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TEACHER GUIDANCE OF THE SEX DEVELOPMENT  
OF SIX AND SEVEN-YEAR-OLD PUPILS

by

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Adviser

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Significance of the Problem

Psychologists have been unable to agree on what are the original behavior drives which are native to every child, such as the bodily appetites and emotions;<sup>1</sup> however, they are in substantial agreement that these and the learned responses of early life have great effect on behavior in later life.

Ruth May Strang, with wide experience in child guidance, places moderate emphasis on the early years in her remarks:

The period of infancy and young childhood has the advantage of being the period in which many habits are initiated. . . Children seem not to outgrow their early experiences--especially vivid emotional crises--as they do their dresses and shoes. These experiences sometimes have been retained and have influenced adult behavior.<sup>2</sup>

Read Bain reiterates this thought in these words: "Most students agree that the basic personality is pretty well defined by the age of eight or ten or even earlier."<sup>3</sup> Adler presents an extreme point of view: "A child has formed and shaped his behavior pattern at the end of his

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1. Blatz, William E. and Bott, Helen. Parents and the Pre-School Child. New York: Morrow, 1929. p. 27.

2. Strang, Ruth. An Introduction to Child Study. New York: Macmillan, 1938. pp. 6-7.

3. Bain, Read. "Producing Marriageable Personalities," Family Marriage and Parenthood. Edited by Howard Becker and Rueben Hill. Boston: Heath, 1948. p. 190.

third year of life."<sup>4</sup>

Granting the importance of these early years in forming basic patterns, there are some things that affect the child's sexual adjustment more than others. As one of the major needs of the child is affection, the parents naturally form one of the main sources of this security. The mother who is more closely associated with the child may

. . . love the child unwisely and too much . . . If the mother loves him too much. . . he may never learn enough self-reliance for adequate adulthood. . . This is one of the possible effects of parent-child fixation.<sup>5</sup>

Kanner conducted a study at the Children's Psychiatric Clinic at Johns Hopkins Hospital to discover children's attitudes toward sex. Conn summarized the study and found this factor an important one:

Contacts with other children help to direct the sexual imagination of the child toward heterosexuality. Overprotection and oversolicitude on the part of the parent tend to deprive the child of the opportunity of exchanging sex information with his fellows. Such deprivation may help to retard the child's sexual orientation during this phase of active and social and sexual growth.<sup>6</sup>

If a child is to come out of the early phase of development when he is interested in sex play, manipulation of genital organs, curiosity in sex differences and bodily functions, he must be guided through these discoveries, having no shameful attitude toward these interests.<sup>7</sup>

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4. Adler, Alfred. "Character and Talent," Harper's Magazine, 155:65, June, 1927.

5. Bain, op. cit., p. 184.

6. Conn, Jacob H. "Sex Attitudes and Sex Awareness in Young Children," Child Study, 16:106, January, 1939.

7. Pilpel, Cecile. "A New Approach to Sex Education," Child Study Association of America. Sex Education Facts and Attitudes. Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1934, pp. 8-9.

This thought is reaffirmed in Lawrence Frank's words:

In our culture he may be taught that his own genitals and those of others are especially inviolable. . . These early lessons in inviolability and untouchability and often the added feeling that the genitals are obscene, wicked, and sinful often give rise to the persistent feelings of the individual that complicates his adult mating and frequently lead to profound frustration and dismay.<sup>8</sup>

"Children absorb their parents' attitudes about sex and what they see in their parents' married life teaches more than any verbal instruction on sex."<sup>9</sup>

Breckenridge<sup>10</sup> and Blatz<sup>11</sup> feel that if the child has the right attitude and self-control in the other drives when the sex urge is fully manifested at puberty, the child will have a better chance of achieving control of the sex drive.

It seems to be generally recognized that many parents are incapable of giving sex guidance because of religious taboo, the very intimate relation of the subject itself, or ignorance. Parents have felt the effects of taboos placed upon sex.<sup>12</sup> Early Christian sects put a restraint on sex that today is still lingering in the minds of many

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8. Frank, Lawrence K. "The Basic Needs of the Child," Mental Health in the Classroom. Thirteenth Yearbook of the Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction of the National Education Association. Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1941. p. 14.

9. Pilpel, op. cit., p. 10.

10. Breckenridge, Marion and Vincent, E. Lee. Child Development. Philadelphia: Saunders, 1943. pp. 494-495.

11. Blatz, op. cit., p. 31.

12. Gruenberg, Benjamin C. How Can We Teach about Sex? Public Affairs Pamphlet, No. 122. New York: Public Affairs Committee Inc., 1946. pp. 7-8.



people. Followers of the early Jewish religion, and those of Calvinism and Puritanism, used severe measures to curb primitive drives.<sup>13</sup>

Blumgart asserts: "The case histories of present day psychiatrists show that such measures are still current."<sup>14</sup>

Parents have conflicts in their own feelings about giving instructions in a subject that is so intimately bound up in their own emotional life. According to Pilpel:

We are physically and psychically so constituted that sex affects our emotions, along with our thinking, and talking about sex is consequently an emotional as well as an intellectual experience.<sup>15</sup>

For example, the writer of this study, while making a survey of sex interests of kindergarten children, noted the following incident: A mother had accepted her responsibility intellectually, had given simple and frank answers to her child's questions but could not permit the child to feel the fetal movements within her.<sup>16</sup>

Many parents are ignorant of the fact that there are early manifestations of interests in sex; consequently they do not realize that guidance is needed. They are also ignorant of the method by which to give this guidance.

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13. Blumgart, Leonard. "Parent and Sex Education," Child Study Association of America. Sex Education Facts and Attitudes. Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1934, p. 27.

14. Ibid.

15. Pilpel, op. cit., p. 10.

16. Finch, Margaret G., Survey of Sex Guidance and Interests of Pre-School Child at the Woman's College, Greensboro, N. C. and State Teachers College, Farmville, Va. Term Paper, Fall Semester, Woman's College, 1948.

Stoddard in summarizing Hattendorf's study of sex education for parents in the University of Iowa states: "Ignorance proves to be the great deterrent: ignorance of proper terminology of child needs and of the probable effect upon child behavior of a positive, educational approach."<sup>17</sup>

Some parents are unaware of very early erotic feelings of children. Blatz observes:

The other appetites are definitely manifest at birth; the sex impulse reaches its characteristic development at puberty and later. For this reason, training in sex habits is often neglected during the early years of a child's life because the parent feels that the child is not yet ripe for such knowledge.<sup>18</sup>

There are still parents who have come from a generation in which their fathers and mothers, not knowing how to provide sex instruction, instilled into them the belief that sex was not a proper subject for the child until he was "old enough to know the facts of life." The vogue was to keep silent on the subject until the child was ten or twelve.<sup>19</sup>

Although parents know the actual facts of sex, they are often unable to impart this knowledge because they lack the proper terms and do not know how much information to give.<sup>20</sup>

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17. Stoddard, G. D. "Foreword," Hattendorf, K. W. and others. Research in Parent Education I, University of Iowa, Studies in Child Welfare, Vol. VI. New Series No. 241 (Dec. 15, 1932). Iowa City: The University, 1932. p. 3.

18. Blatz, op. cit., p. 30.

19. Dickerson, Roy E. "Parental Preparation for Training the Child," Home Study Course Social Hygiene Guidance, Lesson I. Los Angeles, California: Institute of Family Relation, 1944. p. 3.

20. Gruenberg, Benjamin C. "Fearless Sex Education," Child Study Association of America. Sex Education Facts and Attitudes. Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1934. p. 24.

### Statement of the Problem

This thesis is a study of teacher guidance of the sex-development of six and seven-year-old pupils. The orderly development of the study requires adequate answers to the following sub-problems:

- I. What pre-school sex experiences must be taken into account?
- II. What are the sex manifestations found in six and seven-year-old pupils?
- III. What experiences (lessons, projects, readings, etc.), appropriate to the age, stimulate legitimate questions and promote insights?
- IV. What teacher preparation is essential in order to prepare her for this role?

### Delimitation of the Problem

Sex guidance as treated in this study is limited to the guidance given six and seven-year-old pupils.

### Method

First, a careful survey was made to eliminate the possibility of duplicating previous work done in this field and to discover related supporting studies. The following reference works were used:

Palfrey, Thomas R. and Coleman, Henry E. Guide to Bibliographies of Theses--United States and Canada. Second Edition, Chicago: American Library Association, 1940.

United States Library of Congress. A List of American Doctoral Dissertations, Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1927-1938.

Doctoral Dissertations Accepted by American Universities, 1933-1934. Compiled for National Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies by the Association of Research Libraries. New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1938-1947.

Illinois University College of Education Bureau of Educational Research. Ten Years of Educational Research, 1918-1927. Bulletin 42, by Walter S. Monroe and others. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois, 1928.

Bibliography of Research Studies in Education, 1926-1927.  
Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1929-1940.

Good, Carter Victor. "Doctor's Thesis Under Way in Education",  
1930-31. Journal of Educational Research. 1930 to  
January, 1948.

Gray, Ruth A. "Recent Theses in Education," School Life.  
1933 to February, 1948.

The survey of the professional literature, which revealed a wealth of material on the subject, was conducted with the help of the Education Index working through Volume IV, 1938 to Volume XX, 1949, and the reference works noted above. Help was also received from the following theses:

1. Ingle, Kelsey Huddleson. "A Study of the Needs of High School Girls in the Area of Sex Guidance in Family Life Education." Graduate Center, Woman's College, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, 1948.
2. Stohlman, Mary Helen. "Provision for Sex Education in Public Schools of District of Columbia." George Washington University, Washington, D. C., 1934.

Finally a study was made in the homes and schools of a town, Farmville, Virginia, and a city, Greensboro, North Carolina, to ascertain further interest of young children in sex education and to verify the material given by comparing it with best authorities in this subject. This study included (1) conferences with teachers, (2) interviews with parents, (3) experiments suggested by the literature and taken from the writer's experiences in first grade, and (4) a demonstration of sex guidance in a classroom.

## CHAPTER II

### PRE-SCHOOL AND PRIMARY CHILDREN'S SEX EXPERIENCES

#### Early Sex Manifestations Found in the Literature

There are certain significant experiences a pre-school child may have had in his sex development which a teacher should know and understand in order to guide him when he enters school. These experiences start in infancy, for it is during the first year that the child goes through the period of receiving pleasure from sucking, biting, and exploring with his mouth. A child may stay in this period too long when this pleasure-urge is imperfectly gratified either by overindulgence or too drastic curtailment. Then the child is slow in the normal process of growing up emotionally.<sup>1</sup>

Between twelve and twenty-four months a child becomes interested in his eliminative processes.<sup>2</sup> In the process of toilet training, the child shows a natural interest in products of his own body. Consequently this is a period in which the child may experiment with his feces. This is a fascinating way of satisfying a natural desire for touch sensations. The child may resort to retaining the feces when on the toilet and to releasing it when clothed in order to stir up excitement or to seek revenge on an adult.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Groves, Ernest R. and Groves, Gladys Hoagland. Sex in Childhood. New York: Macaulay, 1933. pp. 22-23.

2. Breckenridge, Marian E. and Vincent, E. Lee. Child Development. Philadelphia: Saunders, 1943. pp. 484.

3. Ibid., p. 485.

Inasmuch as the sympathetic nervous system does control the eliminative processes, and since tension affects this function, one wonders whether the retaining of the feces might not be an involuntary action rather than a matter of revenge.

Mr. and Mrs. Groves, who are recognized authorities in sex education, state another common experience in these words:

At about the end of the second year when the necessary accomplishment of toilet training drives the child from anal satisfactions and impels him to seek new pleasures, the child becomes acutely aware of his genitals. From the first-half year he may already have shown occasional flashes of interest in this part of his body, but now he turns to it in earnest if he has succeeded in freeing himself from preponderant interest in the oral and anal zones.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, at an early age the infant boy may feel stimulations that cause the erection of the penis. Jersild says:

This phenomenon does not of course necessarily mean that the young boy has sensations or feelings of an erotic or sexual nature; it does mean, however, that the genital organ comes to the young child's attention.<sup>5</sup>

A large proportion of both boys and girls during the first year or two manipulate their genital organs.<sup>6</sup> According to Jersild, this should not necessarily be regarded as an experience equivalent to masturbation but one that shows the child has an active interest in the genital organs. Jersild also asserts that:

Such behavior at the infancy level and similar behavior sometimes accompanied by other signs of interest in sex at pre-school level may be transitory or it may persist for an extended period

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4. Groves, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

5. Jersild, Arthur Thomas. *Child Psychology*. Revised Edition. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1947. p. 96.

6. *Ibid.*

of time; it may occupy a child many times during a day or it may occur at widespread intervals.<sup>7</sup>

Just as in other phases of development there are wide ranges of individual differences there will be some children who will indulge in manipulating the genital organs more than others.<sup>8</sup> These early aspects of sex development should neither be treated more roughly or handled more delicately than other stages of development in the child's growth. If parents are very severe in their restraint and punishment or show an attitude of revulsion, they may have an unwholesome effect on the child's attitudes toward these actions.<sup>9</sup>

It seems to be generally recognized that children become interested in physical sex differences at an early age. Hattendorf's study<sup>10</sup> of children's sex interest ranked physical sex differences fourth in a scale of nine for children aged two to five years. This study also showed that the earliest and most lasting interest was displayed in organs and their functions and physical sex differences.

For this reason children should sometime during these first three years become familiar with their own make up and that of other children of the same sex as well as those of the opposite sex.<sup>11</sup>

The desire to see the body of the opposite sex is a normal feature of the child's development. Many children, once they have noticed

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7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p. 97.

10. Hattendorf, Katherine Wood. "A Home Program for Mothers in Sex Education," University of Iowa. Studies in Child Welfare, Vol. VI. Iowa City: University of Iowa, 1932. p. 64.

11. Groves, op. cit., p. 60.

the differences in sex, are quite interested.<sup>12</sup> The degree of the child's reactions when he sees the difference in sex organs has been disputed. A few authorities have thought that children become very upset when they discover they do not have the same kind of genital organ.

Groves says:

It is important to explain that the spectacular difference between girls and boys is natural, and also that the boy's genitals will be like the father's when he is a man, and the girl's like the mother's.<sup>13</sup>

Jacob H. Conn's studies<sup>14</sup> of children's reactions to the discovery of the genital differences showed that a large per cent accepted it with no disturbance, although a small per cent of girls wondered if they had not formerly possessed the same organs as the boys but somehow theirs had been cut off. The average child was not upset over the matter. Likewise, Jersild holds the viewpoint that the normal child is not disturbed on discovering the genital differences.<sup>15</sup>

Still another early interest is displayed by the child when he shows interest in watching others in the bathroom or when they are undressed. This interest may come at the early age of thirty months.<sup>16</sup>

Authorities agree that it is best for the child to have this curiosity satisfied at an early age. As Jersild states:

. . . if the child is interested but hindered through the prudery

12. Ibid.

13. Groves, op. cit., p. 54.

14. Conn, Jacob H. "Sex Attitudes and Sex Awareness of Young Children," Child Study, 16:86 /, January, 1939.

15. Jersild, op. cit., p. 97. (footnote).

16. Gesell, Arnold and Ilg, Frances L. Infant and Child: The Culture of Today. New York: Harper, 1943. p. 345.



of his parents, he may at the early age of two or three become quite furtive in his efforts to satisfy his curiosity by peeping or trying to obtain a view of the naked human body.<sup>17</sup>

Strain says, "undressing [meaning exploring] each other is by far the most common of childhood sex offences and is chronologically the first."<sup>18</sup> A few children whose curiosity has been satisfied continue to indulge in this act. This may be the result of one of the following reasons: living in overcrowded conditions in a home having a low moral tone, or being surfeited in the teaching of sex to such an extent as to become preoccupied with sex play.<sup>19</sup> Very few children show this maladjustment owing to over-stressing sex teaching, for it is assumed that when a child's sex interest is satisfied, this phase passes away.

Another phase through which the pre-school child passes, is the one in which he delights in playing without clothes. Bodily modesty has to be taught the very young child.<sup>20</sup> At the age of five the child has become rather modest. One can assume that our culture has taught the child when he arrives at this age to be modest.<sup>21</sup>

During these early years the child often wonders about the origin of new life and begins to ask questions. According to Blatz, the child is almost sure to ask "where do babies come from?"<sup>22</sup> Most authorities

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17. Jersild, op. cit., p. 97.

18. Strain, Frances B. New Patterns in Sex Teaching. New York: Appleton, 1934. p. 59.

19. Ibid., p. 64.

20. Ibid., p. 62.

21. Gesell, Arnold and Ilg, Frances L. The Child from Five to Ten. New York: Harper, 1946. p. 80.

22. Blatz, William and Bott, Helen. The Parent and the Pre-School Child. New York: Morrow, 1929. p. 153.

rank this question as one of the early ones.

Another early sex experience is the act of urinating outdoors as occasionally practiced by some children. This behavior may be indulged in because the child is lazy and finds it too inconvenient to use a toilet. The child may have been improperly trained in toilet habits, or he may have reverted to former habits. This urge may be very frequent, owing to physical or emotional causes. There may be an additional reason; for instance, the child may be showing off.<sup>23</sup> Boys occasionally like to experiment with their aim on trajectory, and girls may also experiment by trying to urinate in the manner of a boy.<sup>24</sup>

Any child from any background can at times acquire an undesirable vocabulary.<sup>25</sup> which may include dirty, blasphemous and vulgar words. Some children pass through the stage of using bathroom terms, terms which are connected with elimination and the names of sex organs. They may use these sensitized words to get attention or to cause a sensation.<sup>26</sup>

Thus one may assume that it is part of the child's process of growing up to hear these "so-called vulgar words." A child should not live such a protected life that he does not come in contact with words of common usage good or bad. He needs to be acquainted with them so that he will know when to avoid using them.

In like manner the child passes through five stages of growth in

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23. Strain, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

24. Jersild, op. cit., p. 92.

25. Ridenour, Nina. When a Child Uses Bad Language. New York: New York Committee on Mental Hygiene-State Charities Aid Association, 1947. p. 1.

26. Ibid., p. 2.

his affections. The mother is the first love in his affections. The mother is the first love in infancy as she satisfies all needs.<sup>27</sup> There is a need for comradeship with the father in order to balance the basic attachment of the young child to the mother. In these early years the pattern for a mother fixation may be formed. Groves says:

. . . motherhood and wifehood are normally competing interests, and unless wifehood holds its own, the setting is laid for the stagnating child-mother dependency known as mother fixation.<sup>28</sup>

The next stage in the child's emotional development has been called the neutral or pre-school age, one in which the child loves either male or female playmate.<sup>29</sup>

Children show very little sex preference in their attachments.<sup>30</sup> When the child reaches kindergarten or first grade, there is a marked tendency to want uni-sexual friendship. Although girls will include boys in their play, boys will not include girls as readily.<sup>31</sup>

Dramatic games and make-believe play form the spontaneous expressions of sex interest for the young child. Some of the most common games are playing house, dressing up animals to be real babies, getting married, playing doctor and hospital, and playing having a baby. These are all universally beloved among young children. The child expresses

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27. Strain, op. cit., p. 7.

28. Groves, op. cit., p. 34.

29. Strain, op. cit., p. 6.

30. Ibid., p. 8.

31. Hurlock, Elizabeth B. Child Development. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1942. p. 367.

what he has imagined or has observed about sex.<sup>32</sup>

### A Limited Survey of Sex Interests of Pre-School Children

#### Method of Conducting the Survey

In order to determine the incidents offering opportunity for sex guidance at the pre-school level, to find the interest developing at that time, and to evaluate the methods used, the author conducted a survey with the parents of the Nursery School and the Kindergarten of the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and with the parents of the Kindergarten of the Training School of the State Teachers College, Farmville, Virginia.

The parents from each of these localities have somewhat the same opportunities as both communities have a college in the center. The investigator felt that the survey would be more accurate if samples were secured from a small town and a city. The interviews in the latter were given from October to December 15. However, only one series was given in Farmville in this process; whereas in Greensboro, continuous interviews were conducted during this period of time. Consequently this survey would have been more accurate if the same number of interviews had been given in both localities.

The student who conducted the survey worked with the director of the study in deciding upon its scope and the method to be used. A guide sheet was formulated to help the parents recall and write up the incidents. Valuable suggestions were found in Katherine Hattendorf's study,

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32. Strain, Frances B. Sex Guidance in Family Life. New York: Macmillan, 1946. p. 125.

"A Home Program for Mothers in Sex Education."<sup>33</sup>

In the discussion the subjects found to be most interesting to little children were: origin of babies, coming of a new baby, intra-uterine growth, process of birth, organs and their functions, physical sex differences, the father's part in reproduction, and marriage.

The same headings, with one addition, vulgar or taboo behavior, were chosen for the Finch Survey. This guide sheet was tested out by several mothers before the final form was adopted. A summary of the total survey giving the sex, the age, sex information grouped according to subject matter and percentage of boys and girls inquiring is given in Table I.

In both age groups more mothers of males reported no interest shown, and, out of the number of mothers who did not respond at all, the majority were mothers of boys. Thus it might be suggested that mothers are more self-conscious in talking to boys, or that boys may be slower in developing, or also that they may be getting the information from other sources.

The findings of this study of the five-year-old child have also been compared with those of Gesell and Ilg.<sup>34</sup> Gesell's profile shows that both sexes are interested in babies and that they also wish to hear repeated stories of their own birth, even though they have been told the origin of new life. This study reaffirmed the first characteristic, for the children dramatized having babies and also wanted their parents to have babies. Very few five-year-old children are curious about the male's

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33. Hattendorf, op. cit., p. 88.

34. Gesell, Child from Five to Ten, pp. 79-81.

TABLE I  
103 INQUIRIES FOR SEX INFORMATION GROUPED ACCORDING TO AGE, SEX, NUMBER,  
PER CENT OF BOYS AND GIRLS, AND SUBJECT MATTER

Nursery School-Age 3-4											
Per cent	Sex Number of each	Organs and their functions	Wanting a baby	Sex Differences	Origin of new life	Prenatal growth	Process of birth	Male's part in reproduction	Marriage	Total questions	Grand total questions
	Girls										
	6	4	1	6	2	2	2	1	3	21	
Per cent		19	4.7	28.6	9	9	9	4.7	14.3		
	Boys										
	6	1	0	5	6	1	2	0	0	15	
Per cent		7.7	0	33	40	7	13	0	0		36
Total per cent		13.9	2.8	30.5	22.0	8.0	11.0	2.8	11.0		
Kindergarten-Age 5-6											
	Girls										
	24	4	3	12	9	5	8	0	7	48	
Per cent		8.3	6.2	25	18.8	10.4	16.7	0	15		
	Boys										
	20	4	1	5	4	1	1	1	2	19	
Per cent		21.0	5.0	26.0	21.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	10.5		67
Total per cent		11.1	5.1	25.3	19.4	8.9	13.0	1.4	13.0		103
Grand total per cent		12	.48	17	21	.87	12	.48	19		

part in reproduction and, in the Finch Survey, there was only one four-year-old girl who asked questions. The child at this age finds it hard to understand the growth of the baby within the mother.

There were many samples showing the child's confusion over the intra-uterine growth and the beginning interest in the growth of pubic hair on adolescent sisters and parents. According to Gesell the five-year-old is beginning to be modest, and it was noted in this survey that there were fewer children indulging in the game of "show." Out of the total number of fifty-five children in the Finch Survey, only 10.3 per cent indulged in exhibiting and exploring.

To make another parallel between the two surveys, the sex interests were compared according to rank. The ranking is shown in Table II.

#### Comparison of the Finch and Hattendorf Surveys

There are significant similarities to be found in these two studies. The younger children in each study showed much interest in origin of new life. Both ranked sex differences in the upper scale. In the two studies the child displayed very little interest in the male's part in reproduction. It is noted that few children in the present survey displayed interest in organs and their functions. It might be assumed that these young children have already satisfied their curiosity.

Comparison of the four-year-old child's interest in the Finch Survey with those of the Hattendorf Survey show the following conclusions: The four-year-old boy displayed the greatest interest in origin of new life in Finch's Survey, whereas the greatest interest of this character in Hattendorf's study was in organs and their functions. Second in importance in the former survey was sex differences, while in the latter, the origin of life was listed before sex differences. The

TABLE II

COMPARISON OF HATTENDORF AND FINCH SURVEYS SHOWING NUMBER OF INQUIRIES,  
NUMBER AND AGE OF CHILDREN MAKING INQUIRIES, AND INQUIRIES  
IN TERMS OF SUBJECT MATTER

	Study			
	Hattendorf		Finch	
Number of inquiries	75	69	36	67
Number of children making inquiries	394	358	12	21
Age of children	3 to 4	5 to 6	3 to 4	5 to 6
Group of subject matter				
Origin of new life	2	1	2	2
Sex differences	3	5	1	1
Process of birth	5	2	4	3
Father's part in reproduction	7	8	7	8
Marriage	6	6	5	4
Intra-uterine growth	6	6	6	6
Organs and their functions	1	3	3	5
Coming of another baby	4	4	8	7

peak of interest of the four-year-old girl was shown to center in sex differences and organs and their functions. In this there was close correlation with Hattendorf's study.

Specific incidents show that the child at three or four is asking questions with deeper meaning than at two and a half.<sup>35</sup> At this age he is beginning to wonder about the past that he no longer remembers.

35. Groves, *op. cit.*, p. 118.



Samples to illustrate this were found in the survey; for example, a boy wanted to know "where he was before he was born," and a little girl repeatedly asked her mother to tell her about the story of her birth.

Tentative conclusions showing outstanding characteristics of the five-year-old girl are as follows: Girls displayed the greatest interest in sex differences and origin of new life. In Hattendorf's Survey the first two important ones were origin of new life and process of birth. The boys were interested in, first, sex differences and, second, origin of new life. In the other study the first interest was process of birth, and the second was origin of new life.

An outstanding difference noted in both age groups in the Finch Survey is the fact that the greater number of questions was asked by the girls. Hattendorf's study showed that more inquiries occurred per boy than per girl, although a larger proportion of the girls than the boys asked questions. There were six boys and six girls who contributed incidents in the Nursery School. There were 15 incidents listed for the boys. The number of questions per boy was  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ; for girls,  $3\frac{1}{2}$ . In the kindergarten group there were 24 girls taking part and 9 boys. The total number of incidents for girls was 48, and the number of questions per girl was 2. Incidents listed for boys numbered 19; questions per boy were  $2\frac{1}{9}$ . Average number of questions asked by all the boys was 1.36, and the average for the girls was 2.3.

#### Analysis of the Sex Incidents

In this survey the parents' answers were analyzed and rated as adequate, misleading, and incomplete. To illustrate what is meant by the ratings, an example of each type is given with an explanation of why the rating was given.

The following incident was chosen to show an adequate answer to a

specific question. A child asked her mother how babies "get" born. The mother had already explained the place in the mother's body where the child grew. The mother then replied that the mother's vagina is made so that it can open wide enough for the baby to come out, and in that way the baby is born. Then the vagina closes again. This is a direct answer using the right terms with the child and answering only what the child had asked.

An episode showed how easily a misleading conception can appear in the following story: A child begged her mother for a baby sister. The mother explained to the child that God did not send babies into a home where there was no father to help the mother care for them. Then as Frances Bruce Strain writes:

'Who made me, mother?' 'God made you. He brought mother and father together so that they loved each other, then married and united to make you! It hasn't many words but it is fussy--it befogs. . . 'You grew in mother' and so on is much simpler, more understandable.<sup>36</sup>

As a result of the first answer, the child may be assailed by doubts when she finds that there are illegitimate children.

The following incident shows an example in which the parent did not give the complete answer. A five-year-old boy, after looking at a picture of a father and a baby, asked his mother where he came from. The mother told him that he came from her stomach. The child wanted to know how he got there. The mother replied, "I will tell you next year. Come to me and ask me again next year." The mother evaded the question, possibly for these reasons: ignorance of the facts to tell, inhibitions on the subject, or inability to see that the child was old enough to

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36. Strain, New Patterns in Sex Teaching, p. 97.

understand the facts.

Likewise young children like to display in their conversation their knowledge of sex. This incident shows an adequate way in handling that type of sex interest: Grandmother and grandson were in the toilet together. The grandson said, "You ought to have a penis, Grandmother." The grandmother casually answered, "Yes?" The little boy who had recently been painting Easter eggs remarked, "I can make you a penis. What color do you want?" "Oh! I'd like to have a white one like yours." "How would you put it on?" asked the grandmother. "I'd get some sticky paper and put it on." They both laughed. This showed a casual acceptance of a normal interest of a child. Both persons looked upon the incident in fun. The adult did not attempt to give any information on sex differences but accepted the whole experience in a playful mood.

To give a general idea concerning which group gave more effective sex guidance, Table III presents a summary of all the incidents showing the ratings of each group.

TABLE III  
RATING OF THREE GROUPS FOR EFFECTIVE SEX GUIDANCE  
AS SHOWN BY INCIDENTS REVEALED IN THE SURVEY

Guidance	Group		
	Nursery School	Woman's College Kindergarten	Farmville Kindergarten
Answers			
Adequate	28	13	10
Misleading	2	4	10
Incomplete	1	1	2
Childrens' Conversation	3	3	0

The parents of the Nursery School children showed the highest adequacy in handling the sex questions and interests of the child. One might suspect that these parents had for some reason a more adequate training for sex guidance.

One significant factor emerged. All of the parents who reported made an attempt to answer the child. One parent out of seven evaded the child's question in Hattendorf's study. An attempt was made to find out whether children are asking more questions now than at the time of Hattendorf's study. There were seventy-two children taking part in the Hattendorf group. They asked three hundred and ninety questions during eight months. Each child asked an average of .665 questions per month. In the Finch Survey there were forty-three taking part. They asked 103 questions during two and a half months. Each child asked an average of .953 interrogations per month.

Since seventeen years have passed since Hattendorf's study was conducted, it might be assumed that the child today is more free in asking questions and that parents are more willing to answer and more open in reporting questions.

In this survey a list of taboo or vulgar behavior was also made to show the activities the children participated in at the two age levels. Children in the three to five age group indulged in the following acts: urinating outdoors, exploring the genital organs, and using bathroom words for vulgar words. In the older group these things were noted: exploration of genital organs, urinating outdoors, manipulation of genital organs, and using taboo words.

Authorities in the field of sex education declare that these actions are to be expected of some children at these ages. This, however,

does not imply that the parents are wrong in trying to guide children away from these actions, but rather that they should accept them as actions needing positive guidance rather than punishment and disapproval.

#### Summary of the Literature and the Survey

From the study of the literature and the small survey, these significant experiences of a pre-school child were found: showing an interest in the process of elimination, using taboo words, manipulating the genitals, being curious concerning sex differences and the origin of new life, dramatizing sex interests, and indulging in forms of exhibitionism.

#### Sex Manifestations in the Six and Seven-Year-Old Child

##### Six-Year-Old Sex Interests

Now that the pre-school experiences have been summarized, the picture shifts to the sex manifestations in the six and seven-year-old child. According to Gesell and Ilg's study,<sup>37</sup> the main difference in the sex interests of the five and six-year-old is that the child's world around him has enlarged, the relative quiescence of the five-year-old vanishes at six. All interests, including sex, spread into many varied fields. Gesell says, "Six is interested in marriage, the origin of babies, pregnancy, birth, opposite sex, sex role, and a new baby. The facts of intercourse are still beyond his grasp."<sup>38</sup> There is a definite interest in marriage; the child has learned that marriage means marrying a member of the opposite sex. However, this member may be his mother,

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37. Gesell, op. cit., p. 116.

38. Ibid.

sister or teacher. Children at this age enjoy dramatizing marriage. There is a continued interest in using sensitized words and name-calling. Boys and girls indulge in exploration; boys especially tend to expose their genital organs before girls. Six is more interested in how the baby comes out than in how the baby starts. Yet there is a beginning interest in this function. The child now seems to grasp the idea of how the baby starts from a seed.

Gesell<sup>39</sup> and Groves<sup>40</sup> both recognize this age as one in which the child indulges in sex play, dramatizing doctor play, having a baby, and in other similar activities. Groves stresses that the feeling of shame and ugliness should not be attached to these games as it is a transient phase similar to that of the three or four-year old when he is playing house.

In concluding the profile, Gesell found these general sex characteristics: the child is exploring in many fields of sex interests. Some of the most outstanding are: sex dramatization, interest in marriage and exploration. The child is also interested in the origin of babies and in wanting a baby in the family.

#### Seven-Year-Old Sex Interests

Gesell's study showed these significant sex interests of the seven-year-old child. He found that the child is now beginning to understand pregnancy in a simple manner. The child shows more concern about the details of birth. He is also less likely than the younger child to enter into overt sex play. There is now a tendency to be self-conscious

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39. Ibid.

40. Groves, op. cit., p. 80.

about undressing even with members of the family. In addition, the seven-year-old has begun to have boy-girl affairs, especially in school.<sup>41</sup>

In summarizing the interests of these two ages, one might say that the child's interest at six is in an experimental and broadening phase; he has broken from the home circle, has found many new and strange ideas, yet he has not been in this adult world long enough to lose his spontaneity and frankness.<sup>42</sup> His questions are still very free and uninhibited; whereas, at seven the child is thinking deeper concerning the manner of birth and pregnancy.

This would show then that at seven the child is thinking through some of the simpler details of sex.

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41. Gesell, op. cit., p. 148-9.

42. Strain, New Patterns in Sex Education, p. 133.

## CHAPTER III

### CLASSROOM EXPERIENCES WHICH STIMULATE SEX GUIDANCE

#### Introduction

Sex guidance may be given through the care of pets, through the teaching of appreciation of the family life in the home unit, and through the use of games and rhythms which give a natural setting to the early process of growing up socially. As the first-grade child often has to pass through the period of adjustment over the arrival of a new baby in his family, suggestions will be given showing the manner in which a teacher may help solve the problem in school. A short incident will also be given to show how a teacher guided a child when he purposely made an obscene drawing.

#### Methods of Teaching

Frances Bruce Strain thinks that sex education must be taught in an incidental manner in the primary grades, and that incidental teaching may come through spontaneous play, companionship between the sexes, dramatization of home life, drawing and clay modelling of domestic themes, songs, and stories.<sup>1</sup>

It is generally agreed by writers in the field that the first-grade child may also learn on a very childlike level the family life of animals and may compare their family life with that of the human family.

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1. Strain, Frances Bruce. Sex Guidance in Family Life Education. New York: Macmillan, 1946. p. 108.



Strain says: "The conducting of family life projects as a part of a sex program is best worked out in the primary and elementary grades incidentally."<sup>2</sup>

Incidental teaching has a broad meaning and a limited one. Some students in the field of sex education take the opportunity given them in a natural opening for incidental teaching and give sex information over and beyond that asked for by the child.<sup>3</sup> Others think that the teaching should be given as long as the questions come and end when there are no further questions.<sup>4</sup>

Strain sums up her belief on how far mothers must go in answering children's questions in these comments:

You must, if I may be emphatic, continue to answer as long as he continues to ask. Otherwise let your answer stand as it is, turn the youngster out to play or to follow some other interest.<sup>5</sup>

The following taken from the Hygiea Magazine<sup>6</sup> is a good example of a parent's preparation for answering questions. In order to prepare herself for the children's questions concerning their pregnant cat, a mother of a five and a seven-year-old obtained suitable books and waited for inquiries to come from the children. When the questions came, she answered them.

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2. Ibid.

3. Biester, Lillian L. and others. Personal Health and Human Relations. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1947. p. 11.

4. Strain, Frances B. New Patterns in Sex Teaching. New York: Appleton, 1934. p. 96.

5. Ibid., p. 103.

6. Murlin, Jean Ewell. "Give Your Child Experience," Hygeia, 27:114, February, 1949.

Strain believes that anyone who is planning to use pets in the classroom to guide in sex development should first think of the whole family life cycle, the new babies, the care of the young, the courtship, marriage, mating, reproduction, sickness and death.<sup>7</sup> The teacher should not overstress any one phase, such as reproduction. Animal family life has this cycle in a lower form and children can feel a little of this when they have animals to watch and care for.<sup>8</sup> A teacher of very young children needs to understand that children at this age are interested in their pets as something to love, to observe, and to enjoy. The six and seven-year-old child usually is not concerned about the male's part in reproduction, as this interest does not usually begin to appear until the child is about seven or eight years of age.<sup>9</sup>

The investigator offers these experiments taken from her actual teaching experience, from a demonstration in the Nursery School of the Home Economics Department and the First Grade in the Curry School of the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina in Greensboro, and from the literature.

### Three Experiments

#### Experiment I - Mammals

Care of rabbits.--Rabbits are suitable subjects for an experiment for the following reasons:

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7. Strain, Sex Guidance, p. 105.

8. Ibid, pp. 109-110.

9. Gesell, Arnold and Ilg, Frances L. The Child from Five to Ten. New York: Harper, 1946. p. 116.

Their natural appeal to young children.

Their short reproductive period.

Their demonstrations of a mother's care for her young.

The ease and simplicity of their care.

An example of the method in which a teacher led her children to understand the family life of a pair of rabbits and their babies is told by Abbie C. Enders,<sup>10</sup> a teacher in the Swarthmore Public Schools. This incident which may be used in any first-grade room is given in the following paragraphs.

The kindergarten children in the school bought two pet rabbits, provided their home, and cared for them. The question came up incidentally concerning the gender of the rabbits. The teacher and children could not tell which was the father and which the mother. They received conflicting statements from outsiders stating that both were females or both males. From this discussion the group was led to talk about the fact that there must be a father and a mother in order to have babies, all of which was simply stated. Finally the group decided to exchange one rabbit so that they might have a pair because they wanted to be sure to have baby rabbits. However, before the exchange could be made, baby rabbits were born unexpectedly while the children were absent. This emergency made it necessary to learn at once which rabbit was the mother because the teacher knew that father rabbits often kill their babies and the children wanted to remove him immediately from the cage. Members from the college biology department were called in to identify the mother. These students made no explanation about the sex organs of the

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10. Enders, Abbie C. "Bunnies, Buns and Babies," Childhood Education, 23:370-372, April, 1947.

animals but merely showed the children which was the female. The children were told not to disturb the mother rabbit and to try to keep her very quiet. Later the teacher explained to the group that the mother rabbit must not be disturbed so that she would give the needed attention to her babies and feed them properly. The pupils then planned their work to eliminate all the activities that caused excessive noise. The children and teacher helped to prepare a warmer bed for the mother and babies and watched the mother rabbit pull hair from her chest to line the nest.

When the children came together to write the important happenings of the day, the arrival of the baby rabbits was the main topic. The teacher told them that a rabbit was a mammal because it was born alive and drank milk from its mother. The children talked about all the animals among those they knew which were mammals. Individuals asked whether a specific animal was a mammal, and the teacher gave the group the opportunity to answer such questions when she thought they knew the answers. One child said, "My baby brother drinks milk from my mother. Is he a mammal?" The teacher replied: "Yes, we are all mammals."

Following this discussion, the children were shown pictures of new-born mice, newly-hatched birds, and human babies before birth. Some teachers would not approve of the last unless a child asked to see a picture of a human baby.

One of the baby rabbits which had died from exposure was examined by the children. They noted the partial formations, and, when they asked about the umbilical cord, they were told simply that the babies received their food from their mother through this tube, just as human babies receive their food from a tube in the mother's body. The teacher

and children talked about their confusion concerning the sex of the older rabbits and how difficult it is to tell the difference in sex in both old and young rabbits, but how easy it is to tell the difference between boys and girls.

This discussion appealed to the group and held their interest because many of the children had babies at home, or were expecting little brothers and sisters. The children talked freely without any self-consciousness.

Points for teacher's guidance. The following information should be a part of the teacher's preparation before using pets in the room: (1) the physical features of the animals used, (2) proper food and care of the animals, (3) ways to identify the male and female, (4) method of mating, (5) manner of building nest, (6) length of propagation, (7) number of babies, and (8) proper care of their young.

The teacher may anticipate possible questions and prepare her answers beforehand. The following are questions which the children might ask with suggested answers:

1. How can you tell the father rabbit from the mother rabbit?

Suggested answer: The father rabbit has a penis between his hind legs. It is very small.

2. Where did the mother rabbit get the babies?

Suggested answer: The father rabbit puts a tiny egg up in between the legs of the mother rabbit in a place made for this in the mother rabbit's body. This tiny egg joins with another tiny egg in the mother's body. These two tiny eggs grow together and after growing a long while a baby rabbit is made.

3. How did the baby rabbits get out of the mother?

Suggested answer: The babies were born. They came from an opening between the mother's hind legs. This opening was made for them to come out.

4. How long did it take the baby rabbits to grow in the mother?

Suggested answer: Thirty-two days.

5. How did the babies eat and how did they breathe before they were born?

Suggested answer: The babies get their food through a tube that is attached to the mother's stomach. The food comes to them from the mother through the tube. They also breathe through this tube.

6. Do baby rabbits nurse their mother?

Suggested answer: Yes, they nurse their mother.

7. Does the father rabbit help to take care of the babies?

Suggested answer: No, he must be taken away from the babies as he often kills them.

There are other mammals similar to the rabbit which lend themselves to this type of experiment: for example, guinea pigs and mice. Sources of information which will be helpful for the teacher in carrying out this experiment will be found in the appendix.<sup>11</sup>

#### Experiment II - Fowls

Care of chicken family.--A mother hen, rooster, and chicks are suitable for this experiment for the following reasons:

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11. See Appendix A. p. 60.

Their distinctive differences in male and female.

Their natural appeal to young children.

Their reproduction as an example of hatching.

Their demonstration of a mother's care for her young.

The demonstration of the characteristics of hatching as contrasted with birth.

This experiment requires more preparation on the part of the teacher, greater space in the classroom with the requirement of a coop, and more emphasis on keeping the utensils and coop clean.

Bibby and Strain recommend using a hen and chicks in the classroom to stimulate leading questions on sex and for observations which will lead to a better understanding of family life.

Quenton L. Brown<sup>12</sup> in his activity program directed a group of upper primary grade children through a study of the care of chickens stressing the following points: their commercial use, structure, proper food, and care of baby chicks. Through incidental teaching the group learned in a detailed manner the fertilization of the egg and the different steps in development of the chicken embryo. As the group of children were older than the first-grade child, they could understand the development of the chick. It is generally thought that first-grade children as a group will not be able to comprehend this development. For this reason suggestions have been adapted from the unit to be used as an introduction to the meaning of hatching from an egg.

Through the teacher's guidance the children may learn these

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12. Brown, Quenton L. "Chicken Unit," Grade Teacher. 59:26/, April, 1942.

significant points:

The difference in physical features and habits of male and female chickens.

Hen's care of her eggs and her baby chicks.

Method of emergence from the egg.

Manner of behavior of chicks immediately after being hatched.

Meaning of term "hatch".

Meaning of term fowl in comparison with mammal.

Methods of handling baby chicks.

The following information should be a part of the teacher's preparation before using the chickens in the room: (1) knowing the physical features of male and female, (2) method of mating, (3) length of incubation, (4) care of eggs, (5) proper food and care of the chickens, (6) hen's care of baby chicks, and (7) children's care of the baby chicks.

The teacher may anticipate possible questions and prepare her answers beforehand. The following are questions which the children might ask, with a suggested answer for each question.

1. How do you know when a hen wants to set?

Suggested answer: The hen stops laying and makes a clucking sound.

2. What does the hen have to do for the eggs so they will hatch?

Suggested answer: The hen must sit on the eggs and keep them warm with her feathers and the heat from her body.

3. How long will it take the eggs to hatch?

Suggested answer: The hen must keep them warm for three weeks.



4. What would happen if the hen stayed off the nest too long?

Suggested answer: The eggs would get too cold and they would not hatch.

5. How does a baby chick get out of an egg?

Suggested answer: The chick works very hard to get out; he pecks with his bill until he has broken the egg in two, then he comes out.

6. What does the baby chick eat while he is in the egg?

Suggested answer: He eats the egg yolk. (This question is more advanced and probably will not be asked.)

Sources of information which will be helpful for the teacher in carrying out this experiment will be found in the appendix.<sup>13</sup>

#### Experiment III - Fish

Care of guppies--male and female--Guppies are suitable for experimental purposes for the following reasons:

The fish are live bearing.

They are inexpensive.

This experiment requires a balanced aquarium.

Roy E. Dickerson<sup>14</sup> recommends using guppies in the classroom because they are live bearing and the young may be seen inside the female late in pregnancy. As guppies are cannibals, the babies must be removed

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13. See Appendix A. p. 60.

14. Dickerson, Roy E. "The Questions Children Ask or Do Not Ask," Home Study Course Social Hygiene Guidance, Lesson II, Los Angeles, California: Institute of Family Relations, 1944. p. 21.

after their birth.<sup>15</sup>

Gambesia are live bearing fish just as the guppy and may be used in place of the guppy.

For further information, see the appendix.<sup>16</sup>

#### Experiences Centered in the Home Theme

The home unit is a very adaptable unit to be taught to the first-grade child as he is still very closely associated with his family and the family activities, and this unit is accepted as an universal interest for children at this age. Parker District School in Greenville, South Carolina, uses the home as one of the most important centers of interest for first-grade work.<sup>17</sup>

As has already been shown in this study, Strain<sup>18</sup> believes that having pets in the classroom gives the children an opportunity to understand lower animal family life and to compare this with that of the human family. She also believes family life may be taught through dramatizing home activities or playing housekeeping in the kindergartens and first grades. She thinks that when the child plays the game mother and father that this behavior will lead unmistakably into later mature sex interests.

As children come from various types of homes with different backgrounds, some have received the wrong attitude toward family life and the

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15. Miller, Ida M. Twenty Little Fishes. New York: Messner, 1942. p. 53.

16. See Appendix A. p. 60-61.

17. Tippet, James S. Schools for a Growing Democracy. New York: Ginn, 1936. p. 97.

18. Strain, op. cit., p. 108.

relationship between the members. Guidance should be given when an opportunity arises in the teaching of the home unit. The following incident will show the manner in which one teacher led her children to understand the affectionate relationship between father and mother, and the principle that home life is built on love and respect for the members of the family.

A group of first-grade children built in the classroom a small town, which included a home and a few shops. These buildings were large enough for the children to play in. Each day a new family was selected to take care of the home. The father selected the pupil to be his wife and they together chose several members of the class for their children. The dramatic play was very real to the group. One morning after the new family had been selected, the father kissed the mother good-by before starting to work. Some members of the class snickered and began to make fun of them. This showed that the emphasis was being placed by the children on the boy-girl relationship rather than on that of the father and mother. In order to correct this impression, the teacher quietly told the group that her parents bade each other good-by in that manner and gave the members of the group an opportunity to tell of their parents' affectionate ways. The group resumed their playing.

Sources of information which will be helpful for the teacher in carrying out this experiment will be found in the appendix.<sup>19</sup>

Experiences Which Help in an Adjustment to the New Baby

According to Gesell and Strain, it is a natural characteristic

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19. See Appendix A. p. 60-61.

for the six-year-old child to want a baby brother or sister. The first-grade child often has to pass through the period of adjustment over the arrival of a new baby in the family. This adjustment is done primarily in the home. Jersild states:

The success of efforts to forestall jealousy will depend not only upon the subtlety and naturalness of the methods that are used but even more on the relationships that exist between the child and his parents.<sup>20</sup>

It may be assumed that the school may help by giving the child an opportunity to talk about and to ask questions about the arrival of the new baby. As children live very close to their teachers and members of the class in the beginning grades, they feel free to talk unself-consciously about the new baby.

For the teacher who needs suggestions that would stimulate discussion about a new baby, excellent material may be found in these books: Peter and His New Brother by Liselotte Frankl and The New Pet by Marjorie Flack. The one which is recommended as best is Peter and His New Brother by Liselotte Frankl. Josette Frank, Consultant on children's books for the Child Study Association of America, in her recommendation of the book says: "No book, no store of wisdom will keep [a child] from feeling jealous, even resentful. . . . But understanding parents can help him. . ." <sup>21</sup>

To test the value of reading aloud a book of this type to young children, an experiment was conducted in the Nursery School of the Home

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20. Jersild, Arthur T. Child Psychology. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1947. p. 307.

21. Frankl, Liselotte. "Foreword," Frank, Josette. Peter and His New Brother. New York: Chanticleer Press, 1948. p. 1.

Economics Department and the First Grade in the Curry School of the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina in Greensboro.

#### Books Used for Guidance

Peter and His New Brother by Liselotte Frankl was selected for use in testing the value of reading aloud. This book is suitable for the following reasons:

The arrival of a baby has a natural appeal to young children.

The happenings recorded are similar to children's daily experience.

The story may be read at one sitting.

There is humor and action in it.

The book has many large colored pictures.

The following is a synopsis of the reactions recorded in the Nursery School:

Preparation.---The story was read and approved by a parent, the former Nursery School director, and the present director. The director herself read the story to her five and seven-year-old children, who received it with enthusiasm. The five-year-old child showed the greater interest.

Introduction.---The story was directly connected with the children in the class who were expecting baby brothers or sisters. These children had told the group of the coming of "their" baby all during the year. This was a natural lead into the story.

Children's reactions.---The children showed greatest interest in the baby and the baby's actions, and then spontaneously told of their own experiences. The response was good, and at no time was

a feeling of jealousy manifested by the group.

The following is a synopsis of the reaction recorded in the  
First Grade:

Introduction.--As there was no immediate or strong interest in the arrival of a baby in any of the families represented in the group, the introduction was made through a well-known story of this type in one of the children's readers.

Reactions noted.--First Grade children at six and seven have a better conception of the meaning of birth than the four and five-year olds. Two generalizations were made which show this. They were: babies are carried in mothers' bodies, and babies get their food from their mothers' bodies from a cord before they are born. These remarks came from the children, were accepted with no questions and no laughter. The book did stimulate the children to talk spontaneously about babies and also their baby brothers and sisters and how they help to care for them.

#### Sex Guidance Through Games and Rhythms

The average child on entering school at six years has just passed through the pre-school age in which his love impulse toward his playmates is neutral. At this time he may love either sex. Campbell's<sup>22</sup> study of the social sex development of children from kindergarten through high school showed that children from five to about seven were unconscious of sex in their play life. He found that boys and girls play well together

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22. Campbell, Elsie H. "The Social-Sex Development of Children." Genetic Psychology Monographs. Edited by Carl Murchison. Vol. 21, No. 1. Provincetown, Mass.: The Journal Press, 1939. p. 469.

a feeling of jealousy manifested by the group.

The following is a synopsis of the reaction recorded in the First Grade:

Introduction.--As there was no immediate or strong interest in the arrival of a baby in any of the families represented in the group, the introduction was made through a well-known story of this type in one of the children's readers.

Reactions noted.--First Grade children at six and seven have a better conception of the meaning of birth than the four and five-year olds. Two generalizations were made which show this. They were: babies are carried in mothers' bodies, and babies get their food from their mothers' bodies from a cord before they are born. These remarks came from the children, were accepted with no questions and no laughter. The book did stimulate the children to talk spontaneously about babies and also their baby brothers and sisters and how they help to care for them.

#### Sex Guidance Through Games and Rhythms

The average child on entering school at six years has just passed through the pre-school age in which his love impulse toward his playmates is neutral. At this time he may love either sex. Campbell's<sup>22</sup> study of the social sex development of children from kindergarten through high school showed that children from five to about seven were unconscious of sex in their play life. He found that boys and girls play well together

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22. Campbell, Elsie H. "The Social-Sex Development of Children." Genetic Psychology Monographs. Edited by Carl Murchison. Vol. 21, No. 1. Provincetown, Mass.: The Journal Press, 1939. p. 469.

and choose each other freely in dramatics and games. This trait gives one of the characteristics of the profile of the average child on entering school. Yet at the very beginning, school life brings before the child the fact that in the building and on the playground there are certain places such as the toilets, dressing rooms, and showers in the gymnasiums which show the distinction in sex. There are a few schools which have a common toilet for the first-grade children.

To further emphasize this distinction, some teachers, not realizing that separation of the sexes at this age is unnatural, begin at the very beginning of school to make distinction between the sexes. This can be seen in such simple procedures as lining up for dismissal and assigning certain duties to boys and others to girls.

This distinction is also stressed on the playground where certain games, especially ball games, are called boys' games, and others, girls' games. However, boys may delight in jumping the rope with girls, and girls enjoy a ball game with the boys, if the teacher and her group accept this as natural, not unusual activity.

Campbell's findings show that in games (like ball) requiring skill, there is a tendency on the part of the boys to choose boys who more often than girls are skilled in playing ball.<sup>23</sup> At this time the teacher may help the girls enjoy easy ball games by placing little emphasis upon the skill and stressing only the pleasure of the game.

Although children play together with very little consciousness of sex, many little boy and girl affairs begin to grow within the classroom

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23. Ibid., p. 523.



among six as well as seven-year-old children. Gesell<sup>24</sup> states that with the seven-year-old: "Boy - girl pairs are fairly common, especially at school." A teacher who knows that this is a natural behavior for the child at this age will help first by having a calm attitude and second by making as many opportunities as possible for an outlet to this affectionate feeling. The writer has found that games and rhythms in which a child has opportunity to choose his partner are very good outlets for their affections. These games give the shy child an opportunity to make new friends. Useful games and rhythms are listed in the appendix.<sup>25</sup>

#### Summary of Sex Educative Experiences

A summary of the sex educative experiences brings the following points into the foreground:

1. Sex guidance given through
  - a. Care of pets
  - b. Appreciation of family life
  - c. Rapprochement of boy-girl relationships
  - d. Sibling adjustments
2. Method of teaching
  - a. Through incidental teaching
3. Experiments
  - a. Mammals
  - b. Fowls
  - c. Fish

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24. Gesell, op. cit., p. 149.

25. See Appendix A. p. 60-61.

4. Experiences centered in the home theme
  - a. Housekeeping
  - b. Preparation for new baby
5. Sex guidance through games and rhythms.

## CHAPTER IV

### TEACHER'S PREPARATION FOR SEX GUIDANCE

#### Introduction

Before any guidance in sex for the young child can be done by the teacher, there must arise in the teacher's mind a willingness to consider whether there is a place for sex education in the school. That this type of guidance is becoming more acceptable is evidenced by the approval of courses in social hygiene by the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection<sup>1</sup> and also by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers at the Forty-Eighth Convention in 1944.<sup>2</sup>

The teacher having accepted the fact that sex education in the high school, although still in the experimental stage needs to consider whether there is a place for sex guidance in the beginning grades. Strain states that there is a need in these words:

In school, this education begins when [a child] enters nursery school, kindergarten, or first grade. . . Yes, it begins from the moment they flock in at the opening of school at five or six and it continues until they leave. . .<sup>3</sup>

As has been stated before, Strain recommends incidental teaching for the

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1. White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, Subcommittee on Social Hygiene in Schools. Social Hygiene in Schools: A Report. New York: Century, 1932. p. 72.

2. Zillmer, Aimee. "Social Hygiene," Proceedings of Forty-Eighth Annual Convention of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. New York: The Congress, 1944. p. 33.

3. Strain, Frances B. Sex Guidance in Family Life Education. New York: Macmillan, 1946. p. 34.

primary and elementary grades.

Not only willingness but adequate preparation for the task is required. One of the steps in preparation is to be able to understand the child's point of view concerning sex. It is accepted that young children who ask questions or are interested in sex are asking for curiosity or are interested in sex because the thing is new. There are no emotions connected with the subject.<sup>4</sup> With younger children there is a naturalness and a lack of sophistication in their asking and in their interest.<sup>5</sup>

Another aid in understanding the child's point of view is to realize that a child asks for a direct answer. Strain<sup>6</sup> advises: "We don't talk in pictures or poetry. We try not to befog them any more than we can help." She continues to give advice to the teacher in the following manner. A teacher should be consistent in the answers that she gives to the child: these answers must point in the right direction so that no reconstruction of ideas is necessary as the subject develops.

There is still another factor to consider--that is to give the child an opportunity to think over what he sees and observes. A child wants to work out things for himself. Strain asserts:

It is much better to let a child observe and think his way through a new idea than to prompt him or to anticipate his needs. A teacher should serve merely as a link between ideas, not the originator of them.<sup>7</sup>

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4. Gruenberg, Benjamin C. "Fearless Sex Education," Child Study Association of America. Sex Education Facts and Attitudes. Washington, D.C.: The Association, 1934. p. 24.

5. Strain, Frances B. New Patterns in Sex Education. New York: Appleton, 1943. p. 136.

6. Ibid., p. 130.

7. Strain, Sex Guidance, p. 117.

Young children will need explanation again and again because they have a native tendency to make up things about birth and sex differences: they have a desire to distort these conceptions in accordance with their own private wishes.<sup>8</sup>

For instance, parents have had the child to come to them to ask over again questions in order to clarify their thinking or for reassurance. It is assumed that the pupil would do the same in school.

#### Knowledge of the Subject

How does the teacher receive adequate preparation for guidance? To list the academic subjects which will prepare a person for so wide a field as sex education might intimidate beginners in this work; yet on the other side of the picture there is the thought that one has to make a beginning and no one is an expert in his job when he first starts out.

Frances B. Strain<sup>9</sup> thinks there are basic subjects which are essential for those who teach sex as a course in the curriculum. For the primary teacher these subjects are recommended from the basic list: biology, mammalian in particular, child care and development, marriage and the family, human reproduction, nature study and creative activities. There should be an emphasis placed on knowing the normal sex interest of the child from infancy through the latency period.

There are opportunities to build up one's background in these different fields through reading the articles in current magazines, technical

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8. Wolf, Anna W. M. "The Dilemma of Sex Education," Child Study Association of America. Sex Education Facts and Attitudes. Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1934. p. 18.

9. Strain, op. cit., p. 327-8.

magazines, in suitable books, in attending study group conferences, resorting for counsel to the American Institute of Family Relations, the different bureaus established in large cities, and in seeing accepted movies such as the Oregon School System film, the "Story of Human Life."

In order to present the subject matter clearly and directly, the teacher should know the correct anatomical terms and be at ease in using them. The pre-school child should know the terms for eliminations and for visible organs.<sup>10</sup> This list is suggested: breast, nipple, navel, penis, rectum, bowel movement, urinate, buttocks, and circumcision. The teacher should know these and be prepared to teach them if the occasion arises.<sup>11</sup> There may be an opportunity during the first year to introduce these words: mating, father's cell, mother's cell, embryo, vagina, or the birth canal, pregnancy, and others. The one rule to remember is that these should be taught gradually and put in a setting that children can understand.<sup>12</sup>

Blatz recommends:

The facts of sex should always be placed in their social setting-- that is, the mother not only bears children but cares for them. . . the father procreates children but also shares in their care.<sup>13</sup>

He also believes in explaining sex to children as a social function. For example, little girls are built in a certain way so that when they grow up they can be mothers.

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10. Strain, New Patterns in Sex Teaching, p. 108.

11. Ibid., p. 107.

12. Ibid., p. 131.

13. Blatz, William E. and Bott, Helen. Parents and the Pre-School Child. New York: Morrow, 1929, p. 155.

Strain<sup>14</sup> reaffirms this belief by insisting on teaching sex through the appreciation of family life as one way to guide children in their early sexual development.

#### Books Recommended

After making a careful study of the literature on sex education, the following books were chosen for recommendation because they give worthwhile information which will be valuable in the teacher's preparation:

1. Title: Growing Up, by Karl de Schweinitz.

Use: To be read to children between five and twelve. It is recommended that eight-year-old children and older read it for themselves.

Annotation: This book represents another attempt to tell children "where babies come from". Without any doubt whatsoever, it is the best of its kind; the language is simple and the analogies of birth and mating among animals are skillfully drawn. The book is beautifully printed.

(Taken from a book review in Child Development)

2. Title: Sex in Childhood, by Ernest R. Groves and Gladys Hoagland Groves.

Use: For the teacher.

Annotation: An authoritative guide showing all the maturity traits of the child from five to ten. The traits are given in detail and there is some comparison showing the growth in sex development. The traits are set apart in

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14. Strain, Sex Guidance, p. 104.

outline form under each year so that the whole child's growth can be noted very easily. The material is readable, giving concrete examples of the traits.

4. Title: Child Psychology, by Arthur Thomas Jersild.

Use: For the teacher.

Annotation: Useful to get the more scientific approach to the subject. This book will balance the more dramatic and slightly overrated pamphlets and lighter books on the subject.

5. Title: Sex Guidance in Family Life Education, by Frances Bruce Strain.

Use: For the teacher.

Annotation: The book states, in practical ways, methods for presenting sex to children from kindergarten through high school. The book gives a quiet unemotional approach to sex guidance in school. Two other books by the author are recommended as additional reading, secondary to this one. The books are: New Patterns in Sex Teaching (1934), Sex Interests of Children from Infancy to Childhood (1948).

#### Other Qualifications

A teacher may accept the subject, sex guidance, as one which should be taught, may appreciate and understand the child's point of view, and also have the factual knowledge of sex; but may still be unable to guide children because of harmful inhibitions in her own emotional life.

Cecilé Pilpel in her article, A New Approach to Sex Education says,

. . . that we will have to concern ourselves with our values and



understand our own needs and drives before we can hope to develop sound procedures in the sex education of our children.<sup>15</sup>

Teachers should free themselves from abnormal responses to sex, which may take the form of prudishness, being overly shocked, and thinking sex desires are wrong because of religious taboos placed on them.

One of the ways to correct mistaken attitudes concerning sex is to find out how these attitudes were formed. These may have had their origin because of the manner in which the sex information was imparted. In fact this reaction may have colored or discolored the whole future life and personality of the person. After realizing what caused inhibitions, the next step is to learn what are the normal phases of sex development. In learning these the individual understands what his own needs are and the fear is greatly diminished.

There are approved channels of outlets for these sex drives. The Mississippi State Board of Health issued a monograph on Education for Responsible Parenthood. One of the sections deals with the emotional outlets for sex. The outlets which were suggested are: creative work, playing, thinking, worshipping, socializing and expressing the affectionate side of life.<sup>16</sup>

The purpose for self analysis is that before any one can teach about sex, one needs to be conscious of his own sexual life; then there will be a better understanding of what the child is experiencing. It is important to have a good personality, an open mind, a human touch, because

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15. Pilpel, Cecilé. "A New Approach to Sex Education," Child Study Association of America. Sex Education and Attitudes. Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1934, p. 5.

16. Mississippi State Board of Health. Education for Responsible Parenthood. Jackson, Mississippi: State Board of Health, n. d., p. 5.

according to Lillian Biester "the teacher's own attitude will largely determine the attitude of the group."<sup>17</sup>

In enumerating the other qualifications for a teacher, Maurice Bigelow,<sup>18</sup> an authority in sex education says, "a teacher needs to be a specialist in common sense." With this characteristic the teacher will learn to adapt her ideas on sex to local conditions in the school and community and also to be calm and unemotional in working out experiments as part of the regular school program. She will not advertise or dramatize the teaching of sex instruction nor will she represent it as anything different from regular class work. The teacher, as Strain<sup>19</sup> advocates, should attempt to carry into her teaching a touch of humor, to make it human, and a touch of sentiment to keep the instruction from being dry and unfeeling.

In concluding this discussion of the guiding points for the teacher's preparation, one should note that Strain states the necessity of keeping a balance in sex education in these words:

. . . [sex] is not as a thing apart, not as a lesson to be learned at mother's knee, or in the doctor's office or minister's study, but as a living and integral part of education inside as well as outside of home and school.<sup>20</sup>

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17. Biester, Lillian L. and others. Units in Personal Health and Human Relations. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1947. p.18.

18. Bigelow, Maurice A. "Education and Guidance Concerning Human Sex Relations," Journal of Social Hygiene, 31:232, April, 1945.

19. Strain, op. cit., p. 266.

20. Ibid., p. 1.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

This thesis represents primarily a study of teacher guidance in the sex development of six and seven-year-old pupils. A preview of the plan of work indicated that certain preliminary steps were necessary. First, in order to determine the sex interests of the pre-school child and to evaluate the methods used in dispensing sex information, the investigator conducted a survey with the parents of the children of the Nursery School and the Kindergarten of the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, and with the parents of the children in the Kindergarten of the Training School of the State Teachers College, Farmville, Virginia. Second, a guide sheet<sup>1</sup> was formulated by the author and used in recording the sex interests of the children. This sheet indicated the following interests: (1) organs and functions (2) sex differences (3) origin of new life (4) prenatal growth or pregnancy (5) process of birth (6) male's part in reproduction (7) marriage (8) vulgar or taboo behavior. Next, the results of this work were compared with the findings of Hattendorf's Survey of sex education in the home.

Using accepted standards as criteria, these interests were analyzed and graded. The following points were immediately noticeable:

(1) both sexes showed greater interest in the sex differences and in the

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1. See Appendix B. p. 62.

origin of new life, an attitude normally expected at this age level; (2) very few children were interested in the male's part in reproduction. Two other noteworthy points showed that the greater number of questions was asked by girls. In both age groups more mothers of males reported no interest shown, and out of the number of mothers who did not respond at all, the majority were mothers of boys. This leads to the suggestion that mothers are more self-conscious in talking to boys, or that boys may be slower in developing, or that boys may be receiving sex information from other sources.

In analyzing the mothers' responses to queries for sex information, these conclusions were drawn: (1) that there are still many parents who give incomplete answers, such as the stereotyped "babies-come-from-the-hospital" reply; (2) even with the limited data offered, there was an indication that there is an improvement in the manner in which parents are handling the sex interests of their children. It was also noted that more responses were made by the parents in the Finch Survey than were made by those in the Hattendorf Study.

Additional information was culled from the literature on the subject. In fact, all data on the six and seven-year-old group came from this source. In order to make guidance for children of this age more specific and concrete, suggestive educational experiences were formulated and presented by the author. These took the form of a series of experiments with mammals, fowls, and fish; a group of studies centered in the home; and experiences for socialization in the school.

In summarizing the teacher's preparation for this aspect of the work, it is important to stress the following points:

1. Open-mindedness to the subject and suggestions in presenting it.
2. Knowledge and appreciation of child's point of view in the origin of his sex interests and the means of satisfying them.
3. Knowledge of sex integration in the teacher's own personality.
4. Background knowledge showing familiarity with the needs of children at different age levels.
5. Teaching of sex through the appreciation of family life in its social setting.

#### Recommendations

Upon the basis of the findings of this study, the writer seems justified in making the following recommendations:

1. That, in order to assist a teacher to do a better job, the parent should give the pre-school child a partial understanding of the origin of birth and the difference between the sexes.
2. That a teacher should know the significant sex interests of the pre-school child in order to understand the child's sexual nature.
3. That positive guidance, rather than punishment, should be given in correcting taboo behavior.
4. That a teacher should know what a six to seven-year-old child's sex interests are and should furnish natural, incidental outlets for these interests by:
  - a. Providing for dramatization through suitable units of work, such as the home life unit.

- b. Understanding and guiding simple boy-girl relationships into acceptable patterns through play, partner games, and simple rhythms.
  - c. Recognizing the fact that many children, aged six and seven are beginning to wonder about the details of birth, to understand sex differences, and to get a simple knowledge of pregnancy.
  - d. Conducting in the classroom experiments that will give a simple introduction to reproduction.
  - e. Promoting through discussion and the reading of well-chosen books an appreciation of the coming of a new baby in the home.
5. That these or similar types of incidental guidance be continued in the school program through the elementary grades.

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APPENDIX 4

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Department 1 - Illinois

Books for Reader

1. Shaw, Cyril. THE LIFE OF MARSHAL LIA. New York: Random House, 1947. 150 p.
2. De Schweinitz, Mark. GROUND UP. Second Edition. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949. 23 p.
3. Davis, Frances Stone. BRING BACK. New York: Knickerbocker-Century, 1946. 241 p.

Motion Pictures for Reader

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica Film (Grand Productions). ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA 1950. 100 p., Sound. Encyclopaedia Britannica Company, 25 S. LaSalle Drive, Chicago, Illinois.

APPENDIX 5

Department 2 - Youth

Books for Reader

1. Salter, Willwood P. THE LIFE OF MARSHAL LIA. New York: Young World Press, International Publishing Company, 1949. 150 p.

Motion Pictures for children

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica Film (Grand Productions). ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA 1950. 100 p., Sound. Encyclopaedia Britannica Company, 25 S. LaSalle Drive, Chicago, Illinois.

Code Book

Books for Reader

1. Faragon, J.B. and Evelyn S. THE FOX BABY. New York: Lipincott Company, 1938. 24 p.

APPENDIX A  
REFERENCE MATERIAL

Experiment I - Mammals

Books for teacher

1. Bibby, Cyril. How Life is Handed On. New York: Emerson Books Inc., 1947. 159 p.
2. de Schweinitz, Karl. Growing Up. Second Edition. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949. 95 p.
3. Strain, Frances Bruce. Being Born. New York: Appleton-Century, 1936. 241 p.

Motion picture for teacher

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica Film (Erpi Production). Reproduction among Mammals (16 m., Sound). Encyclopaedia Britannica Company, 20 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois.

Experiment II - Fowls

Books for teacher

1. Selsam, Millicent E. Egg to Chick. New York: Young World Book. International Publishing Company, 1946. 31 p.

Motion picture for children

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica Film (Erpi Production). Poultry on the Farm (16 m., Sound). Encyclopaedia Britannica Company, 20 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois.

Home Unit

Books for teacher

1. Faragoh, J.B. and Evelyn S. The New Baby. New York: Lippincott Company, 1938. 34 p.

Books for children

1. Farago, J. B. and Evelyn S. The New Baby. New York: Lippincott Company, 1938. 34 p. (Selections).
2. Frankl, Liselotte. Peter and His New Brother. New York: Chanticleer Press Inc., 1948. 20 p.
3. Flack, Marjorie. The New Pet. Garden City: Doubleday Company, 1943. 30 p. (Excellent for beginners).

Supplies

1. Carolina Biological Supply Company, Elon College, North Carolina.
2. Carolina Caviary. L. B. Fink, Faith, North Carolina.
3. General Biological Supply House, 761-763 East Sixty-ninth Place, Chicago 37, Illinois.

## APPENDIX B

## Copy of Guide Sheet Used in Finch Survey

THE WOMAN'S COLLEGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Incidents Offering Opportunity for Sex Guidance at the Pre-School Level  
Kindergarten

CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SEX \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 OTHERS PARTICIPATING \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF INCIDENT: Please check one.

(a) Organs and their functions \_\_\_\_ (b) Sex differences \_\_\_\_ (c) Origin  
 of new life \_\_\_\_ (d) Prenatal growth or pregnancy \_\_\_\_ (e) Process of  
 birth \_\_\_\_ (f) Male's part in reproduction \_\_\_\_ (g) Marriage \_\_\_\_  
 (h) "Vulgar" or taboo behavior \_\_\_\_ (i) Others \_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE INCIDENT --How, where, when, and why it arose, and the conver-  
 sation involved. Please describe fully.