre-student teaching experiences, over three-fourths felt that these activities would have helped them in student teaching.

Classroom Instruction. In this particular area, as in the area of Planning for Teaching, all nine of the items were experienced by at least some of the pre-student teachers. The most frequently encountered experience, with a 100.0 per cent affirmative response, was "Working with the whole class together." The next most frequently encountered activities, in descending order, were "Presenting a lesson plan to the class," "Presenting a new idea to the class," "Working without the presence or assistance of the classroom teacher," and "Working with individual pupils."



The least encountered experience was "Working with individual discipline problems" with only two, or 6.0 per cent, of the pre-student teachers encountering this. "Working with small groups of pupils" was the second least encountered experience.

All of the pre-student teachers rated the experiences they had encountered as Very Helpful or Somewhat Helpful. Not one of the respondents indicated these Classroom Instruction experiences as of Little Help or of No Help. Of those who had not had these specific experiences, 88.2 per cent felt that having encountered these activities would have been helpful to them in their student teaching.

Non-Instructional Duties. It was interesting to note that the majority of pre-student teachers did not experience the non-instructional duties itemized in the questionnaire. Not one of the sample attended a faculty meeting or a PTA or Community Club meeting; only two supervised a lunchroom or a playground; and only three became familiar with a school report or record. The largest positive response was eight, or 24.2 per cent, becoming familiar with a school routine such as checking out supplies.

Among the respondents who did not encounter the pre-student teaching experiences listed, 59.2 per cent felt these activities would have helped in student teaching, and 40.8 per cent said they would not have helped.

TABLE II

PRE-STUDENT TEACHERS' EVALUATION  
OF SPECIFIC PRE-STUDENT  
TEACHING EXPERIENCES

Item	Had this experience		Had this experience; Rated it in terms of value to student teaching as:				Did not have experience but feel it would have helped in student teaching							
	No.	%	Yes	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Little Help	No Help	Yes	No					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%				
<u>Planning for Teaching</u>														
1. Develop a bulletin board	22	66.6	11	33.3	10	30.3	9	27.2	3	9.0	7	21.2	4	12.1
2. Develop other instructional materials	23	69.6	10	30.3	15	45.4	8	24.2			9	27.2	1	3.0
3. Develop a lesson plan	29	87.8	4	12.1	17	51.5	12	36.3			4	12.1		
4. Use teacher's manual	21	63.6	12	36.3	14	42.4	7	21.2			8	24.2	4	12.1

TABLE II (continued)

Item	Had this experience		Had this experience; Rated it in terms of value to student teaching as:				Did not have experience but feel it would have helped in student teaching							
	No.	%	Yes	No	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Little Help	No Help	Yes	No				
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%				
5. Use any type audio-visual equipment	24	72.7	9	27.2	15	45.4	8	24.2	1	3.0	7	21.2	2	6.0
6. Participate in a field trip	5	15.1	28	84.8	5	15.1					19	57.5	9	27.2
7. Participate in a demonstration	5	15.1	28	84.8	2	6.0	3	9.0			25	75.7	3	9.0
8. Participate in a construction type project	20	60.6	13	39.3	11	33.3	8	24.2	1	3.0	11	33.3	2	6.0
9. Construct own test or quiz	9	27.2	24	72.7	7	21.2	2	6.0			20	60.6	4	12.1
10. Administer any test or quiz	9	27.2	24	72.7	7	21.2	2	6.0			16	48.4	8	24.2

TABLE II (continued)

Item	Had this experience		Had this experience; Rated it in terms of value to student teaching as:				Did not have experience but feel it would have helped in student teaching	
	No. %	No. %	Very Helpful No. %	Somewhat Helpful No. %	Little Help No. %	No Help No. %	Yes No. %	No No. %
<u>Classroom Instruction</u>								
11. Present lesson plan to class	30 90.9	3 9.0	19 57.5	11 33.3			3 9.0	
12. Present new idea to class	22 66.6	11 33.3	19 57.5	3 9.0			8 24.2	3 9.0
13. Plan with the children for a learning experience	10 30.3	23 69.6	8 24.2	2 6.0			20 60.6	3 9.0
14. Work with individual pupils	16 48.4	17 51.5	12 36.3	4 12.1			17 51.5	
15. Work with small group of pupils	5 15.1	28 84.8	5 15.1				23 69.6	5 15.1



TABLE II (continued)

Item	Had this experience		Had this experience; Rated it in terms of value to student teaching as:				Did not have experience but feel it would have helped in student teaching	
	Yes	No	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Little Help	No Help	Yes	No
	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %
<u>Non-Instructional Duties</u>								
20. Familiar with school report or record	3 9.0	30 90.9	1 3.0	2 6.0			20 60.6	10 30.3
21. Familiar with a school routine	8 24.2	25 75.7	3 9.0	4 12.1	1 3.0		19 57.5	6 18.1
22. Supervise lunch-room or a playground	2 6.0	31 93.9	2 6.0				22 66.6	9 27.2
23. Attend a faculty meeting		33 100.0					17 51.5	16 48.4
24. Attend a PTA or Community Club meeting		33 100.0					12 36.3	21 63.6

### III. OVER-ALL EVALUATION AND SUGGESTIONS

Table III reveals the information reported in items 1, 2, and 3 of Part III of the questionnaire, Over-all Evaluation and Suggestions. Item 1 showed that more than half of the pre-student teachers' over-all evaluation of pre-student teaching in terms of preparation for student teaching was deemed Very Helpful. Fifteen respondents, or 45.4 per cent, rated the experience as Somewhat Helpful, and only one pre-student teacher said that it was of Little Help.

The majority of the sample, 72.7 per cent, rated the pre-student teaching experience in terms of total teacher preparation prior to student teaching as "One of the most valuable experiences" or "A somewhat valuable experience." Eight respondents, or 24.2 per cent, rated pre-student teaching as their Most Valuable Experience, and only one appraised it at No Value.

Eight pre-student teachers, or 24.2 per cent, felt this type of experience could be valuable for prospective teachers after the student teaching period as well as prior to it. The remaining three-fourths, or 75.7 per cent, indicated it would not be a valuable experience after student teaching.

TABLE III  
 PRE-STUDENT TEACHERS' EVALUATION  
 OF THE PRE-STUDENT TEACHING  
 EXPERIENCE

Item	Number	Per Cent
1. Over-all evaluation of pre-student teaching in terms of preparation for student teaching		
a. Very helpful	17	51.5
b. Somewhat helpful	15	45.4
c. Of little help	1	3.0
d. No help	0	.0
2. Rating of pre-student teaching in terms of total teacher preparation program prior to student teaching		
a. Most valuable experience	8	24.2
b. One of the most valuable experiences	14	42.4
c. A somewhat valuable experience	10	30.3
d. Of no value	1	3.0
3. Valuable experience after student teaching as well as prior to it		
a. Yes	8	24.2
b. No	25	75.7



Item 4 of Part III of the questionnaire asked the respondents if they could see this experience as having real value in areas other than social studies and, if so, what areas. The pre-student teachers' response to this item was a unanimous "yes," but with opinions differing as to what particular areas. Nine pre-student teachers felt that this type of experience would be worthwhile in all elementary subject areas. Other respondents specified particular areas with reading being the most often nominated, mentioned by ten pre-student teachers. Math and language were each mentioned four times and science three times. Also listed at least once by some respondents were art, music, and spelling. One pre-student teacher commented, "I think social studies is the most adaptable to this sort of thing."

Eight pre-student teachers did not mention particular subject areas but instead offered such comments as "Just the over-all experience of seeing the children in the actual classroom situation;" "I feel the real value lies in student and school contact;" "Field experiences with relation to a methods course is a valuable experience for it's learning at its best;" and "Mostly, value has been added in class management and how to present yourself."

Item 5 of Part III questioned "How did this pre-student teaching experience have particular significance or relevance to you personally in terms of preparing you for student teaching?" Of the 31 pre-student teachers who responded to this

item, the majority, 58.0 per cent, revealed that having more confidence in themselves and thus being better prepared for student teaching was the most personally significant advantage gained from the pre-student teaching experience. Such comments were offered as "Was excellent experience. I felt much better prepared for student teaching;" "It gave me a needed confidence that said I have the ability to stand before a class and teach;" "I was very anxious to begin student teaching after such a successful pre-student teaching;" and "I had never been before a class before--I wasn't as apprehensive about student teaching."

Four pre-student teachers felt that the pre-student teaching experience assured them in their desire to become teachers. One pre-student teacher said, "It is most important to see that each pre-student teacher has a classroom experience to make sure teaching is something they really want to do." Another offered, "Made me sure that this was what I really wanted to do."

Four respondents felt that the pre-student teaching experience familiarized them with the ages, size, ability, and interests of children, i.e., put them back in touch with small children. One respondent appeared to feel she had gained a negative advantage from this experience, commenting, "She was a first year teacher and had no classroom discipline whatsoever--this gave me good ideas of what I did not want in my own classroom later."

Four pre-student teachers apparently received little gain or advantage from this experience. Two felt that the pre-student teaching experience was solely observation with little or no teaching; a third stated it was of little value "because of the short (once per week) time period involved." The fourth respondent stated simply, "Sorry--none."

The last item of the questionnaire asked the pre-student teachers what suggestions they might have for improving this pre-student teaching experience. Among the many and varied suggestions offered by the respondents, two main themes appeared to be recurrent. The first most consistently offered suggestion was for "more." One pre-student teacher said, "The only thing I would add to the program--is more of it." Others offered more specific comments: "Go more times to the school;" "More student participation in the class;" "Lengthen the time of the experience;" "More visitations and earlier--perhaps in the sophomore year;" and "Don't limit it to just social studies."

The second most recurrent theme involved the cooperating teachers with seven pre-student teachers designating this as an area in need of improvement. Comments included: "Be sure the teachers want a pre-student teacher;" "Have the cooperating teacher better informed of what this experience is for;" "Cooperating teachers should be screened;" and "I think this is a fine idea, but it depends on the cooperating teacher and what she allows the person to do. I felt that my pre-student teaching experience was more of an observation experience rather

than actually teaching."

Miscellaneous comments included "Ask teachers to explain daily classroom routines, bulletin boards, etc.;" "Perhaps do a unit in class and present it in pre-student teaching;" and "Have time in class for students to talk about their experiences in pre-student teaching."

Four pre-student teachers offered no suggestions, stating the experience was fine just as it was.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

The Purpose. The purpose of this study was to analyze a pre-student teaching experience in social studies in terms of its preparation for and relevance to the actual student teaching experience, as viewed by the pre-student teacher.

Objectives of the Study. The objectives to be achieved in this study included the presentation and analysis of the findings of a pre-student teacher survey based on the pre-student teaching experience in terms of general information; specific pre-student teaching experiences, i.e., planning for teaching, classroom instruction, and non-instructional duties; and an over-all evaluation and suggestions for improvement by the pre-student teachers. A further objective to be achieved was the recommendation of changes and improvements in the procedures of the pre-student teaching experience in order to make it more meaningful and relevant to student teaching.

The Procedures. The following activities were carried out in the development of this study.

1. A thorough examination was made of the literature on prospective teachers' experiences with children in the classroom prior to student teaching. A great deal of related literature concerning contacts with children in the classroom

during and following the student teaching period was also studied.

2. Following suggestions and recommendations from the advisory committee, a questionnaire was drafted which was relatively easy to read and complete and comparatively free of ambiguous meanings. The purpose of the questionnaire was to analyze the pre-student teaching experience in social studies, as viewed by the pre-student teacher, in terms of its preparation for and relevance to the actual student teaching experience.

3. The sample was selected from those college students who took part in the pre-student teaching experience in the spring of 1969 and who were doing their actual student teaching in the fall of 1969. The questionnaire was administered to the sample at their respective student teaching seminars on campus at the University of Nebraska at Omaha approximately four weeks after the college students had begun their student teaching.

4. Following an analysis of the completed and returned questionnaires, the findings of the pre-student teacher survey were considered. Recommendations were then made for changes and improvements in the procedures of the pre-student teaching experience in order to make it more meaningful and relevant to student teaching.

## II. FINDINGS

The data obtained from the questionnaire dealt with general information relating to the pre-student and student teaching experiences; specific pre-student teaching experiences in three major areas: planning for teaching, classroom instruction, and non-instructional duties; and an overall evaluation and suggestions for improvement by the pre-student teachers.

General Information. More than half of the questionnaire respondents, 57.0 per cent, had their pre-student teaching experience in the first, second, and/or third grades, and slightly over four-fifths of the pre-student teachers reported an average room size of between 22 and 33 pupils. None reported having 38 or more pupils.

In the student teaching experience, 48.6 per cent of the pre-student teachers occupied first, second, and/or third grade positions, and 45.9 per cent occupied fourth, fifth, and/or sixth grade positions. The average room size during student teaching was reported as slightly over half of the respondents, or 51.3 per cent, having had 22 to 33 pupils. Nine pre-student teachers, or 27.2 per cent, indicated between 34 and 37 pupils in their student teaching rooms and 15.1 per cent reported 38 or more pupils.

More than three-fifths, or 63.6 per cent, of the pre-student teachers reported their schedule of classroom

visitations as once per week for four consecutive weeks, and a corresponding 60.6 per cent found appropriate this frequency of classroom appearances. Of the pre-student teachers who reported a differing opinion on the number and frequency of classroom visitations, as indicated by "Other" on the questionnaire, the overwhelming majority expressed a desire for more visitations per week and/or an extension of the visitations over a longer period of time.

In response to Item 5-b of the questionnaire, 69.6 per cent of the sample reported the number of classroom visitations sufficient, and 30.3 per cent indicated there should have been more visitations. Not one of the pre-student teachers expressed a desire to lessen the number of classroom appearances.

Twenty-three, or 69.6 per cent, of the pre-student teachers visited their respective schools more than the prescribed number of appearances, and 30.3 did not. The vast majority, 93.9 per cent, preferred the pre-student teaching experience to be ungraded.

Specific Pre-Student Teaching Experiences. Of the ten items in the area of Planning for Teaching, all were experienced by at least some of the pre-student teachers, and six were encountered by no less than 60.6 per cent of the respondents. Twenty-nine, or 87.8 per cent, of the pre-student teachers' responses proved "Developing a lesson plan" to be



the most frequently encountered activity. The least encountered items were participating in a field trip and participating in a demonstration with only five, or 15.1 per cent, of the respondents experiencing each of these activities.

The vast majority of pre-student teachers rated the experiences they had encountered as Very Helpful or Somewhat Helpful. Only five of the sample checked three items as of Little Help, and none checked any experience as of No Help. Of those who had not encountered these specific pre-student teaching experiences, over three-fourths felt that these activities would have helped them in student teaching.

In the area of Classroom Instruction, all nine of the items listed were experienced by at least some of the pre-student teachers. The most frequently encountered experience, with a 100.0 per cent affirmative response, was "Working with the whole class together." The least encountered experience was "Working with individual discipline problems," with only two, or 6.0 per cent, of the pre-student teachers encountering this.

All of the pre-student teachers rated the experiences they had encountered as Very Helpful or Somewhat Helpful. Not one of the respondents indicated these Classroom Instruction experiences as of Little Help or of No Help. Of those who had not had these specific experiences, 88.2 per cent felt that having encountered these activities would have been helpful to them in their student teaching.

It was interesting to note that the majority of pre-student teachers did not experience the Non-Instructional Duties itemized in the questionnaire. Not one of the sample attended a faculty meeting or a PTA or Community Club meeting; only two supervised a lunchroom or a playground; and only three became familiar with a school report or record. The largest positive response was eight, or 24.2 per cent, becoming familiar with a school routine such as checking out supplies.

Among the respondents who did not encounter these specific experiences, 59.2 per cent felt these activities would have helped in student teaching, and 40.8 per cent said they would not have helped.

Over-All Evaluation and Suggestions. Item 1 of the over-all evaluation of the pre-student teaching experience showed that more than half of the respondents, 51.5 per cent, deemed the experience Very Helpful in terms of preparation for student teaching. Fifteen respondents, or 45.4 per cent, rated the experience as Somewhat Helpful, and only one pre-student teacher said that it was of Little Help.

The majority of the sample, 72.7 per cent, rated the pre-student teaching experience in terms of total teacher preparation prior to student teaching as "One of the most valuable experiences" or "A somewhat valuable experience." Eight respondents, 24.2 per cent, rated pre-student teaching

as their Most Valuable Experience, and only one appraised it at No Value.

Three-fourths, or 75.7 per cent, of the pre-student teachers indicated that this type of experience would not be valuable for prospective teachers after the student teaching period.

Item 4 of Part III of the questionnaire asked the respondents if they could see this experience as having real value in areas other than social studies and, if so, what areas. The pre-student teachers' response to this item was a unanimous "Yes," but with opinions differing as to what particular areas. Nine pre-student teachers felt that this type of experience would be worthwhile in all elementary subject areas. Other respondents specified particular areas, with reading being mentioned ten times, math and language each four times, and science three times. Some respondents did not mention particular subject areas but instead offered such general comments as "I feel the real value lies in student and school contact."

Item 5 of Part III questioned "How did this pre-student teaching experience have particular significance or relevance to you personally in terms of preparing you for student teaching?" The majority of the respondents, 58.0 per cent, revealed that having more confidence in themselves and thus being better prepared for student teaching was the most personally significant advantage gained from the pre-student teaching experience.

Other responses to Item 5 included that this experience assured and encouraged some pre-student teachers in their desire to become teachers; others felt that it familiarized them with the ages, size, ability, and interests of children, i.e., put them back in touch with small children. Four pre-student teachers apparently received little gain or advantage from this experience.

The last item of the questionnaire asked the pre-student teachers what suggestions they might have for improving this pre-student teaching experience. The most consistently offered suggestion was for "more" --more visits to the school, lengthen the time of the experience, more student participation in the classroom, more visitations and earlier, and extending this experience to include subject areas other than social studies.

The second most recurrent suggestion designated the selection of cooperating teachers as an area in need of improvement, with such comments as "Be sure the teachers want a pre-student teacher;" and "Have the cooperating teacher better informed of what this experience is for." Four pre-student teachers offered no suggestions, stating the experience was fine just as it was.

### III. ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

On the basis of the information obtained from the questionnaire, the following interpretations seem to be in order:

1. The pre-student teachers surveyed in this study, for the most part, considered this experience a valuable part of their teacher preparation program prior to student teaching.
2. The pre-student teachers unanimously felt that this type of experience would be of value in areas other than social studies and, although opinions differed as to what areas, almost every subject field in the elementary curriculum was mentioned as a possible experience.
3. The most personally significant advantage gained by the pre-student teachers from this experience appeared to be an increased confidence in themselves as potential teachers.
4. The majority of the pre-student teachers attributed their resulting eagerness to student teach to this experience.
5. Although grading this experience (i.e., A, B, C) was deemed undesirable by the pre-student teachers, it might be advisable to consider some form of evaluation, perhaps a student teacher conference or a seminar, to help the pre-student teachers more

objectively assess their personal and professional teaching qualifications.

6. Of the specific pre-student teaching experiences itemized in the questionnaire, the area of Classroom Instruction appeared to be the most meaningful and relevant to the pre-student teachers.
7. The area of Non-Instructional Duties appeared to be the least meaningful and relevant to the pre-student teachers, most likely because of the lack of opportunity to experience these activities due to the limited amount of school time involved.
8. The selection of cooperating teachers was designated by some pre-student teachers, by no means a majority but enough to warrant serious consideration, as a crucial area in the success, or lack of it, in the pre-student teaching experience.
9. The pre-student teachers' majority opinion that this type of experience would not be valuable for prospective teachers after the student teaching period may imply one of two possibilities:
  - a. This type of experience would actually not be valuable after student teaching; or
  - b. It would be valuable, but the pre-student teachers are unable as yet to recognize the worth of increased and varied opportunities to observe and work with as many classroom teachers as possible.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. This pre-student teaching experience should be continued and could be expanded to include elementary subject areas other than social studies.
2. The school visitations of the pre-student teachers could be extended from four to six or more periods and could be extended to two semesters.
3. The average of 30 minutes per class per day for the pre-student teachers should be retained for the particular unit under study because of the necessary time allotment for other subject areas, however, the pre-student teachers' appearances in the classroom could be extended from once a week to twice a week or more.
4. This type of pre-student teaching experience need not necessarily be graded (i.e., A, B, C), but some form of evaluation, perhaps a student teacher conference or a seminar, might be considered advisable.
5. Of the specific pre-student teaching experiences offered, the expansion of those activities considered in the area of actual Classroom Instruction might be the most meaningful and relevant to the pre-student teachers.

6. The cooperating teachers might best be selected on the basis of a sincere desire to have pre-student teachers in their classrooms and on an expressed willingness to let the pre-student teachers do more than observe, i.e., assume some professional responsibilities.
7. This type of experience after student teaching and prior to the first year of professional service might be considered worthwhile as an additional opportunity for direct contact with children and as an opportunity to observe and work with as many classroom teachers as possible.



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APPENDIX

The Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE - SOCIAL STUDIES PRE-STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to analyze the pre-student teaching experience in social studies, as viewed by the pre-student teacher, in terms of its preparation for and relevance to the actual student teaching experience.

The pre-student teaching experience, which provides an opportunity for juniors in college to actually work with elementary school children in the classroom prior to student teaching, has been in operation for three years.

It is hoped that an analysis of the experience will be helpful in suggesting possible changes and improvements in the procedures of the program in order to make it more meaningful and relevant to student teaching.

Your cooperation is vital to this study, and any benefits accrued will be greatly appreciated not only by the analyzers but by future pre-student teachers. Needless to say, your frank and honest answers will only add to the validity and usefulness of this study.

PART I - GENERAL INFORMATION (Indicate your answer by placing a check mark in front of the appropriate response.)

1. Check the grade or grades in which you had your pre-student teaching experience.

<input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten	<input type="checkbox"/> Four
<input type="checkbox"/> One	<input type="checkbox"/> Five
<input type="checkbox"/> Two	<input type="checkbox"/> Six
<input type="checkbox"/> Three	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)

2. Number of pupils in your pre-student teaching room.

<input type="checkbox"/> 18-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 30-33
<input type="checkbox"/> 22-25	<input type="checkbox"/> 34-37
<input type="checkbox"/> 26-29	<input type="checkbox"/> 38 or over

3. Check the grade or grades in which you are student teaching at the present time.

<input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten	<input type="checkbox"/> Four
<input type="checkbox"/> One	<input type="checkbox"/> Five
<input type="checkbox"/> Two	<input type="checkbox"/> Six
<input type="checkbox"/> Three	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)

4. Number of pupils in your student teaching room.

<input type="checkbox"/> 18-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 30-33
<input type="checkbox"/> 22-25	<input type="checkbox"/> 34-37
<input type="checkbox"/> 26-29	<input type="checkbox"/> 38 or over

5. Most of the pre-student teacher visitations were scheduled on a one class per week basis for a period of four consecutive weeks or a total of four classroom appearances.

a. Does this coincide with your experience?

Once per week for four consecutive weeks

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

b. Do you feel the number of classroom visitations was sufficient or should there have been more or less appearances?

Sufficient       More       Less

6. To what degree do you feel the frequency of classroom visitations was appropriate?

One visitation per week for four consecutive weeks is appropriate

There should be two visitations per week for two consecutive weeks

There should be four consecutive daily visitations

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Did you, of your own volition and with your cooperating teacher's permission, visit your school more than the four prescribed appearances?

Yes

No

8. Do you feel your pre-student teaching experience should be graded (i.e. A, B, C) or ungraded?

Graded

Ungraded





3. Did you have an opportunity to develop a lesson plan?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

4. Did you have an opportunity to use a teacher's manual?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

5. Did you have an opportunity to use any type of audio-visual equipment?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No



9. Did you have an opportunity to construct a test or quiz of your own?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
\_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

10. Did you have an opportunity to administer a test or quiz, either your own or someone else's?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
\_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Classroom Instruction

11. Did you have an opportunity to present a lesson plan to your class?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
\_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

12. Did you have an opportunity to present a new idea to your class?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
\_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

13. Did you have an opportunity to plan with the children for a learning experience?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

14. Did you have an opportunity to work with individual pupils?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

15. Did you have an opportunity to work with small groups of pupils?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No







21. Did you have an opportunity to become familiar with a school routine such as checking out supplies?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

22. Did you have an opportunity to supervise a playground or a lunchroom?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

23. Did you have an opportunity to attend a faculty meeting?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

a. How would you rate this experience in terms of its value to student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Very helpful \_\_\_\_\_ Of little help  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat helpful \_\_\_\_\_ No help

b. If you did not have this experience in pre-student teaching, do you feel that having had it would help you in student teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No



4. Do you see this experience as having real value in areas other than social studies? If so, what areas?

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5. How did this pre-student teaching experience have particular significance or relevance to you personally in terms of preparing you for student teaching?

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6. What suggestions would you have for improvement of the pre-student teaching experience?

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