

has been accomplished, the outstanding achievement being *An Introductory Psychology for Teachers* by Dr. Ed. K. Strong, Jr.

Realizing that much still remained to be done as far as the course for first year normal school students was concerned, the Normal School President's Section of the Superintendent's Conference of the N. E. A. conducted during the past year a contest for a syllabus for an introductory course in psychology. There were more than thirty contestants from all sections of the country, some of them authors of textbooks on psychology. The syllabus<sup>1</sup> reviewed here was given first award by the committee.

This syllabus meets the standards outlined above in a peculiarly satisfying way. From the very first lesson the student is set a definite problem to solve by a most carefully prepared set of questions. These questions really outline the topic, and in connection with each set is given a list of readings from standard texts to help the student in their solution, the plan being similar to that used by Professor W. H. Kilpatrick at Columbia University. From the very first the work is organized so that it is an illustration of the methods stressed in the laws of learning. Moreover the student is constantly taken into confidence; he knows where he is going, he sees the subject develop topic by topic, and realizes the use of economical methods of study. This syllabus is for the student's first quarter in normal school. A syllabus for a second quarter's work, now in preparation by the author, will deal more specifically with learning and human behavior. Yet in a most skillful manner Dr. Gifford has emphasized these topics in the present outline, at the same time giving a view of the science as a whole. There are a goodly number of experiments; some for class demonstrations and some formal experiments to be done in laboratory periods and written up. In addition to these experiments the problems set for the student, by their very nature, constantly demand introspection and observation. And not least, by any means, the introductory statement to each topic, as well as the questions themselves, are couched in such clear English that many of the pit-

falls for beginning students in psychology are removed at the very outset.

Dr. Gifford is a student of both education and psychology with wide experience in the teaching of both subjects. He has drawn freely from the best thought on the teaching of the subject, and with his thorough understanding of the situation, has been able to formulate a syllabus which is an original contribution to the problem of teacher training.

KATHERINE M. ANTHONY

## VII

### RELIEVING THE HOUSING SITUATION FOR THE BIRD FAMILY

One day toward the last of January a group of our Third Graders found a certain story in one of their readers which they asked to read aloud to the class. The name of the story is "Our Wren House," and it recites the experience of some children in building a wren house. Those who took part in the reading and the children to whom it was read enjoyed the story very much. Immediately after the story was read several boys said that their fathers could build bird houses. Then one boy told us there was an old bird house on their lot, but that it had no roof. He went on to say that he was going to get it down and try to put a new roof on it.

As soon as this boy had finished telling us his plan a number of boys said they believed they could make a whole wren house just like the one they had read about. I encouraged them to look around through our supplies and see whether they could find any material which they could use. They succeeded in finding some empty chalk-boxes. They borrowed a hammer, some nails, an auger and a pocket knife from the janitor. A committee was appointed by the class and they took the material and tools to the basement to work. They returned in half an hour with a wren house like the one about which their story had told them.

The entire class was most enthusiastic over the house. It was very plain to see that each child would have been delighted to carry it home and put it up where he could watch for "tenants." I told them I was sure that many birds would be looking for homes very soon and that if they wished to invite some to

<sup>1</sup>"A Syllabus in an Introductory Course in Psychology," by W. J. Gifford. Harrisonburg, Va.: Published by the author. 1922.

live in their yards, I would be very glad to help them in any way I could. They immediately suggested bringing cigar boxes, soap-boxes, etc., from home. Then they discussed the matter of tools. They realized that they should not continue to borrow from the janitor. It developed that four of the boys had complete little tool chests. Others had hammers, or saws, or augers. Many who could promise nothing else, agreed to bring nails. In a short time we had a very interesting workshop.

After two or three wren houses had been built by different committees, one of the boys said that he had seen some bluebirds real early in the spring the year he was in the Second Grade and that he would like to build the kind of a house that bluebirds would like for a home. I then gave them a bird house book containing pictures of many different kinds of bird houses. This book also gave plans for making the houses.

Then the entire class set to work in earnest. Every child in the room planned to make a house or to help someone else make one. During almost every period of the day for the next month I had a small group of children out of the room working on bird houses. No group could stay longer than one period and a child could only belong to one committee during the day.

While doing this work, the children found books at home in which there were pictures of birds, pictures of bird houses, and instructions for making bird houses. These were brought to school, passed around, and discussed. Lumber of different kinds was brought from home. A trip was made to the tannery to get bark for covering some of the houses. The children had a great deal of experience in measuring during this time. Before a plank or a large piece of bark was sawed, they planned just how the material should be used in order to keep from wasting any of it. They learned many facts about the yard, the foot and the inch. The most spontaneous discussions the children have engaged in were in connection with this work. Every day they had some time during which they told the class about the birds they had just seen. They discussed their size, coloring, call or notes, and often times their habits. Every child in the room can recog-

nize at sight the following birds: Wren, Bluebird, Cardinal, Baltimore Oriole, Orchard Oriole, Flicker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Purple Grackle, Scarlet Tanager, Bobolink, Bob White, Meadow Lark, English Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Mocking Bird, Cat Bird, Blue Jay, and Robin.

The girls had a part in all of this work even if they were not able to handle some of the tools. They were just as interested in making their bird homes out of tin cans, gourds, flower pots wired against boards, and cocoanut shells. Then, of course, they took an important part in the painting of the houses. When the last bit of work was completed we had an exhibit of thirty pretty bird homes, ranging from the tiny green tin can to the big apartment house.

After the exhibit the children took them to their homes and put them up. Every day since they have talked about them. At first they were interested in telling each other just where they had put them, why they had put them in just those places. In some instances they told how they were protecting the home from cats.

Now many of them have most interesting news for us about their tenants. We have enjoyed every minute of the time given to this work.

ZOE PORTER

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#### DO YOU USE YOUR "PROJECT" RIGHT?

The loose type of thinking which has confused the well-conceived project with the problem or the purposeful act on the one hand, or with the exercise, the illustration, the application, the experiment, or the practicum on the other hand, has led to the effort to increase the number of projects and even to the attempt to conceive a project for each important topic taken up in a study.—H. B. Wilson and G. M. Wilson.

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#### A DEGREE IS NOT AN OBITUARY

When a man's life ends, we ask what he has done; but a diploma from a school or a degree from a college or university is not an obituary, and when a student's education ends we should ask, not what he has done, but what he is or has become.—President A. Lawrence Lowell, Harvard University.