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SUGGESTIONS FOR A PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM IN LEBANON

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P R E F A C E

International educational conferences, congresses and reformers, have put a measure of urgency upon the extension of educational opportunities for the very young suggesting that all children benefit from education in the very early years. Thinking and learning are enhanced by exposure to a wide variety of materials, equipment and activities under the guidance of a competent teacher. Since this education is the right of every young child in every democratic society, the Ministry of Education in Lebanon decided to open public preschool-classes and began last year (1971 - 1972) by opening certain number of preschool-classes and by preparing periods of probation for kindergarten teachers, and sent a group of educational specialists to CANADA - Québec to continue their studies in the formation of preschool teachers.

As members of the Lebanese group that has been sent to CANADA - Québec, we found it very important to help in this new trend in Lebanon by proposing a kindergarten curriculum for the Lebanese children, which may be of certain help in the preschool education.

In order to reach our objectives we divided our piece of work into six parts as follows :

An introduction which contains the objectives of the preschool education, a historical survey and the importance of this period .

The situation of preschool education in Lebanon, the public need of this education and a survey about its situation in private and public sectors .

The dimension of the curriculum; to whom it is put for why and what are the reasons, the objectives and the aims; what activities can be offered and how it can be given .

The curriculum itself, language, science, mathematics, music, social studies and art expression .

Evaluation, methods of evaluation that the kindergarten teacher can use to evaluate her children and the curriculum .

We have finished by a chapter of recommendations which we see necessary for the Ministry of Education in Lebanon to realize .

Finally, we hope that this effort will be of certain help to the preschool education in Lebanon .

I. I N T R O D U C T I O N

Kindergarten and école maternelle are two terms which designate the level and the teaching methods employed in various kinds of educational institutions for five and six years old .

The expression "pre-school education" is perhaps a little misleading, since it implies that such institutions have no place in the general school system. Yet the term is convenient because it stresses the distinction which must be preserved between this first stage in education, essentially different because of the children's age from a "school", and the subsequent traditional levels. (1) Hence we are employing it in this paper .

1.1. WHY IS THE PRE - SCHOOL PERIOD ?

Although research is far from conclusive, it indicates that a good kindergarten experience favorably influences later academic achievements, safe guards health, fosters social

(1) Report of The Royal Commision of inquiry in education in the province of Quebec, 1964, part two, p. 77 .

development, has desirable effects on personality, growth, and increases opportunities to one and a half year, an eight month period which so far has no name .

Research shows clearly that the first four or five years of a child's life are the period of most rapid growth in physical and mental characteristics and of greatest susceptibility to enviromental influences. Experience indicates that exposure to a wide variety of activities and of social and mental interactions with children and adults greatly enhances a child's ability to learn . (1)

Childhood reports all stress the importance of young child's early experiences. Ontario's kindergarten guidelines states that : " The first year in school (which can be at either age five or four) is a critical period in a child's growth. Initial experiences and impressions leave indelible imprints which affect later growth and development. The attitude that a child develops towards education and towards life itself is frequently a reflection of his initial experiences in kindergarten, nursery school or grade 1". (2)

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- (1) Adopted from : Educational Policies Commission,
"Universal opportunity for early childhood education",
NEA Journal, November 1966, pp. 8 - 10 .
- (2) Ontario. Department of Education. Kindergarten :
Curriculum K-1, Toronto, 1966, 93 p .

Alberta's recent report states : "All young children are endowed with greater potential for imagination, creativity, innovation, reasoning and understanding than was previously supposed. Few children have their potential developed to its fullest extent, either in their homes, or in other parts of their environment. From the earliest age this potential must be realized, rather than neglected or smothered. Once young children are ready to reap rewards and satisfaction from planned learning experiences, they should not be kept waiting too long for the opportunity. The principle of public responsibility for free education, which is accepted for older children, should apply to younger children as well. It is deserving a particular attention in the decades ahead". (1)

Finally we can summarize that the critical of early experiences in the total development (cognitive, social, emotional and physical) of the young child no longer needs to be documented. We no longer need to ask the question : " Does early education produce positive effects ? " . The positive answer has been given to us by such investigators as : Hunt (1961), Bloom (1964), Skeels (1966), Kirk (1958), Gray and Klaus (1968), Caldwell and Richmond (1968) and many others . . .

(1) Alberta. Commission on Educational Planning.
A choice of futures (worth report). Edmonton, Queen's printer for the province of Alberta, 1972, 325 p .

1.2. HISTORICAL VIEW .

Early childhood educators all stress the importance of young child's experiences. Friedrich Froebel (1782 - 1852) a German educator, and a disciple of Pestalozzi established the first kindergarten; which means "garden of children". He designed a curriculum for the kindergarten that was soundly based on the normal developmental pattern of child growth. Froebel observed keenly the child behavior and he was the first to recognize the true significance of the child's world .

Froebel conceived the idea of educating the whole child and suggested that education is more than preparation for life; education is life itself. Play and related activities were viewed by him as appropriate media for the child's development. It was he who said : " People think the child is only seeking amusement when it plays. That is a great error. Play is the first means of development of the human mind, its first effort to make acquaintance with the outward world, to correct original experiences from things and facts, and to exercise the powers of body and mind " .

Like Pestalozzi, Froebel established a teacher training institute in association with his kindergarten. He also proposed training of young women for the role of kindergarten teacher .

Since Froebel time, many psychologists postulated theories on the child and his development. Jean Piaget, the Swiss

psychologist, described the stages through which young children develop their mental model of the world. Piaget believed that the quality and the speed of this model formation depends largely on the child environment; so that the more we give the child to see and hear, the more he wants to see and hear; the greater variety of things he has coped with, the greater his capacity for coping .

Piaget and the American psychologists he influenced, emphasized the fact that what a child learns before grade one may influence his intellectual development more than what happens to him in the years after. The American psychologist Benjamin Bloom has hypothesized that the child develops about 50% of his mature intelligence by age four, about 30% between four and eight and only 20% there after. He suggested that 17% of educational growth takes place between the ages of four and six .

Dr. Montessori created her educational materials and unique teaching methods which were designed to encourage the self-motivation of very young children with a prepared environment and with cognitive materials developed for specific stages of growth .

Maria Montessori believed that the child "possesses unusual sensitivity and mental powers for absorbing and learning from his environment that are not like those of the adult both in quality and capacity", and that there is "an orderly process through which the minds of children can be developed as efficiently as their bodies" .

During the course of her career Dr. Montessori devised a remarkable variety of didactic equipment. Included among her educational materials were many simple puzzles and games, tactile boxes, insert boards, counting devices, buttoning and lacing frames, map puzzles, sand paper letters, and many others. These materials were cleverly made to serve as self-corrective instructional aids. She called them auto educative .

During the school day the child is free to choose any of these instructional devices. The teacher provided only a minimum of guidance, because the child is encouraged to develop independence. The children's house is designed to give the child a feeling of belonging and an opportunity to share in all the joys and responsibilities associated with home .

Beginning at age three, Montessori's children receive motor and sensory education through using cylinders, cubes, boards with rough and smooth surfaces .

Today's program is a logical fusion of the ideas of Froebel, Montessori, Dewey and all of the practitioners who have worked with the four and five years old. The fact should be added however, that the debate continues with warm fervor among the innovators representing the cognitive psychologists, the proponents of the established kindergartens, and the followers of Montessori .

Nowadays, much interest is given to Britain's infant school programs. In Britain compulsory school age begins at five

years, and children are admitted at the next term after their birthday, i.e. at four months intervals .

The " Integrated day " and " free " approaches have grown out of Britain's programs, offer a wide array of creative, intellectual, artistic and physical activities, from which the child chooses according to his own interests and energies. The approach is a mixture of Piaget and Dewey with bits of Montessori .

The child is free to move in class, he has not an assigned place, the teacher offers attention to each child, she is informal, and she keeps detailed records of how the pupils are progressing .

Recently, tried out in some infant schools the "family grouping ", in these classes the age of children ranges from five to seven, the child stay in the same class during his infant school without " going up " from grade to another .

In Britain now, conferences are held between parents, teachers and school, so that the parents understand the concept and how it works before their child goes to his infant school .

1.3. WHAT SHOULD A KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM STRIVE TO ACHIEVE ?

The objectives of instruction in these years lie in four major areas : Intellectual, emotional, social and physical .

The intellectual goals include the promotion of curiosity,

growth of language, and generation of readiness for the intellectual activities that will come in later years. They also include the development of the ability to handle concepts, to perceive and meet problems, to observe and listen . . .

So, early education can help in the intellectual development of the child by enlarging his span of experience, and by guiding him to new contacts with the world which become new learnings and open new possibilities .

The emotional goals of early education include promotion of children's sense of security and self respect; there are no more important prerequisites to learning, happiness or mental health. A child must find in the school a sense of accomplishment, a sense that he is able to learn by himself and to help others. He must feel respected and valued .

Early education seeks to develop the relations of the child with other children and adults. If a child is to lead a happy and responsible life, however, he must balance his egocentricity with a concern for and responsibility toward others .

Finally, early education must devote considerable attention to the child's physical well-being and development .

Blanche Persky, a professor of education at N.Y. University, sums up current thinking about the objectives of kindergarten program : " Basically, the purpose of a kinder-

garten program should be to strengthen the desire to learn, to provide opportunities, to investigate, to observe and to create. There must be provision for success and acceptance of the mistakes that are made as children seek to find answers that give satisfaction. There must be opportunities and equipment for sound physical growth, for intellectual stimulation and development and for the social learning that enable children to grow toward responsible citizenship " .

The question now is about the teacher's methods of achieving these goals, and what approach should they take. Creativity and freedom or cognitively and structured experiences ; should the emphasis be on social growth or intellectual growth ?

Most current theories stress that a child cannot develop socially and emotionally without acquiring knowledge and developing his intellect .

Saskatchewan's Report of the Minister's Committee on Kindergarten Education concludes that " We consider that the major objectives of kindergarten education should be the promotion of self-actualization, socialization and a commitment to learning " .

What is the actual situation of kindergarten ? In most industrialized countries, the system of nursery schools and kindergartens is very extensive. Kindergartens became a necessity in all societies and it is now widespread in the whole world .

It has been clearly shown that incalculable gains can indeed accrue to the young child and thereby to the entire community by the early and judicious use of appropriate intervention strategies. Today's composite question must be which intervention techniques are best employed with which children, and what point of time and under what kinds of situations ?

If this is the importance of pre-school education, what is the situation of this education in Lebanon ?

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2. PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN LEBANON

Preschool education is not widespread in Lebanon, but now the growing recognition of the importance of this period in the world, that we have seen in the first chapter, together with many Lebanese socio-economic factors, make the Lebanese government to issue a decree for the foundation of public pre-school classes in Lebanon .

The socio-economic factors in Lebanon, divide it into three main classes : rich, middle and low .

The rich or advantaged families in general, can provide the children with all means of physical and mental nutrition, children go to private kindergartens, since their parents can pay the expensive school fees; at home children live a comfortable life, and have many educational means : television, radio, records, educative toys, books, pictures . . . They can go in visits, trips, voyages and hence the dimensions of their personalities can be well developed .

The middle class which includes the majority of Lebanese families is divided into two levels : the high middle class and the low middle class .

The high middle class can provide the children, to a certain extent, with educational media, in private schools as well as at homes .

The low middle class and the low class are disadvantaged classes, and a description of the environment of the disadvantaged Lebanese child provides a dramatic contrast with that of the more advantaged child. His environment generally may be described as a highly unstructured. These families are hard pressed to meet immediate needs and the present takes priority over the future .

The language directed toward the child, is used more for controlling behavior than for explaining, describing or instructing. The vocabulary is limited with the limited media that the environment provides the child with .

The disadvantaged Lebanese child needs an educational program to complement his environment. We cannot assume that these children develop an organized fund of sensory and motor learnings, which are basic to the development of language and conceptual skills. In many cases, the homes of these children fail to nourish their health, their emotional stability or their intellect; and children cannot develop the skills essential for listening, focusing and thinking .

In these families, in general, parents reach to a certain level of education or without any education; they do not

have free time to pass with their children and they do not have the means to provide them with educative toys, books, pictures, films, trips . . . which are essential to their interests, skills and abilities development .

So these factors with others call for the urgent need of opening public kindergartens, especially for those disadvantaged children .

WHAT IS THE ACTUAL SITUATION OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN LEBANON ?

As we have seen above, Lebanese children are divided into advantaged and disadvantaged classes. Advantaged children whom are the minority go actually to private schools and disadvantaged children wait for public kindergartens. This situation will be changed with the initiatives of the responsables in the ministry of education .

This chapter will be limited to the situation of public preschool education which began two years ago, with a general view on the private schools, based upon the available documents which we have .

A. THE PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE PRIVATE SCHOOLS:

Children who go to these schools, are rich since they have to pay high school fees; they are accepted at the age of three .

The responsables in these schools make their best to

provide the children with a favorable milieu, which helps in their physical and mental development and in their personality development as a whole .

Since, these schools are private and since there are not official objectives for the preschool period, these institutions have their own special aims which influence the Lebanese advantaged children, however, it helps them to develop their personalities and to live a successful life .

B. THE PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS :

This education is indispensable for the majority of the Lebanese children, because in reality the preschool sector began in the public school since 1971. Before that date children between five and seven who were accepted in public schools, were grouped with first elementary students and thus they were not given activities which satisfy their age needs and development. This way of receiving activities at the beginning of their school life was inefficient and yielded to many failure and drop-outs problems .

This number of preschool children augments yearly in the public schools, although the majority of children between five and seven are refused in order to give place to those who are older .

The following statistics reveal the number of children of such situation during the school years (1970 - 1971) and

(1971 - 1972). It is very necessary to note here that there are no statistics available on the number of children of pre-school age (between five and seven years old) in Lebanon .

Distribution of preschool age children in the public schools according to districts for the year 1970 - 1971 . (1)

DISTRICTS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
Beirut	529	1254	1788
Lebanon Mount	3016	2645	5661
North Lebanon	4104	3474	7578
South Lebanon	3755	3174	6929
Bekaa	2651	2083	4734
Total	14055	12630	26685

(1) Statistiques scolaires. Années 1969 - 1970 , 1970 - 1971 publiées par le bureau de statistiques. République Libanaise, Ministère de l'Education Nationale. Page 29 .

Distribution of preschool age children in the public schools according to districts for the year 1971 - 1972 . (2)

DISTRICTS	SECTIONS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
Beirut	110	1358	1963	3221
Lebanon Mount	267	2318	2137	4455
North Lebanon	358	4593	3598	8191
South Lebanon	312	3701	3621	7322
Bekaa	219	2465	2433	4898
Total	1266	14435	13752	28187

We remark that the number of children is higher in the different districts than it is in Beirut, although the population is more dense in the capital where there is plenty of private kindergartens .

In the other districts the number of children is greater than in the capital, because of the lack of private kindergartens, or because of the inability of the parents to pay the expensive school fees in the private kindergartens .

We see that the number of children attending these classes

(2) Statistics taken from The Center of Educational Researches and Development .

is becoming larger year after year, 21825 in the year 1968 - 1969 ⁽¹⁾ to 28187 in the year 1971 - 1972 necessitates the special implementation of kindergarten classes .

Lately, certain modifications were done in the educational system, and a special attention was given to the pre-school education by a decree which organized preschool education and which can be stated as follows :

- Issuing the decree 2150 of 24 March, 1971 which circumscribes the preschool education curriculum .
- The articles of this decree will be applied in public schools at the beginning of the school year 1972 - 1973 .
- Annulation of the preschool curriculum which is precised in the article one of the decree 6998 in the first October 1946 . ⁽²⁾

(1) Statistiques scolaires. Années 1969 - 1970, 1970 - 1971 . publiées par le bureau de statistique. République Libanaise Ministère de l'Education Nationale, page 77 .

(2) Decree No. 2150 : Limitations of educational curriculum in the preschool period, 1971, Lebanese Republic, National Ministry of Education and Arts .

The first steps were made to apply this decree by a meeting held between the responsables of the ministry of education and the ministry of plannification, that led the promulgation of the decree 2150 to administrative measures .

On the other hand, the UNICEF assured a financial help and supported two centers which were created, one in Beirut and the oher in Tripoli. For each center was chosen an administrative staff from the public sector, although the monitors were chosen from the private sector .

The first session of training of kindergarten teachers was in the summer 1971. There were two centers, one in Beirut and one in Tripoli. The duration was from 13th July till 10th September 1971. In Beirut center there were 53 student-teachers of the public sector, 7 student-teachers were sent by the Association for the Animation of the Palestinians Camps. In Tripoli center there were 35 student-teachers. To support this training session, a certain number of experimental preschool classes had been opened at the beginning of the school year 1971 - 1972, but this number of classes was very limited .

During the summer 1972 another training session was held in five centers; two in Beirut - Lebanon Mount, one in Tripoli - North Lebanon, one in Sidon - South Lebanon and one in Zahlé - Bekaa. The participants were 300, with an average of 60 in each center , 260 of the public sector and 40 of the private sector.

The curriculum was proposed by the intervention of the

staff of the kindergarten teachers' training school which is a part of the French Cultural Mission, and was divided as follows :

1st week : Educational organization

- Principles of preschool education .
- Organization of classes and furniture .
- Materials .

2nd week : The activities of formation

- Sensory exercises .
- Observation .
- Foreign language .
- Reading readiness .

3rd week : The activities of expression

- Graphical exercises .
- Drawing and painting .
- Puppets and stories .
- Play .

* Presentation of Montessori method by a specialist .

At the beginning of the school year 1972 - 1973, 340 experimental preschool classes were opened. They were grouped with primary official schools through all Lebanon .

Actually, strong efforts are made in order to strengthen the classes that have been opened, and in order to extend the educational system to preschool education. At the same time,

the probation periods continue, and there will be one in the summer 1973 to train 300 kindergarten teachers .

Thus the preschool education entered in the official Lebanese system of education .

We have to note here again, that the present information is the only available documents that we have, and we cannot have more, being far away from the country .

Reviewing the content of the decree 2150 and the preschool curriculum attached to, we find some weaknesses that we are going to mention :

- The age of kindergarten children is not mentioned, nor precised .
- General aims and objectives are briefly stated .
- Specific aims do not exist for most of the subjects .
- Some subjects are mixed with others and briefly mentioned .
- Description of activities, subjects and methods of teaching and evaluation are not mentioned .

So, in this paper we will try our best to fill the gaps that we have recognized in the official kindergarten curriculum, taking into consideration the situation of the Lebanese child, trying to meet his personal and environmental needs and to meet also the society needs, hoping that this work will be of certain help for the administrators in the Lebanese National Ministry of Education .

3. DIMENSIONS OF A PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

A curriculum can be divided into four major dimensions :

1. To whom the curriculum is made, what are the characteristics of the people whom the curriculum is put for .
2. Why it is put ? What are the reasons of putting such a curriculum ? What is the philosophy behind such a work ? What are the aims and objectives of such a curriculum ?
3. What are the activities that yield to such objectives and aims ?
4. How can we execute such a curriculum, under what circumstances, where and what time and whom will execute it and under what methods? So, in this chapter we will try to elaborate these four dimensions as follows :

3.1. WHOM . . . THE CHILD .

The five-year-old is at the end of a period of very rapid growth known in the language of physical development as " early childhood " .

3.1.1. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. At age five the body has attained about 38% of its mature development, though different parts of the body are developing at different rates .
2. The brain is almost as large as it will ever be. The lymphoid organs have attained about 80% of their growth. The nervous system about 88%, and the genital organ about 8% .
3. The boy is somewhere between thirty seven and forty five inches tall, and about thirty three to forty five pounds in weight. Girls are somewhat smaller than boys, and the five-year-old girl stands between thirty six to forty four inches in height and weighs between thirty one and forty two pounds. During the fifth year, the child will add about two or three inches to his height and will gain from three to six pounds in weight .
4. At five, the child's motor coordination is improving, although he still prefers to work at things that make demands on large muscle activity rather than small. " Fives ", run, skip, dance, climb and jump, although not with too much grace at times. The five-year-old can walk a straight line, descend the stairs alternating his feet, if he has had sufficient experience with stairs, and many five-year-olds can skip. Girls usually develop some of the motor skills before boys, because of a maturity difference in favor of the girls. The skeletal development of the girl at age five approximates that of the boy at six, which

accounts for the fact that physiologically girls seem to have an edge over boys at the same age .

5. Hands and eyes, although not completely coordinated, are better so than at four. The eye is still growing and is not yet sufficiently mature for close work. Low vision is likely to be the rule rather than the exception during the preschool years and even up to nine years of age. Park and Burri have brought to our attention the following facts relating to vision in the early years of childhood. Using 20 - 20 as perfect vision they report that approximately 60% of preschool children have less than perfect vision; while from 65% to 80% may be expected to achieve a 20 - 20 rating in the early elementary and junior high-school period. For this reason he should not be expected to spend much time doing close-range work. If the occasional kindergarten child wishes to read, he should not be expected to read print less than 24 point, which is print about $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch in height .

6. All the baby teeth have appeared and possibly one or two have already fallen out. While he is in his sixth year the child may be expected to acquire the first four of his permanent teeth.

7. Speech is sometimes faulty and immature .

8. Auditory perception is not well developed .

9. Five-year-olds are active children, and they need much opportunity to use materials and equipment that can help them

channel their energy. They need tricycles, wagons, large planks and boxes to make bridges for climbing, jungle gyms to climb, ladders, halls; some more adventuresome "fives" like to roller skate and even walk and stilts. Some girls enjoy jumping rope, although many boys (and some girls) at this age still have not developed this skill .

10. This age child readily shows fatigue. Although he may occasionally rest of his own accord, he more often needs planned rest and supervision .

11. They are quiet for only short periods of time .

12. They need frequent change in activity .

13. They are predisposed to contagious diseases, particularly respiratory infections .

3.1.2. PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS :

1. The kindergarten child exhibits a great deal of emotional stability. His relationships are generally pleasant and a matter-of-fact. He also obeys others. He is usually docile before company and in new situations; however, he may occasionally revert to showing off .

2. He accepts punishment from his mother and soon forgets .

3. Although not characteristically aggressive, he may stamp his feet, slam the door, call names, make verbal threats, resist

directions, be destructive in play, and have an occasional temper tantrum. These later come on abruptly and are of short duration, with little moodiness remaining .

4. The kindergarten child is rather expressive; tension manifestations such as outbursts of screaming, striking out at things or people seem to come to a peak at this age. Six-year-olds may alternate rapidly from joy to sorrow, manifesting outwardly the change in mood. Children of this age often appear rude and defiant, they seem to have a ready-to-fight attitude. Actually, this attitude is an indication of growth, proof positive that the six-year-old is becoming more independent. At this age, the child tends to be argumentative, another indication of growing independence. He often tries to show his mother or teacher that he is wrong about something. He may be quarrelsome, he often teases and bullies other children. He may quarrel often with his best friends, and within the family with his favorite sibling. "Sixes" thrive on praise and wilt from criticism, signs that although the kindergarten child is growing up, he is still quite immature .

5. Usually, a kindergarten child displays a good deal of independence and can look after such things as toileting by himself, although a reminder may be in order if he is absorbed in play. Most "fives" are capable of dressing themselves if clothes are easily manageable, although they often get straps twisted, sometimes put shoes on the wrong feet, and do considerable dawdling in the process .

Teachers and parents need to develop patience in letting five-year-olds help themselves, even if the process seems slow and the child seems somewhat inept .

6. Because they enjoy the feeling of being independent, " fives " like to do simple errands and are capable of doing quite well if given errands compatible with their immaturity .

7. Although the five-year-old appears to be a rather self-composed and independent person, his home and mother are very important to him. He likes to go to school, but he is eager to return to his home and mother. Mother and teacher are very important persons at his age, and the five-year-old constantly seeks their support and approval .

8. At five, the child is beginning to develop some ideas of right and wrong on his own. He still turns to adults for reassurance and he still tends to think of "bad" and "good" in terms of specific situations, but he seems to be making beginnings in understanding acceptable and unacceptable behavior. " Fives " want to conform in the group situation, they seek to please adults; hence, the kindergarten year is an especially good one to help children adjust to the needs of the school group and understand the need for the authority in some situations. Since the five-year-old is in good emotional equilibrium, these lessons are more effective than they will be when he becomes more at odds with the world, as he was to some degree at four and will be again at six .

9. Kindergarten child is self-centered .
10. He needs a sense of security and belonging, and he seeks confidence .

3.1.3. INTELLECTUAL CHARACTERISTICS :

1. The kindergarten child is curious and eager for facts .
2. He is interested in simple answers to such questions as :
" Where does the rain come from ? " or " Why do bees sting ? " .
3. He has developed considerable accuracy in sense judgements .
4. He learns chiefly by doing, by experiencing and by observing .
5. If taught, the child can tell his full name, age, address, his father's name. He can cut, paste, draw and speak clearly .
6. His span of attention varies greatly according interest, intelligence, maturity, previous experiences and general physical health .
7. With his vocabulary of over 2,000 words he is able to use sentences or parts of sentences, tell a complete short story, and tell about a complete event. He can learn to "read" picture in a book and may even show an interest in learning to print his own name. He may pick out tunes on the piano and even play a few simple melodies .

8. Research by Benjamin Bloom (1964) shows that about 50% of an individual's measureable intelligence developed in his first four years and another 30% by the age of eight .

9. Children not only can and do learn at an enormously fast rate in their earliest years. They also actually enjoy doing so .

10. In many way, the entering kindergarten child is very mature intellectually. His greatest intellectual asset is still his memory. He may amaze adults with his memory of past experiences, both real and imaginary .

11. The kindergarten child's concepts of time and space are very limited. For instance, he fails to understand historical events in anything resembling true chronology. Also the child of this age is unable to judge when it is the time to return home, when he goes off to visit friends or out to play. Space concepts are difficult for the kindergarten child too, he may have great difficulty understanding about places beyond his own town, and far away places hold little meaning for him .

12. A child's ability to recognize and name a large range of objects is tremendously important for his effective learning in the early grades and throughout life. The ability to see how objects are alike or different is one of the basic foundations upon which school learning is built .

3.1.4. SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS :

1. Kindergarten child is a distinctly social being. He likes to play together in groups of not more than four or five children. Showing some of the co-operation necessary in playing together, they can learn to understand the rights and feelings of others. The kindergarten child is beyond the age of parallel play; that is playing beside another child, he wants to play with him. Being still very much of an individual, however, the child at this age stays with the group only as long as the activity engages his interest. Groups at five are fluid, and children leave and return without their behavior making much difference to what is going on .

2. He is not yet a good loser in game, and for this reason he may appear to be more quarrelsome than he actually is. Children of this age often make rules for a game as they go along, changing the rules from time to time to suit their own convenience .

3. Within play groups, there is still much quarreling and some fighting, especially in matters concerning personal possessions. The kindergarten child is beginning to handle the language better, so that some quarreling is done with words .

4. Friendship ties between children are based on behavior acceptable to them both, similarity of interests, and the quality or nature of the activity in which they engage. Acceptability of behavior is judged by the child on the basis of past experience with family standards, and upon internal drives. Best

friends at this age are usually the same sex, and in "choosing" games, girls choose girls, and boys choose boys. Some mature children maintain the same friends over a period of time .

5. Sex differences in play are not completely established, but often girls of six enjoy such quiet things as doll play, while boys may prefer more active boisterous play. Both boys and girls enjoy dramatic play, however, and both like running games .

6. Kindergarten children can learn to show some self-control in waiting turns, and may even accept ideas of others or promote their own .

7. Although he wants to do right and resents misbehaving, kindergarten child is not always able to tell right from wrong .

8. Kindergarten children are concerned with themselves, their family, and their own age equals. They have no concepts of their social heritage .

9. The kindergarten child is developing ability to express himself with words rather well. He enjoys telling stories to both his mother and teacher and sometimes true stories, often fantastic ones. He talks freely and often can carry on a successful conversation if he has a good listener who does not interrupt his flow of ideas. Some "fives" still are using infantile speech, but those who have no articulatory defects and who have had good speech models from which to learn, express themselves well and

pronounce words clearly. Speech at five is, of course, very spontaneous and for that reason, perhaps, the child at this age succeeds better in conversations with adults than with other children. The latter want to talk, too, rather than listen .

3.1.5. . . . AND YET SO DIFFERENT .

It would be a much easier job for the teacher if all her children were alike. However, each child is markedly different from every other child. Even identical twins are not exactly alike .

There are greater specific differences between the children with the kindergarten age levels than there are general differences between the various age levels of the school .

Considering differences in the light of the four kinds of development discussed above will guide the teacher in her planning of a kindergarten program which will meet the needs of her class .

Froebel says " In every human being . . . there lies and lives humanity as a whole, but in each one it is realized and expressed in a wholly particular, peculiar, personal, unique manner " .

3.2. WHY . . . GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND AIMS .

All through the educational process the school must keep a balance, and help the child to keep a balance, between the demands of his own personal development and the demands of social living. It is not a steady balance. At some stages of growth the child is an imitator, a conformist, and at others a rebel and an individualist. Our duty is not to stop this normal vibration but to see that he does not swing too far in either direction .

Children have greater potentialities for growth than are as yet being developed in their schools and homes. In the development of childrens' potentialities lies the best chance for better life for them as individuals and for the society of which they will be adult members .

To succeed, education must involve more than an intellectual approach. It must involve a feeling approach. We need the clearly defined analysis of what children are like, what they are interested in, what they need, and how they learn .

The kindergarten is a place where children live, work and play together. It offers the right kind of environment and the right kind of relationship; that are going to affect the child and leave their imprints. The kindergarten has a special place in the school programs, it serves two functions. On the one hand, it helps the children learn those behaviors that will help them adjust to an affective role in society. This we might

call SOCIALIZATION. On the other hand, it helps children develop sensitivities and competencies that will help them lead personally satisfying lives. This we call self-fulfilment, or REALIZATION .

Our view of the role of the school and the relationship between the individual and his society identifies goals for education. Dearden, for example, has suggested that the goal of education is " personal autonomy based upon reason ". He describes this autonomy as follows :

" There are two aspects to such an autonomy, the first of which is negative. This is independence of authorities, both of those who would dictate or prescribe what I am to do. The complementary positive aspect is, first, that of testing the truth of things for myself, whether by experience or by a critical estimate of the testimony of others, and secondly, that of deliberating, forming intentions and choosing what I shall do according to a scale of values which I can myself appreciate. Both understanding and choice, or thought and action, are therefore to be independent of authority and based instead on reason, this is the ideal " . (1)

(1) Dearden. The philosophy of primary education. London : Rontledge of Kegan Paul, 1968, p. 46 .

GOALS OF KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION :

Why a kindergarten is necessary to every child ?

1. Through kindergarten a child gains a feeling of accomplishment through doing .
2. He can add to his security through satisfying experiences .
3. He can gain a sense of importance in a social world .
4. A kindergarten let the child share in determining what his school life shall be, and thus deepen his interests and desire to participate in living problems around him .
5. It encourages and develop natural art expressions of children in their language .
6. Kindergarten help children also to learn, to live together and work together, to concentrate on the job at hand, to solve their problems and take suggestions, to build good steady work habits, to ask questions and seeks answers, to broaden their interests, to manipulate materials, to accept responsibility, to construct, create and experiment, to better their understanding and live with themselves and others .
7. Kindergarten encourages children in feeling that school, doing and finding about things, is fun .

3.3. WHAT . . . THE ACTIVITIES .

If these are the characteristics and needs of the kindergarten children, and if these are the goals of the kindergarten, how can we reach to satisfy the needs of the child, that is how can we reach the goals of the kindergarten, what are the activities that permit us to reach all that ?

The needs of the children are the first consideration when planning for their activities and experiences. The present as well as the future is important to the child, and in the life of any small child, people are more important than things . Education is not all preparation for what is to come; it is also the enriching and interpreting of the experiences of the present .

Kindergarten children need physical care, freedom, space and time, security, self-expression, responsibility, other children, and to learn to work and play with them, finding out to have their curiosity satisfied and questions answered .

Emotionally they need affection, to feel wanted, loved and approved of, recognition, encouragement and understanding, to achieve, to belong, to share in decisions that concern their welfare, people who laugh with them not at them, good healthy mothering, let them be quite babyish at times, and take great pleasure in letting them grow up at others .

HOW CHILDREN LEARN ?

1. CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH CREATIVE ACTIVITY :

All children for the sake of their own satisfaction and their own emotional and intellectual development need opportunities for experimentation and practice in self-expression . The field of manipulative art offers many opportunities for the child to express himself .

Children like to make things, we provide them with certain materials as crayons, paper, paint, clay, scissors, paste, finger paint, wood, puzzles, construction toys, blocks, and musical instruments .

By using these things children have opportunities to express themselves and hence satisfaction. This creative art helps in understanding the child more and more, since by his creative art the child reveals his feeling about things, situations, people, the world, his school, his home, it is a way of responding to these things in his environment, in creative expression, the child attempts to show how he feels about people, objects or an experience. Creative expression represents a form of communication through which every child can share his ideas with others. Children can release their pent-up emotions in creative art activities .

2. CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH CONVERSATION AND DISCUSSION .

Many opportunities must be given for conversation throughout the whole day. The first lesson is that of learning to take turns in conversation, to listen as well as to speak .

Through language development, the child learns to react to and interpret the world around him. By conversation and discussion children also gain confidence in expressing ideas, develop power in language, increase vocabulary and overcome shyness . Conversation and discussion are encouraged during planning, evaluating, mid morning lunch, outdoor play, work period and dramatic play situations .

3. CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH BOOKS, STORIES, POETRY AND PICTURES :

The program of the kindergarten should be planned so as to provide the child with an abundance of experiences which he can draw upon in learning to express himself. But it should also provide experiences through stories and poems .

Story-telling provides one of the best situations for helping children learn to listen attentively for increasing length of time. To the young child, pictures are the story, and the teacher who is reading to kindergarteners should make sure that all children can see the illustrations. Children appear to enjoy pictures of children, of animals, and of other familiar subjects. Picture-story books not only afford genuine pleasure to the kindergarten child but also may help to develop a readiness for reading .

Children enjoy poetry, especially poetry which has a musical quality. Poetry more than any other form of literature can help children to develop sensitivity to language .

4. CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH DRAMATIC PLAY AND DRAMATIZATION :

In its broadest sense, dramatic play is a mirror of the child, It is a good indicator of how life is growing. It becomes successful when it helps a child to clarify his understanding, eases his emotinal and social conflicts and helps him to become a well-adjusted personality. Through it the child gains satisfaction, he could not otherwise achieve. Many creative language experiences come from dramatization. It offers opportunity for free expression, enables the child to project himself into and appreciate the of others, and gives the teacher some clues as to interests, background and home life of the child .

In the kindergarten the house keeping center and the block-activity center provide opportunities for conversation, for sharing, and for acting out familiar roles, father, mother, and community helpers such as doctor, milkman, and fireman .

5. CHIDREN LEARN THROUGH MUSIC :

Emphasis in kindergarten music is on the joy it brings to the child. Perfection is not the aim. Children need instruments to play, space in which to move, good music to hear, adventures to express, songs to sing and opportunities to create .

Listening to songs delights children if the voice is

pleasing, and the songs are short with words they can understand.

Music gives children opportunities for self-expression, to sheer joy in listening to beautiful sounds, to increase his appreciation of other arts and culture; music is a wonderful factor in orienting the child and in encouraging his esthetic expression .

6. CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH SCIENCE ACTIVITIES :

It is a natural curiosity of the child which provides the foundation for science experiences in the kindergarten . It is an answer to the "WHY" of the child. The aims for science experiences, then, include : increasing awareness of and ability to observe natural phenomena; seeking answers to questions through beginnings of experimentation and through tapping knowledge of various sources of information such as people and books. All of the senses are brought into use in science experiences. Kindergarten children need to experience and experiment rather than to be told about something. Science activities also provide an excellent opportunity for children to work in groups, to cooperate with one another in searching for solutions, and to pool information. Science experiments offer good opportunities for social growth, growth in respect for others as well as for the authority of facts and unbiased information .

Kindergarten children share many science activities, the care of pets, the growing of plants and seeds, and the study of other natural phenomena, such as : sunshine, rain, snow, ice,

temperature and wind. They learn to use books related to science, as sources of information .

7. CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH NUMBER EXPERIENCES :

A rich kindergarten environment provides, in addition to a variety of other experiences, many opportunities for developing concepts of quantitative relationships. Interest in number and its functions is great among young children. The child counts chairs, he describes things as round or square or bigger or smaller, he deals with pounds and quarts and kilo-grams, with dozens and hundreds, with nickels and piastres. During their activities children learn, also, to use terms like big, little, long, short, heavy, light .

Recognizing simple numerals seen on familiar objects such as clocks, calendars, food prices, telephone number, scales, measuring tools. Noticing differences in shapes : blocks, jig-saw puzzles .

8. CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES .

The entire kindergarten program is an experience in social living. The chief aim is to help the child develop an understanding of the world in which he lives and to become a part of a better world. Social studies offer opportunities for the child to further understand every day situations, to accept necessary routines, to share materials and ideas, to respect other people and their belongings, and to cooperate with one another. It is

through such activities that a direct effort is made to increase their social understanding and to help them form patterns of social behavior. In a sense, these are the objectives of all education in a democratic society. For most children, the kindergarten is the first experience in living with a group of other children, outside the secure confines of the family. It is their first formal introduction to the responsibilities, as well as the privileges of participation in society. The social studies form a natural core around which all other activities revolve .

9. CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH PLAY :

Play among children is universal. It is a biological necessity through which growth takes place. Regardless of their culture, all children participate in play activities of some kind. Play is vitally related to the child's need to be active, to grow to give motor reactions in response to situations. Through play, the child develops his growing body, building up the vitality which facilitates his emotional, intellectual and social growth. Play is, as well, the child's way of learning about the world through experimentation with his environment, his chief method of self-education. It is also one of the most important means by which he grows in his social behavior. And through play the child can express and release many of his emotional tensions. Because play involves every aspect of the young child's development, children perhaps learn more through play than through any other activity .

Play, in addition, helps to meet the child's emotional

need to belong, to be like others, to have status in the group and a feeling of personal worth .

Here we can suggest equipment for free play :

- Play ground apparatus : Jungle gym, swings, slides, teeter-totter .
- Outdoor storage : Cupboard or boxes for follow blocks, planks, garden tools, brooms, watering cans, hobby horses, wagons, toys, wheel barrows, balls, sand box toys, tubs for water and boats .

3.4. HOW . . . CLASSES, SCHEDULE PREPARATION, ROUTINES .

3.4.1. CLASSES .

Different pedagogical views show that children do not learn passively, but they learn, through exploring, testing, questioning and repeating. So the opportunity for this type of natural learning should be provided indoors and outdoors. In order to provide children with a favorable atmosphere classrooms must be organized as follows :

1. Location and orientation of the classroom :

It is preferable to be on ground-floor, at a distance from the other classes and the recreation room, oriented in such a way as to ensure maximum light. The space must be about 1.5 m² per child, so that he can move about and settle himself easily,

according to his occupations at the moment.

The ceiling : Sound-proof and painted in a color which reflects maximum light without glare .

Walls : Insulated against heat, cold and noise, and painted in colors which assure a bright room and which are restful to the eye. Easily washable and made of durable material, to which posters can be easily fixed without marring walls .

Entrances : Doors leading to the washroom, to the cloak-room and the inner corridor. Air and sunlight enter through the windows with sills low enough to allow the children to see outdoors easily. A green board and a placard board should be fixed at 60 cm from the floor .

The floor : Plain, smooth, easy to maintain and covered with insulating material as children often sit on the floor .

Cupboards : Provided with drawers and shelves for storing materials in daily use, low enough to permit children to help themselves .

Sinks : One kitchen type sink with drain-board reserved for water play. Large enough to accommodate two or three children at a time. A second sink, near the washroom, reserved for cleaning and washing purposes .

Drinking fountains : Set half open, to moderate the force of the water and to avoid splashing, and for reasons of hygiene to prevent contact with the lips .

2. Storage :

A room which can be locked equipped with metal racks deep for storing teaching materials which are used periodically during the year .

3. Washroom :

Adjoining the classroom, they should be low for ease and safety. There must be at least one toilet for every ten children. Doors and partitions should be 1.5 m from the floor to prevent passage from one toilet to another, doors height should be 1 m. to facilitate supervision and help when needed .

The walls and the floor properly surfaced. It is desirable that the lavatories will be supplied with voluntary cold and hot water. Also it must be provided with paper towel dispenser or a dryer and a mirror fixed at children's height .

These rooms must be carefully ventilized and illuminated by outdoor .

4. Cloakroom :

Adjoining the classroom, or may be settled in the corridor if there is sufficient place . They must contain, double hooks for hanging coats. Individual lockers inside which have doors, and

shoes must be arranged in a way that permits the use of these shoes during the day .

5. Gymnasium or playroom :

This is the greatest hall of the kindergarten, with a space of 800 m², every school must contain a gymnasium well prepared which permits children to practice different physical exercises .

Lightning in the gymnasium should be uniformly diffused. Whatever lightning system is used, the lights should be secure against the impact of balls and should be easy to maintain .

Good natural or mechanical ventilation is absolutely necessary in the rooms, without a doubt, ventilation is best left in the hands of the experts .

The floor should have a certain degree of versatility. It should be neither slippery nor rough and should have no glare. Preference should be given to materials which are sound-proof and sound absorbing (wood floor). The gymnasium should be well insulated to avoid reverberations of sound towards neighbouring classrooms and other areas .

6. The play area :

To satisfy the need of the children for movement, equipment should be chosen which will permit a wide variety of activities, both individual and collective, and which will foster muscular

and motor development .

The play area should be large enough, located in a position which facilitates supervision, separated from the street and from the recreation court by a fence, well drained, shaded by trees, provided with a covered playground attached to the building, with a space for a garden, and area of grass and an area of asphalt or concrete. It should be provided also with a rest corner in which there are banks for the children to sit .

3.4.2. ORGANIZATION OF KINDERGARTEN CLASSES :

1. Furniture :

For the use of the teacher :

- Desk with drawers and an armchair .
- Medicine cabinet, out of reach of the children .

For the use of the children :

- Tables and chairs for kindergarten .
- Cupboards with open shelves at the use of children to arrange personal things .
- Removable sets of shelves for storing educational materials currently in use .
- Book support with inclining shelves .
- Record rack to keep the records in a vertical position .
- Sleeping mats .
- A wall easel to which thumb tacks can be fixed. Along the length of the base of the easel can be added a box to hold paint jars. The inclined surface can be raised

so that the interior can be used for cupboards to hold paint pots and paper .

- Movable screens .
- Flannel board, magnetic board or multiple service board, bulletin board, and chalk board .
- Clock .

2. Learning materials :

To satisfy the different needs of the child in this period, we must provide him with materials for awakening his curiosity and stimulating his interests, and satisfy his needs for activity and for expression and for discovery. The list of materials which will be presented later, follow the demand of the activities by which different objectives can be attained, these materials are as follows :

- A. Equipment designed to foster the attainment of language .
- B. Equipment designed to foster bodily expression .
- C. Equipment designed to foster the socialization of the child .
- D. Equipment designed to help the child express and assert himself : plastic art, handicraft and science.
- E. Equipment facilitating the attainment of mathematics.
- F. Equipment facilitating musical initiation .

In general, in choosing these equipment, certain specifications, are considered into accounts, regulating the manu-

facture of the objects, which should be :

- Solid, simple and unbreakable in structure .
- Free from dangerous ridges and angles .
- Painted with a washable, non toxic substance .

A. Equipment designed to foster the acquisition of language :

- Games of observation .
- Sand paper letters on a wooden base, alphabet in plastic material .
- Magnetic board with letters .
- Real photographs, pictures from life .
- Children's library .
- Pictures dominos .
- Lotto games, games for synthesis, association and observation .

B. Equipment designed to encourage movement and to help the development of the child's motor capacities :

For playroom and gymnasium :

- Balls, bags (filled with sawdust, beans, peas, sand or rice) .
- Climbing equipment if space available .
- Skipping ropes, short and long .
- Mats, tunnel, play rings .
- Light weight pieces of balancing apparatus .

For the play area :

- Sand box .

- Buckets, shovels, scoops, rakes, watering can .
- Slide , see-saw, inclined plane bridge , climbing frame, swings .

For the class :

- Hard wooden blocks .
- Box of various kinds of building wheels, peg, small sticks of sufficient number to allow children to make fairly elaborate constructions .
- Games of balance and juxtaposition consisting of pieces having tenons, holes, notches, which allow free creation.
- Sorting games, games from every day life : lacing, buttoning .

C. Equipment designed to foster the socialization of the child:

- Corner of dolls to play the mother. Unbreakable washable dolls or a rag doll, feeding bottles, cradle or bed, telephones, cleaning equipment, instrument cases for a doctor and for a nurse .
- Kitchen equipment, wooden stove, sink, chest of drawers, refrigerator, dishes, utensils, tables, chairs and iron.
- Carpenter's corner, work bench, soft wood, styrofoam, wood glue, large-headed nails, screws .
- Construction corner : Besides the construction blocks mentioned above, fire engine, mechanical shovel and miniature cars .

D. Equipment designed to help the child express and assert himself :

Plastic arts and handicrafts

- Large, fat oil base crayons .
- Colored pencils .
- Boxes of chalk, various colors, large size .
- Boxes of wax crayons .
- Felt pens, various colors .
- Finger paints (various colors) .
- Liquid goauche (varied colors) .
- Empty jars .
- Paint brushes of good quality. Conical in shape and flat in shape. There should be some brushes with short handles and some with long .
- Cardboard and paper of different qualities and colors .
- Sheets of construction paper (solid colors) .
- Sheets of paper for folding and cutting, painting and drawing .
- Sheets of paper for finger painting .
- Sheets of newspaper .
- Roll of paper for painting .
- Modelling clay .
- Upholstery glue .
- Paper glue of good quality .
- Strong glue .
- Ball of wrapping cord .

- Skeins of thick wool, various colors .
- Gummed tape on heavy support .
- Pipe cleaners of various colors and lengths .
- Paper cutter .
- Good quality scissors, scissors with rounded ends ,
scissors for left handed children .
- Boxes of each of the following : thumb tacks, paper
clips, straight pins .
- Large loom .
- Unbreakable dishes for preparing glue, papier mâché .
- Individual weaving looms and skeins of jersey .
- Roll of gummed cloth .

Science

- Balloons .
- Measuring tape .
- Droppers .
- Post for indoor plants .
- Garden trowel .
- Watering can with long spout .
- Absorbent cotton .
- Mirror .
- Transparent glass jars .
- Collection of rocks, minerals and shells .
- Balancing scales .
- Aquarium .
- Bird cage .

- Animal cage , and food for chosen animals .
- Seeds of corn and bulbs .
- Large wall thermometer .
- Magnets .
- Globe of the earth .
- Magnifying glass .

E. Equipment designed to foster mathematical attainment :

- Plastic blocks, red, blue, yellow and green , rounds, squares, triangles, and rectangles, thick and thin big and small .
- Collections of : animals, cars, discs, buttons, sticks, cubes, counters, shells, money . . .
- Classifying games .
- Series games .

F. Equipment designed to foster musical initiation :

Several good instruments rather than many inexpensive ones, for example : xylophone, small bells for the perception of sound, flute, clavi-harp, metronome, cymbals, triangles, drummers .

Audiovisual apparatus

- Portable record player .
- Collection of records : music with free rhythm, music with set rhythm, descriptive music .
- Puppet theater, puppets : animals and people .
- Board with adhensive surface .
- Projector, slides, film strips .

- Tape recorder .

3.4.3. ADMINISTRATIVE AND PEDAGOGICAL ORGANIZATION :

Conditions of admission :

1. Age :

Since the elementary schools in Lebanon receive children who are six years old, the kindergarten can receive children between five and six years old, one year younger than the minimum age for entrance into the elementary school .

2. Formalities :

Children can be admitted to kindergarten if they present the following documents with their request for admission :

- Birth certificate .
- Certificate of good health .
- Certificate of vaccination .

3. Registration :

Request for registration should be made during the first week of July or the second half of September. At a fixed time, the parents or other responsible persons, should present themselves at the school accompanied by the child. The teacher should meet the child in order to make a preliminary assessment and also to show him about the kindergarten room .

4. Number of children per group :

The number of children per class vary between forty and fifty, these children will be divided into two groups; one in the mornings and one in the afternoons. Each group should be mixed .

5. School calendar :

Kindergarten teachers work thirty hours per week, fifteen hours with each group. Daily hours by groups will be :

- 8.00 till 11.00 AM for the morning group .
- 1.00 till 4.00 PM for the afternoon group .

6. Holidays :

The kindergarten generally takes holidays at the same time as the elementary school .

7. Personal file of each child :

It is important that the teacher herself keeps a file on each child. The keeping of such files will help the teacher to know her pupils better and to assess their progress, and help her judge the effectiveness of her methods and the value of her program .

The files should contain :

- The application form .
- Birth certificate .

- Vaccination certificate .
- Medical report and details of former illnesses .
- Details of family situation .
- Report of tests given in certain cases .
- Report of behavior with evaluation of child's activity .
- Report of each interview with the parents .

3.4.4. UPKEEP OF PREMISES :

Kindergarten premises should be kept scrupulously clean . Children make frequent use of gouache, clay water, glue . . . It is obvious that these will leave some marks. After each activity, the child should be encouraged to put his own working place in order. But this will obviously not be sufficient and a cleaning woman should clear up after each group of children .

Each day the care taker should :

- See that the premises are swept according to the conditions stipulated in the regulations .
- Dust the furniture and the play equipment .
- Clean the sinks, drinking fountains and toilets .

Each week he should :

- Clean all room thoroughly .
- Clean the floors .
- Wash spots from the walls and the wood work .
- Clean the windows .

3.4.5. PREPARATION OF THE DAILY SCHEDULE :

Planning the program for kindergarten children involves many factors, including an understanding of child growth and development, an appreciation of the individuality of each child within the class, a sensitive awareness of individual differences, a knowledge of educational experiences which are suitable for five-year-old children, and the establishment of objectives to help each child make the most of his potentialities .

A kindergarten schedule should provide many opportunities for children to participate and to experiment in social living . The richness of the child's experiences depends greatly on the classroom environment. The room should be alive with interesting things, things which make the child wonders, questions, and attempts to find answers. Only the teacher herself, knowing her children and their backgrounds and the opportunities of the school environment, can plan a program which is psychologically sound, interesting and challenging .

THE KINDERGARTEN DAY

Although variations in programs and schedules are inevitable and probably highly desirable, certain experiences should be part of the program of every kindergarten. These should be arranged in large blocks of time so that sufficient time will be spent on each activity .

No two teachers will likely follow the same schedule, and

no teacher will use the same schedule for every school day, but for all teachers there are certain principles and recommendations which might be followed in planning :

- There should be an alternation of strenuous activities and quieter pursuits. Relaxation might be provided by a change of pace, from an active period to a quiet period of story-telling looking at books, or listening to music or a story .

- There should be an easy transition from one activity to another without the necessity of constantly rearranging the room .

- In some kindergarten the activity time occupies the first block of time. As soon as the children arrive, they begin whatever activity they choose. This gives the teacher an opportunity to greet each child as he enters and to talk with him if the child so desires .

- At the end of the activity time the teacher has a group assembly. The last block of time might include experiences related to the development of an interest, physical education, a story, poetry, music, evaluation and dismissal .

- In any schedule the physical education period will be taken at the time best suited for the children within the schedule of the whole school .

- As children mature, there will be long-range plans for such things as the development of an interest, the organi-

zation of activity time, and the sequential development of certain skills. Daily schedules, require continual reorganization according to children's attitudes and different circumstances .

3.4.6. ROUTINES :

The kindergarten teacher is the key factor in the development of a feeling of security within the classroom. It is essential that the kindergarten teacher share the play of her children, giving them an example in order to understand and to imitate and thus to acquire .

As a person who enjoys and accepts children as they are, she helps them accept each other and contributes greatly to the happiness and stability of the class. These are certain rules which are necessary for a teacher to follow in her class :

- Her voice is quiet and pleasant .
- Teach children to work harmoniously with others sharing ideas and things .
- Once an activity is chosen, it should be finished .
- Objects must be arranged in their places after usage .

Within such a secure frame work, limits are set for routines such as entrance, removal of outer clothing, relaxation, dressing, dismissal, and toilet if washrooms are outside the classroom. These should be definite patterns of behavior which the children are expected to adopt in the conduct of each daily procedure .

Thus, children learn to live a social life, and these experiences should foster cooperation, independence, desirable personal habits, and an acceptance of responsibility .

THEMES OF ACTIVITIES :

This is the method of teaching which attempts to integrate subject areas so that important concepts are formed and essential skills are developed. It may be known as theme of activities or interest activities. What is important, is recognition of this method as one of the best approaches for teaching young children .

So, a program which has meaning and purpose for children will inevitably include a variety of experiences related to a common interest. In order to develop this interest, the proposed schedule must be based on a subject which draw the attention of a familiar world for children. Also if the schedule of the class includes varied exercises inspired by this same subject, it will facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge and more accurate ideas and more reality of the world around us, because according to Montessori, it is proved that often changing the work, tires more than the preservation of one work, and that a sudden interruption tires more than the perseverance .

A. Choice of interests :

Interests which are pursued during the kindergarten year are determined to a large extent by the seasons, by current happenings and by the background and experiences of the children.

B. Content :

A theme of activity must contain :

- Interests which might be anticipated, chosen by the teacher to satisfy the needs of children .
- Interests which might arise from the spontaneous interest of children, and it is posed by the children themselves .
- Related activities, which their aim is to provide the child with notions which answer their intellectual appetite of the moment; sensorial notions, language and precalculation .

It is rare that the children find related activities, the teacher must suggest it and choose it according to the preference of the children .

C. The role of the kindergarten teacher :

Since children initiate many interests, the teacher cannot plan their development in advance. She can, however, anticipate some, and she can be prepared to render informed and enthusiastic support to the children's explorations. Her role is to create good motor, intellectual, moral, social and artistic habits .

She must then :

- Know the chosen subject so well and accumulate documents and knowledge about it, to find it when needed .

- Search for the essential activities : The indication of singing, playing, handicraft, image collections, objects to fortify imagination and observation .

C O N C L U S I O N

Finally, depending on the characteristics and needs of kindergarten children in their environment, depending on the philosophy, aims and objectives and depending on the methods of teaching that have been discussed in this chapter, the next chapter will be an elaboration of a kindergarten curriculum for the Lebanese children, emphasizing experiences and activities with content largely undefined; leaving classroom teachers to choose content as they sensed interest among the children or as their personal inclinations directed .

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4. SUGGESTIONS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE

LEBANESE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

4.1. L A N G U A G E

4.1.1. INTRODUCTION

Language is part of every activity in the kindergarten, not just of show-and-tell time or storytelling. The child is practicing and developing in language as he recounts experiences to the teacher, tells stories to the group, participates in simple dramatizations, or helps in group planning .

This language development is affected by his home background, his breadth of experience, his health and emotional balance, and his pattern of growth .

A challenging environment, first-hand experiences, and guidance are the most important factors in language development. Children must have interesting things about which to talk. Each child should have the opportunity to live as richly and wholesomely as possible .

A wide variety of materials - to manipulate, experiment, construct and play with; to look at, to listen to, feel touch,

taste and smell - all will contribute to his ability to talk more freely .

Children differ markedly in language ability. Some are quick to interpret what they see in words. They express themselves clearly, and may read a little. Other children will not see much about them, and are unable to use even simple language to describe an experience. Some will come to school with a vocabulary of several thousand words, while others use only a few words .

Mc Carthy points out that in studies of preschool children there is a relationship between the language of children and the socioeconomic status of their homes. Children of higher socioeconomic status are superior in the matter of length of sentences used, frequency of questions, vocabulary, and proportion of remarks indicating adaptation of information. According to Mc Carthy, although part of this difference may be due to the fact that children of the upper socioeconomic groups tend to be brighter, it is more than likely that there would remain a difference in favor of the upper socioeconomic group even if the factor of intelligence were equalized. The better environment of these children enhances their general language development . (1)

(1) Dorothea Mc Carthy, The Language Development of the Preschool Child; (Institute of Child Welfare Monograph series, No. 4), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1930, cited in Arthur T. Jersild, *Child Psychology* p. 415 .

Noel has made some further observations, noting that the more frequently parents participate in situations requiring the use of oral language, the better will be the quality of the child's language. She agrees that the language the child hears his parents use, determines to a large degree the quality of the child's language . (1)

Tomlinson notes that lower-class children often come to school lacking some of the basic skills in language possessed by the middle-class child. This fact, she feels, adds to the child's insecurity and lowers his chances for success in schools that are largely oriented to middle-class values. She recommends a program to help the children improve their language skills before beginning formal school work . (2)

Only children are generally superior in language development to children with siblings, perhaps because they have relatively more contact with adults. Conversely, children from

(1) D. Noel, " A comparative study of the relationship between the quality of the child's language usage and the quality and type of language used in the home ", Journal of Educational Research, November 1953, Pp. 161 - 167 .

(2) Ether Tomlinson, " Language skills needed by lower-class children ", Elementary English, 1956, XXXIII, 279 - 283 .

large families tend to be relatively slow in language development perhaps because they may adopt the language patterns of their siblings rather than those of adults.

Very often there will be a difference in language development between boys and girls which becomes a significance at the primary level. Usually girls talk earlier and have a larger vocabulary. In addition they begin earlier than boys to use longer and more complex sentences .

Intelligence also seems to be an important factor in developing language ability. Not only does the less intelligent child tend to have a smaller vocabulary than other children, but his sentence structure may be inferior. However, this does not mean that the child who is delayed in language development is necessarily retarded in intellectual development .

Facility with language is the product of many opportunities to hear and to use words. Children who have had little association with adults or who come from foreign-speaking homes may enter the kindergarten with very few Arabic words at their command. These children will need many experiences and much encouragement on the part of the teacher before they are able to express themselves. Some of these children may spend the entire year in kindergarten without saying more than a very few words .

Development of the ability to express himself linguistically is an essential part of the child's growth as a

socialized individual. It both reflects and affects his understanding of all that he sees and hears and his needs and ability to communicate with others. Thus it determines the kind of social participation open to him .

With increased command of language comes increase to understand and handle difficult situations demanding talking. And with this comes increased self-confidence and independence .

For this reason the activities of the kindergarten are so designed that children are given many opportunities to talk, to listen, and to be heard - and many rich and varied experiences to talk about. Language and thought develop best in an atmosphere in which the child is free to manipulate and explore things, to talk about what he experiences, and to indulge in "verbal play" .

4.1.2. LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES

- The basic aim is to help each child develop his own potentiality so that he may listen thoughtfully, speak effectively, read critically and write creatively .
- Through language development, the child learns to react to and interpret the world around him .
- It is through the use of language that the child is able to establish, and to maintain social contacts .
- Language serves the child in seeking information and also in understanding what others tell him in response to his questions .

- Through language, the child helps those about him to understand his needs and wants .
- It serves to help the child to organize his thinking so that he can find a desirable outlet for his own thoughts and feelings .
- Develop meaningful speaking vocabulary of basic words as: names of objects, descriptive words and names of animals and what they do .
- In language activities in the kindergarten we aim to teach the child to listen, when others are speaking, when stories are read to the group .
- Give the child joy and pleasure in listening to stories.
- To appreciate and enjoy poetry .

4.1.3. LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

A language program must be planned to develop the total area of communication in which the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are integrated. It should be based on a knowledge of the needs, abilities and interests of the individual child and related to his growth .

A. RECEPTIVE ORAL LANGUAGE LEARNING

Children listen at different times for different purposes and with varying degrees of depth. Listening has been classified as marginal, appreciative, attentive, and analytic ⁽¹⁾. Marginal

(1) National Council of Teachers English. Language arts of today's children (New York: Appleton Century Crofts Inc. 1954) .

listening is listening to the sounds in the background, appreciative listening as listening to poetry, music and stories, attentive listening is listening for directions, analytic listening demands evaluation of the sound we hear .

The process of appreciative and attentive listening may be developed in schools, and storytelling will help .

1. Telling stories to children :

Kindergarten children love to have the teacher read or tell them stories .

Stories selected for the kindergarten should take no more than fifteen minutes to read or to tell .

Different children and classes of children in different years will show preferences for different kinds of story material. Animal stories are almost universal in appeal, and offer a good starting point until the teacher has become acquainted with the interests of the children .

Youngsters like to hear about animals which act as humans, as well as about animals in animal-like situations .

Illustrations are a very important part of kindergarten stories. These should be large, clearly drawn, preferably in color. Books which have an illustration for each major point in the story invite storytelling by the children as well as the teacher .

Stories should be told and read loud to children. The story with few or no illustration is best told without the book. The teacher is then free to make hand gestures, and to dramatize the plot with facial expression. She can watch the children's faces and see their reactions to the presentation. When books are beautifully illustrated the children should be able to see the illustrations as the story is told or read to them. The teacher can make the story experience a vivid one if she will show the fun, suspense, sympathy, love, and surprise in her face as the action changes .

Various devices and aids are used for storytelling in order to make the stories dramatic or appealing - flannel boards, puppets, toys, or drawing pictures as one tells a story .

2. Poetry :

Children enjoy listening to poetry, for it combines the rhythmic flow of words with a concern for their sounds .

Poems are introduced by setting a mood as for teaching a song. Poems are always read or recited in the exact words of the author .

In teaching a poem to children, the same technique is used as in teaching a song. The children learn by chiming in with the teacher as she repeats favorites over and over for them. Selections to be learned should be short; selections to be read to the children may be long .

To make poetry vital, the teacher must read it so that all its melody, its vibrance, its feeling tone, its movement, its unique qualities leap into life. She must relate poetry to the life and experiences of the children in as many ways as possible. She must be alert to the opportunities the school-day affords for sharing poetry with children .

3. Using audio-visual aids :

There are many records devised for children, a teacher can also make her own sound recordings of stories, reading them into a tape recorder, enabling the children to listen independently. Motion pictures and filmstrips can also be used to extend children's receptive language experiences .

B. EXPRESSIVE AND ORAL LANGUAGE LEARNING

Expressive and oral language or productive language skill is the ability to use language meaningfully to share experiences, communicate ideas, express feelings and alert others to one's needs and desires. The child listening vocabulary is much larger than his speaking vocabulary. He must learn to listen before he can speak, and speaking requires a more active effort than listening. Productive language competence can be developed only if the child is given frequent opportunities to speak .

1. Conversation :

Many opportunities must be given for conversation throughout the whole day. The first lesson is that of learning

to take care in conversation - to listen as well as to speak. Conversation is encouraged during planning, evaluating, mid-morning lunch, outdoor play, work period, and dramatic play situations. The child converses with other individuals, within small groups of children, and with the teacher. The shy child may be stimulated to speak by a friendly child where the teacher has been unable to succeed .

Freedom to express himself as well as he can is an important factor in stimulating conversation, oral contributions, and vocabulary development .

Many times each day kindergarten children and teacher sit together to plan. In the experiences, the children learn to express themselves within a group .

Interesting excursions, experiments, and activities shared by the class as a group provide the children with something to talk about. In her participation in the excursion or experience the teacher helps the children build vocabulary and see relationships .

At a sharing period after work-time, most of the children who have pictures or objects to display will have something to say about it .

2. Dramatization :

Many creative language experiences come from dramatization. Special stories may be selected for this activity, or the children

may express a desire to "play" any story heard during story time .

- Dramatic play is the less formal dramatization which takes place among a few children who assign themselves roles and make up the dialogue as they go along. Usually dramatic play is based on realistic experiences of the children rather than on a story .

Dramatic play offers opportunity for free expression; enables a child to project himself into and appreciate the role of another; and gives the teacher some clues as to interests, background, and home life of the child .

It is important that the room and playground environment be inviting to dramatic play. Besides the doll corner centers of interest will have special appeal .

- With puppets kindergarten children overcome fright of speaking before a group, with puppets they express themselves vocally without being seen, they conceal themselves behind the puppet stage and permit only the puppets to show .

The key to supporting language learning in dramatic play is not in simply setting up the children's play activities and leaving them alone in their corner.

The teacher functions not only as an observer but also as a guide and source of information and play materials .

In addition to the areas already discussed, schools must be equipped with a number of manipulative materials that are provided in support of language learning. Many of the games in the manipulative material area can be used by children individually or in small groups .

3. Reading :

When the child at five or six comes to school and starts living in a larger group there are also reasons for writing and reading, more and different ones such as names on lockers, labels on supplies of equipment and materials, signs on the door. There are symbols or signs that make for ease in living together. To the extent that the child can see and understand the usefulness of this writing in his own living, he will begin to take on the desire to read for himself .

The kindergarten child's strongest motivation to learn to read can come from his intense desire to obtain information and enjoyment from the printed page which he observes in adults. The less motivation of this kind in the home, the greater need there is to stimulate it through the kindergarten teacher's use of books and other reading materials .

Children often demand that teachers read picture captions and surrounding texts when the pictures are attractive or provocative. Some teachers feature the utility of reading by reading recipes, when a cooking experience is in order, by reading instructions for the use of equipment in the classroom, by reading street signs as the class goes on a trip, by reading notices which are being sent home to parents or by reading school rules and regulations. When children help to compose a letter, story or book, the relationship between spoken language and written symbols seems more immediate and visible and children remember and understand better material which incorporates their own language. This is, of course, one of the important reasons for using children's experiences for charts for beginning reading .

Both maturation and well-planned learning experiences are necessary for a child to read .

The teacher should take advantage of experiences in class, needs of the children and their interests to show them that words flow into printed symbols .

In kindergarten some children can learn to read :

- Pupils' names, first name and surname .
- Signs, labels .
- Lists, birthdays, girls, boys, fruits, pets .
- Directions in learning centers .
- Calendars, daily weather, birthday .

However, reading a subject should not be introduced into the kindergarten for want of anything better. There are many essential language learnings which require the careful attention of kindergarten teachers and which must be attained by five-year-olds before launching into the process of learning to read .

Concern for the individual differences within any class, however, requires the teacher to consider the teaching of reading when appropriate .

4. Writing :

Many children use pencils and crayons before they come to school. Of course their purpose of writing is to communicate, not to learn the art of handwriting .

Some children can write their names on the picture they made, and some ask the teacher to write them a word and they try to trace it, or to imitate it. These attempts at writing are to be expected, because once the idea of the spoken and written word has been grasped, reading and writing develop simultaneously and the opportunity for both should be there .

Activities as drawing, painting, modelling, cutting and pasting used in kindergarten help in co-ordination of eye and hand movement and the development of small muscles. All of these activities lay a foundation for the fundamentals of handwriting without a long series of preparatory exercises on strokes and movements .

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4.2. EXPERIENCES IN PRESCIENCE

4.2.1. INTRODUCTION

Science for the kindergarten child is a part of ordinary, everyday living. Many of the questions of the kindergarten child begin with "why"; the child wonders why it rains, why the sky does not fall. He seeks explanation for all manner of phenomena that everyday challenge his curiosity. It is this natural curiosity of the child which provides the foundation for science experiences in the kindergarten .

The science curriculum today is not concerned with fact collecting but with helping children understand the basic processes of science through activities that help him to see how knowledge is developed and verified .

Since the ability to think scientifically does not suddenly appear in a youngster at maturation, and since it requires nurturing from the early years on, kindergarten curriculum uses a particular mode of inquiry in science, that is, the method used to answer a question or to solve a problem. This method often called the "scientific method" helps children to :

1. Observe carefully and accurately .
2. Phrase significant questions .
3. Make comparisons .
4. Look for cause and effect relationships .

5. Make inferences and predictions . (1)

In reality, social living and social experiences are inseparable. One cannot participate in one kind of activity without considering its contribution to the other. Much of science material is social studies material; both are designed to help children live more richly. The interaction of the living organism (including man) with his physical and social environment constitutes social living .

In this curriculum, science experiences will be stressed separately from social studies only to give emphasis to descriptions of different kinds of experiences .

4.2.2. SCIENCE OBJECTIVES

1. Science experiences awaken interest in using the senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch .
2. It develops in the child a sense of curiosity, awakens the child's interest and leads to other valuable experiences .
3. It encourages the child to seek answer to his questions through beginning of experimentation .

(1) Threshold Early Learning Library, Mathematical skills and scientific inquiry, Vol. II, Teachers Publishing Corporation, New York, N.Y. 10022, 1970, p. 63 .

4. It increases the vocabulary of the child .
5. It increases the awareness of, and ability to observe natural phenomena and encourages the child to bring natural specimens to school, and to give accounts of phenomena as he has observed them .
6. By science experiences the child appreciates his own relationship to nature, as indicated by his need for fresh air, sunshine, food, clothing, and shelter .
7. The child gains greater knowledge of his environment and enjoys and appreciates the beauties of nature; he can learn simple facts about the weather, the annual cycle of seasons, animals and how they live, develop and grow, plants and how they develop and grow .
8. Excursions in science lessons will help the child to build for himself an inquiring mind and a seeing eye .
9. Through the development of health habits, the child also adds simple knowledge about the structure and function of his own body .
10. Planned scientific education will help in developing in the child a scientific method of thinking and enables him to learn, to observe in such a way that they can draw conclusions; thus it will help to provide children with the techniques and attitudes needed by the world in which they live .

11. Child also gains self-confidence by sharing his experiences with others, and will build an open mind and requires that statements or criticisms be backed up by demonstrable proof for unbiased data .
12. Science activities cannot be separated from social activities, since it provides opportunities for children to work in groups and to help each other in searching for solutions; and thus it is an opportunity for social growth .

4.2.3. CONCEPTS AND ACTIVITIES

Science curriculum in the kindergarten is centered on two major areas :

- A. Living things : Animals and plants .
- B. The element and natural forces .

A. LIVING THINGS

a. Concepts

- Living things are separated into two major groups :
Animals and plants .
- Living things grow .
- Living things need food, shelter, warmth and air .
- Animals and plants reproduce .

1. Animals :

- Animals are of many kinds .
- Animals live in many and different types of environments .
- Animals carry on certain activities in order to keep alive .
- Animals have definite physical characteristics, by which one can be distinguished from another .
- Animals follow a definite pattern of growth .
- Animals help man in many ways .
- Man is an intellectual animal .
- Man uses plants and animals for food, clothing and to build homes .
- Man can move, have a heart beat, grow, need food, air and shelter. Man also has families .

2. Plants :

- Plants are of many kinds .
- Plants live in different types of environments .
- Plants need water, sun, and air .
- Seeds are of different shapes and kinds .
- Seeds sprout and grow in Spring .
- Man and animal use plants in different ways .

b. Activities :

1. Animals :

The child learns about animals by observing and caring for them :

- The school has to keep animals as pets :
Chickens, ducks, rabbits . . .
 - * Leave children responsible for their care .
 - * Let him watch them change and grow .
 - * Let him observe how they differ from each other .
- Visiting pets : Dogs, baby kittens, turtles . . .
- Birds :
 - * Prepare opportunities for the child to observe habits, nests, and nest-making .
 - * Let them observe differences in size and color.
 - * Let them feed birds by themselves .
- Farm animals .
- Aquarium - goldfish .
- Common insects as fly, ant, bee and butterfly . . .
- Cocoons and moths :
 - * Collect caterpillars
 - * Let the children watch them spinning a cocoon .

- Give children opportunities to read stories and see pictures about animals .
- Prepare excursion to :
 - * The farm and a pet store .
 - * Nature exhibits-museums .
 - * To the beach .
 - * For nature walks, let the children look for specific kinds of specimen .

2. Plants :

- Give children the opportunity of planting and caring for a garden .
 - * Get the ground ready, draw a diagram and plan planting .
 - * Let the children plant seeds and bedding plants .
 - * Let the children water, cultivate and weed .
- Let children observe the different kinds of flowers and vegetable seeds .
- Give children the opportunity to pick, cook and eat vegetables .
- Let children pick and arrange flowers .
- Give the children the opportunity to observe other flowers and gardens .
- Let children plant bulbs indoors and outdoors .

- Let children grow plants from carrots, beets, sweet potatoes, onions . . .
- Let them identify fruits and vegetables .
- Prepare excursion for the children to :
 - * Visit other people's garden .
 - * Visit children's own garden at home .
 - * The park .
 - * Visit a florist .
 - * Walks looking for :
 - + Signs for fall-leaves .
 - + Signs of spring-buds, flowers .
 - + Different kinds of flowers, trees .
 - + Desert flowers and shrubs .

Through experiences in caring for plants and animals, the child can begin to understand some of the attributes all living things have in common. Thus he can distinguish those characteristics which divide the plant and the animal worlds . Through experimentation and careful observation the child can begin to discover the animals and plants basic needs. Child will observe also the plants' and animals' rates of growth and the stages of their life cycles. And so he can relate between these phenomena and his own needs and rate of growth. By these experiences the child can also sense the interdependences of plants, animals and people for survival .

B. THE ELEMENT AND NATURAL FORCES

a. Concepts :

- All our senses can be used to discover the properties of objects in the world around us .
- We can use instruments to extend our senses .
- The existence of order in the world and cause and effect relationships .
- Air surround the earth, we are surrounded by air .
- We need air to live, we breath air .
- Animals and plants need air to live, fire also needs air to burn .
- Wind is air that is in movement .
- Weather changes according to seasons .
- There are four seasons in a year .
- We adjust our clothing and activities to the change of seasons and weather .
- Sun is hot, big, and far away; it helps living things to grow .
- Sun gives us heat and light .
- The moon is smaller than the sun and nearer to the earth .
- Sun, moon and stars are in the sky and they give us light .
- Man used the rockets to reach the moon .
- The earth is made of water and ground, and surrounded by air .

- The soil in the earth is of many different kinds .
- Sources of water and its characteristics .

b. Activities :

1. Water :

- Discuss its sources, uses, characteristics .
- Observe what objects will float .
- Look at swamp water under microscope .
- Let the child play with water, to have his first hand experience with liquid measurement .
- Make evaporation experiments, watch water boil , watch steam from boiling water .
- Freeze water experiments .
- Visit rivers, springs and sea, taste river and sea water .
- Watch ice under the microscope .
- Watch snow and ice melt .

2. Air :

- Discuss characteristics and values .
- Vapor, smoke, fog .
- Feel air by moving hand or paper .
- Make experiments on plants and insects to show their need of air .
- Hang up wet pieces of a similar fabric to dry, put some in a sunny, breezy place, others in a shady, sheltered place, observe the difference after a while .

3. Weather :

- * Discuss annual cycle of seasons : discuss signs of autumn, winter, spring, and summer .
- * Look for and play with autumn leaves .
- * Watch the weather each day at school and help the children to make records .

- * Discuss the characteristics of wind, its ways, it is useful or harmful .
- * Watch trees, leaves and papers blow .
- * Watch smoke blow from chimneys .
- * Run against the wind .
- * Run with kites .
- * Listen to wind blowing in the trees or flapping a window shade or riffling papers .
- * Watch ripples in a puddle or a basin of water (children can blow through water) .
- * Hold up a wet finger in the breeze, and notice that the side from which the breeze is coming is cooler .
- * Watch the directions in which a flag blows, and variation in how hard it blows .
- * Notice that sounds carries better with the wind than against it .

- * Hold cold lid over steaming kettle and watch drops form (rain). Discuss where rain came from .

- * Look at drops of water on cover of aquarium .
- * Discuss whom and what rain helps .
- * Watch clouds and rain; on a partly cloudy day, notice the variations in light and shade as clouds move across the sun .
- * Look for a rainbow, in the sky, in water, in bubbles of soap .
- * Let the children feel rain on hands and face .

4. Sky :

- Look at the sun through dark glasses .
- Make shadow pictures .
- Discuss how the sun helps us and all living things .
- Feel the warmth of sun .
- Discuss the sun, moon and stars, how they differ, what they are made of, how they give light .

5. Rocks and minerals :

- Collect rocks and minerals .
- Examine and talk about them .
- Talk about different things and rocks and stones are used for .
- Watch sand, water, balls, other objects falling (for gravity and magnetism) .
- Experiment with what magnets will attract .
- Know how mineral is used : coal for heat; copper, nickel, and silver for money; gold and platinum

for jewelry; mercury for mirrors and thermometers,
petroleum for gasoline . . .

6. Other possibilities for discussion :

Fire, smoke, dew, frost, electricity, textiles . . .

During the kindergarten year, the resourceful teacher try to make most of the activities stated before, but it is important to note here that detailed study and information will come in later grades. The most essential thing in the kindergarten stage is to stimulate and awaken all the senses of the child; through experiences the child will discover that wonderful things are discovered by using his senses. It is very important to note here that detailed information about things will kill the interest rather than stimulate it .

4.2.4. TEACHER'S ROLE

- Use a science corner and display objects that interest children, change objects occasionally .
- Invite parents and people of particular skill to speak to children about their hobbies and work, and provide resource material and let children try that on their own levels .
- Show interest and welcome a child's contribution, display it in a place where all other children can see; this makes the child feels his contribution is valuable and encourages him to progress .

- Provide children with resource material, books, stories which expand their curiosity .
- Let the child make experiences by himself .
- Ask a lot of questions, wondering ones, that inspire children to look for possible answers .
- A teacher does not need to know all the answers, but she should be honest about what she does and does not know .

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4.3. PRE-MATH EXPERIENCES

4.3.1. INTRODUCTION

Young children are constantly dealing with number and measure in their daily living at home and at school. Through their experiences, children acquire in varying degrees concepts of things in space and their relationship to them, concepts relating to size, quantity, shape, distance, speed, temperature, time, weight, and place. For this reason premath concepts can be incorporated into every area of the curriculum. It is not necessary to sit a child down and "teach him math" at a specific time each day. The young child learns concepts underlying mathematical operations in many of his daily activities .

So, what should be the nature of mathematics program for young children ? Fehr suggests that elementary mathematics should be a "study of number and of space, and the relating of these two ideas through the use of measurement . . . presented in a well-balanced program of mathematical concepts, procedures and problem solving" . (1)

(1) Fehr, Howard, "Sense and nonsense in a modern school mathematics program", The arithmetic teacher, Vol. 13, No. 2 (February 1966), p. 87 .

Such a program would include the study of "sets" or collections of objects, the learning of cardinal and ordinal numbers, one-to-one correspondence, the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, as well as the concepts of fractions, simple geometry, and developing concepts of measurement of two dimensional space, volume and weight .

4.3.2. PRE-MATH OBJECTIVES

Pre-math objectives are numerous: they are remote or near, social or individual, practical and theoretical. For the kindergarten child these objectives may be as follows :

1. To supply the child with pre-math information, which he can choose, synthesize and use according to his interests and his development .
2. To help the child to economize the useless tentative procedures and to avoid wasting materials and time .
3. To help the child acquire a perceptive education, to know and name the qualities of things, before using it in the "sets" .
4. To give the child the occasions to penetrate in the world of numbers and to prepare his mind to conceive these numbers .
5. To help the child to acquire an objective method of thinking in order to develop his logic, by putting him in situations which make him think and reason .
6. To help the child to acquire a good organization of space-relationships .

7. To help the child acquire a self-confidence, which put him at ease in front of a new problem and which permits him to put the acquired techniques and instruments at work .
8. To create in the child the idea of complementarity in grouping and seperating, and to accept new things without fear .

As a summary, we can say that the aim of pre-math in the kindergarten, is to put up in the mind of the child, a mathematical knowledge, formed of concrete and abstract notions, and the images and representations of these notions, a special and precise vocabulary, a mechanism of calculation, and to make his intelligence habitual to use these notions, vocabulary and mechanisms, in his trials of reasoning .

4.3.3. CONCEPTS

Kindergarten program lists the following topics : Sets, recognizing geometric figures, comparison of sets, subset of a set, joining and removing, comparison of sizes and shapes, ordering, using geometric figures for directions and games, using numbers with set .

A. Initial mathematical concepts

1. A set is a collection of things. Things belonging to a set are its members or elements, a set may have many or few members or no members (empty set). These

members can be arranged in a fixed interval serial order .

2. The written symbol representing a number is a numeral .
3. Numbers can be used to describe members of a set (cardinal numbers) and also to describe position within a series (ordinal numbers) .

B. Expanding mathematical concepts

1. Sets can be joined together and subsets can be removed from larger sets .
2. Money represents a series of subsets combined into larger sets, each having a different coin to represent the collection .
3. Fractions are used to represent the subsets of one whole .

C. Measurement concepts

1. The linear dimensions of objects can be measured .
2. The weight of objects can be measured .
3. The volume of containers can be measured .
4. Temperature (amount of heat) can be measured .
5. Passage of time can be measured .

4.3.4. ACTIVITIES

1. Grouping :

To develop a concept of quantity with young children, it is helpful to begin by having them group things.

Such a group may be called a "set". Learning the concepts of more, fewer, and same will precede knowing how many more or how many less there are .

Help the children to recognize small groups or sets of objects (3 blocks, 4 children, 2 potatoes) .

Let the children determine if one set is more or less than another (5 piastres are less than 10 piastres, 5 pencils are more than 3 pencils) .

Let the children match two sets of objects one to one (2 cups to 2 children, 3 paint brushes to 3 jars, 4 tables to 4 students) .

2. Counting :

Children must be provided with experiences that help them associate names or symbols with the numbers they represent. Children can be provided with many experiences to build sets of two, three, four . . . they can match these sets to others or to symbols of these sets of objects. Through a series of such experiences children learn to count by learning that the numbers "one" to "ten" fit into a special order from smallest to largest quantity, and thus they can also understand ordinality .

3. The number system :

The children are already aware of the numbers

named by each symbol or digit, 0, 1, 2 . . . 9. They must now learn that the numeration system has a base of ten and that the place of each digit in a numeral represents its value. Children can learn the use of numerals on clocks, calendars, measuring cups, rulers, and scales .

4. Number operation :

Children go from counting, comparing, and noting numbers to the basic operations on numbers - addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division .

5. Geometry :

Children learn to recognize geometric shapes, the circle of a clock face, the rectangular table . . . so they can begin early to identify and compare square, circular, and triangular shapes. Children can be given the experience of observing the variations and relationships in sizes and shapes of objects, such as big, little, wide, narrow, round, square, or rectangular; children can compare sizes and shapes .

6. Developing measurement skills :

a. Linear measurement :

It is a simple matter to give children sets of wooden rods and to ask them to find the longer and

the shorter one. Children can be provided with tools of linear measurement as rulers, meter-sticks . . .

b. Measurement of weight :

There are a limitless number of objects that can be weighed in the environment of the school. It is helpful to make the children use simple tools of measurement, such as cups, quart measure, teaspoon, tablespoon and scales. Children should be given the opportunity to discover the use of scales and the concept of kilo .

c. Measurement of volume :

In learning of volume, the children can be provided with containers of all sizes and shapes and given an opportunity to fill them and transfer the contents from one container to another. It is a good idea to include containers of the same volume, but of different shapes in the classroom. Using these can help the children learn that volume is not simply a function of height or width of a container .

d. Measurement of time :

Help the children to read clock faces and calendars, and to understand that the time of day

is indicated by the position of the hands of the clock as they relate to time for daily activities, such as work, lunch, clean up, rest, and time to go home .

- * Learn that the day is divided into parts which always occur in regular sequence: morning, noon, afternoon and night .
- * Understand that the calendar is used to indicate days of the week and months of the year .

7. Fractions :

Young children can also be helped to understand simple fractions, once they have an understanding of whole number. Children can learn one-half, one-third, one-fourth, they can discover that two halves of an object make one whole . . . Their first understanding is of the number of parts of a unit, without concern of their equality .

4.3.5. TEACHER'S ROLE

Teachers need to be alert to the number needs of children as they help them build onto the understandings they already have, and extend these concepts and learning through concrete and meaningful experiences .

A teacher should help her children to reason as they solve mathematical problems and she should guide them to clarify con-

cepts and related ideas .

A teacher should provide her children with as much mathematical opportunities and experiences as possible, relating these activities to real life .

Finally, a teacher should keep records of experiments, happenings and observations in order to help her children to develop to the maximum their mathematical readiness .

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4.4. ART EXPRESSION

4.4.1. INTRODUCTION

" There is a deep natural desire on the part of young children to express themselves through art. Thought and feelings which perhaps they cannot adequately express with their limited vocabulary are eagerly splashed out in hold colors or squeezed out in clay. They can translate into art some of the feelings which are above and beyond their words . . .". (1)

The child learns best about the arts if they are a natural part of his life, that is, if he sees and touches a variety of art materials, and if he is provided with many opportunities to investigate and experience different ways of expressing his feelings and ideas .

This interpretation of inner feelings lead to a greater self awareness and a healthier self-concept .

On the other hand, though not conclusive, research indicates that there is more evidence that a correlation does exist between sensorimotor skills and reading and writing readiness .

(1) Leavitt, Jerome ed.; Nursery Kindergarten Education, New York : Mc Graw Hill Book Co., 1958, p. 146 .

4.4.2. OBJECTIVES :

Plastic arts are offered in kindergarten since they help in development of the total child. Among their main objectives are the following :

1. To assist children to present their own personal reactions to experience in a form they devise themselves .
2. To provide children with opportunities and guidance in the fulfilment of their creative powers .
3. To provide the child with a feeling of self-confidence in having control of materials .
4. Art is a mean through which he may express himself more fully than with other media .
5. Art is a mean by which the child better understands the world and his place in it .
6. Art gives the child a satisfaction which comes with the satisfying of the basic creative impulse, and of having their horizons widened .
7. Art gives the child an artistic taste .
8. Art may be used as a mean to reveal child's learning and psychological problems .
9. Art develops child's imagination and knowledge .
10. Children experience joy in creating and interpreting their own work and the work of other children in the group .

4.4.3. ACTIVITIES :

Teachers make it possible for children to experiment; to see and enjoy beauty, forms, and textures; to manipulate and to express what they imagine, know and experience. They are aware that sensations from experience with artistic materials are the beginning of the child's artistic productivity. (1)

Teachers provide these experiences through :

- A. Two-dimensional art work .
- B. Three-dimensional art work .

A. TWO-DIMENSIONAL ART WORK

This is relating to the use of materials on a flat surface: paints, crayon and collage material are concerned with only on a single surface, although children sometimes use collage for construction .

Painting and drawing .

Kindergarten children prefer to experiment with form and color, allowing the movement of their own arms to stimulate the shapes that form on the paper. As they mature, pictures contain more representative forms .

(1) Berson, Minnte. Kindergarten : Your Child's Big Step .
New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1959, p. 74 .

- A teacher should provide her children with experiences of mixing and experimenting with color, becoming more aware of it, make satisfying color choices .
- Children must be given the opportunity to experiment freely with tempera and finger paints .
- Tempera painting is usually considered a quiet, individual activity. Each child has his own paper and paints and there is little interaction with others. Even when two children are painting together at the easel, they are seldom interacting, for their work is separated .
- Children should be given the opportunity to make mural paintings, which will actually be a collection of individual paintings, with any consistence growing out of the teacher's organization rather than their work. It is so interesting for the children to express their thoughts and feeling in making a mural after an interesting trip or listening to a story .
- Children should be given the opportunity to use wax crayons and they can also be encouraged to mix crayoning with other media .
- Using colored or white chalk at the blackboard allows the child freedom to cover a large surface without concern for creating a product, for he knows his work will soon be erased .

- Children should be given the opportunity to create interesting designs by cutting, tearing and pasting paper. For every young children, the teacher can prepare various-shaped pieces of colored paper to be pasted on a background, and as children develop competence in using scissors, they can create their own shapes. White school paste is all that needed for children's collage work .
- Although finger paints are often difficult for the child to control, they offer the child a release that cannot be matched by other media. By finger painting, the child is given the opportunity to be in a direct interaction with the media without using paint brushes crayons or scissors .
- Children can be provided with the opportunity to view and enjoy some of the work of famous artists .

Teachers should organize the area used so that clean up is as simple as possible. Teacher's role in painting and drawing is not to have the children copy models she provides, but to encourage them to explore the media, to observe their progress and to guide it, providing new techniques consistent with the child's development and needs .

B. THREE DIMENSIONAL CONSTRUCTIONS

In the kindergarten, the three-dimensional media include wood working, cardboard box constructions, clay modelling, and the creation of mobiles and stables .

- Children should be provided with wood working activities, since the simple activity of hammering and sawing is often enough to satisfy the child. This activity appeals the boys, and boys must be given the opportunity to enjoy masculine activities, girls should participate and learn also, just as boys can learn from cooking activities .
- Through wood working, children are given the opportunity to discover some of the characteristics of woods: their color, texture, hardness, and suitability for certain purposes .
- Children can be given the opportunity to constructs objects, toys and models .
- Children should be provided with activities of clay modelling, they enjoy the cheer fun of manipulating clay. They pound it, roll it into balls or snakes, flatten it out, break it up and push it all together again .
- Children can also be provided with other modelling material such as plasticine and oil-based clay .

- Teachers should draw the attention of their children to become aware of the textures and consistence of clay, sand, soap, and plasticine .
- Children should be provided with shape and reshape objects, activities which give them satisfaction and expression .
- Children can be provided with activities of construction which can be made out of cardboard boxes and cartons that are cut up, pasted together, elaborated with paper, and painted and colored. This "cardboard carpentry" is a welcome addition to the resources of schools .
- Children can construct many mobiles and stables by using a variety of material in interesting fashions .
- Children should be provided with activities of weaving and sewing .
- The teacher can help the children to plan and arrange pleasing furnishing for a center in the room or the playhouse .
- Children can participate in designing and making original decorations for holidays or other special occasions .
- Children can also make interesting and original collage from paste and scraps of paper, metal, wood, thread, and cloth .

The teacher should display the work of the children, but it should not display any work of her children, the child should experience failure and success, so only the worthy work can be displayed .

Not only the work of the children can be displayed, but if possible, the works of professional artists can be also displayed, drawing children's attention that they are not competing with these artists .

4.4.4. TEACHER'S ROLE

The role of the teacher in the arts is to encourage self-discovery in both the affective and cognitive areas. This will be best achieved if she has specific objectives in mind, has a large repertoire of effective resource materials and tasks, and presents these materials not rigidly, but with an awareness based on knowledge of the child's learning process .

Teachers should make it possible for children to experiment; to see and enjoy beauty, forms and textures; to manipulate; and to express what they imagine, know and experience. They are aware that sensations from experience with artistic materials are the beginnings of a child's artistic productivity .

The child must be given opportunities in which he can freely use his imagination with the products of this imaginative thought accepted and cherished. The child, in order to use his power, must feel a degree of acceptance in a climate in

which he is viewed as a competent individual, important and worthy .

The teacher should avoid the imposition of subject unless the child is completely without ideas; if so she should merely suggest, and do not prescribe .

The teacher should create the impression that art is not merely "busy work" or a "time-filler" .

A teacher must understand that children are only interesting in demonstrating the reality of the mind and emotion, not the reality of outward appearances .

Children must be given a feeling of independence .

A teacher should encourage her children to show and explain their work to others in the class, creating an atmosphere of mutual interest .

Children expect and deserve help occasionally - this in art is usually a matter of motivation by "talking it over" .

Art should not be pigeon-holed and isolated from other areas, its concern is man and his total existence .

A teacher should use constructive criticism. Instead of saying "that's bad" try to find a solid solution, or imply that something else might work better .

A teacher should not try to force gifted or retarded

children into the same activities with the normal children. She should try to set up special activities for those whose talents are extraordinarily great or small .

Finally, a teacher should use all available visual aids which are of good quality. These will serve, as an effective stimulus .

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4.5. MUSIC & RHYTHMIC ACTIVITIES

4.5.1. INTRODUCTION

There is often music in the air in the creative kindergarten. Children sing at games and at dramatic play. They "make up" songs about things they experience: the trips and excursions. They listen for music sounds in nature as the wind rustles the leaves, or birds sing or passing tracks and trailers.

Experiences in music should be available to all children, not merely to the highly talented few. All children can learn to value and to enjoy music, whether or not they have special aptitude for it. It is the business of the school and particularly of the kindergarten, to offer opportunities for children to participate in as many musical experiences as possible and to make available as many sources of music as possible .

The music should strengthen and clarify the child's own feelings of rhythm; the teacher should help him to express in more controlled and coordinated fashion his own rhythmic patterns. The impulse to dance - to move the body rhythmically to music - is inherent in the child; the teacher need only draw it out by giving him the security and freedom to express himself .

The music education program should give each child the opportunity to participate with his peers in many types of musical experiences. He should have the chance to express his feelings musically through the means best suited to his abilities: through singing, playing in the rhythm band, dancing,

or listening. Thus, music at times becomes a strong motivation for physical activity and at other time requires careful thought as the child evaluates a musical composition to decide how to interpret various passages. For this reason the physical education curriculum is grouped with the music education curriculum, however physical education sometimes may be done without music as music may be done sometimes without bodily expression .

Emphasis in kindergarten music is on the joy it brings to the child. Perfection is not the aim. The teacher plans for as many opportunities as possible for the children to experience musical and rhythmic expression .

4.5.2. OBJECTIVES

1. Music helps provide experiences to meet each child's physical, mental, emotional and social needs .
2. Music activities can give children emotional release as well as much joy. The experience of expressing their feelings through singing or rhythmic activity, added to the pleasure of listening to music, can contribute greatly to emotional stability and social well-being .
3. Children learn to listen .
4. Learning to appreciate music will enrich the lives of all children .
5. Children learn to co-operate, to subordinate their own desires and impulses to the interest of the group.

6. It gives a wide range of experiences .
7. It gives children a feeling of active participation through all phases of music - they sing, listen, play instruments and move to music .
8. It gives child opportunities for self-expression .
9. Increases the child's appreciation of other arts and culture .

4.5.3. ACTIVITIES

The music program must include various types of musical experiences such as: singing, listening, playing of simple instruments, interpreting rhythms, and participating in other creative experiences .

A. SINGING

Good singing experiences depend upon the teacher's understanding of children, their needs, abilities, limitations, and stages of development. The creation of a healthful classroom atmosphere is of prime importance. This atmosphere should foster the desire to sing. Musical skills and techniques cannot be taught by isolation drill, if good attitudes are to result. These skills can be developed best when there is enjoyment and pleasure in singing .

There are hundreds of appealing songs which kindergarten children can seem to enjoy learning and like to sing again and again. They sing these songs in other activities alone or with a smaller group .

Games involving pitch, such as stretching tall on high notes and stooping on low notes, may be played .

Selecting the songs :

Several criteria applied in the selection of songs for kindergarten children :

- * Subject matter and words should be meaningful and interesting for children; children like songs on animals, seasons, homes, kindergarten activities and community life .
- * Songs should be short .
- * Rhythms should be definite and unchanging throughout the song .

B. LISTENING

Listening to music is an important phase of every kindergarten musical experience , and makes an important contribution to children's growth and development. Good listening makes active use of the mind and imagination in response to melodic and rhythmic patterns .

Children should be given an opportunity to listen to wide variety of music. They will listen to the recordings of songs which are familiar to them from radio, television or previous classes. The teacher should also introduce new songs from time to time .

The rest period is an excellent time for children to hear soft music .

Listening ability and vocal control come more slowly with some children than with others, but they will come if he is exposed to music and no one worries about him. A loss of self-confidence is usually the stumbling block. Encourage him to listen and sing even if he is not singing your tune. Vocal chords need exercise and ears need exercise too .

C. RHYTHMIC ACTIVITIES

Nearly every part of the kindergarten day involves rhythm and some form of response to it. Rhythmic activities are best conducted with the aid of piano, phonograph, drum, some other percussion instruments .

Fundamental rhythms, walking, running, hopping, jumping, galloping, sliding, skipping, clapping and animal walking are considered fundamental kindergarten rhythm .

Music involves physical activity as moving vigorously with large muscles or calmly, precisely, with small muscles .

The music should strengthen and clarify the child's own feelings of rhythm; the teacher should help him to express in more controlled and coordinated fashion his own rhythmic patterns. The impulse to dance to move the body rhythmically to music - is inherent in the child .

Children extend and refine their abilities in rhythmic expression as they gain experience and added maturity, progressing from the stage of free bodily movements to the more complex patterns of the dance - or from using simple percussion instruments to accompany themselves to using them to beat a complicated pattern .

D. EXPERIENCES WITH INSTRUMENTS

A kindergarten class may be equipped with a musical corner in which there are some musical instruments as drums, tambourines, rhythm sticks, maracas, tone blocks in small sets, xylophones, and tuned bells which are all instruments simple enough for young children to use .

Children may play musical instruments in a group or independently. They can play while singing .

Children can be given opportunities to make their own musical instruments of milk containers, boxes filled with grains of sand or beans, pot covers, and automobile brake drums . . .

The use of musical instruments encourages the exploration of tonal as well as rhythmic relationships, and the children often begin to play simple tunes by themselves .

As children play instruments, they should become aware of the range of sounds that can be made with each instrument .

Activities with instruments should be a function of the

children's interest and willingness to try out new ideas in sound .

4.5.4. TEACHER'S ROLE

Almost all children enjoy singing, teacher should capitalize on this enthusiasm and exuberance. She should provide her children with simple musical instruments and with records, and she should well choose the songs for them .

Teachers should give the children the freedom to experiment simple musical instruments, she can give children opportunities to create their own instruments. The teacher should help the children explore and discover the rich area of music through the use of instruments .

As children listen to music, they become aware of various qualities, loud music, soft, fast, slow, pitch rises and falls; teachers can help children become aware of these differences and learn to characterize elements of music as well as its design and texture .

The teacher might also be able to bring live musicians to class to play for the children. Teachers can also develop discussions that enhance attentive listening and lead to critical listening .

Teacher should encourage movements and its various dimensions and she should allow her children freedom of expression within a framework established by her .

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4.6. SOCIAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

4.6.1. INTRODUCTION

Social education in the kindergarten forms a natural core around which all other activities revolve. Within a classroom, the teacher not only creates a range of conditions that helps the child learn his role of pupil in school, but also teaches him the rules, expectations, and values of the school. All education is concerned with socialization and values. The basic social values that we wish to communicate to children include concern for the worth of the individual, concepts of freedom and responsibility and the importance of democratic decision-making. Social studies and values are learned all day, not just in single segmented subject-oriented periods. Children learn what to value from inferences drawn from the behavior of significant adults in their lives, by imitating their behavior and assimilating perceived values .

Wolfson suggests that values can be learned by young children through role playing, creative dramatics, literature, and art experiences. She concludes that value development can be promoted by providing a wide variety of opportunities to consider their own feelings. ⁽¹⁾ This may be considered as a

(1) Wolfson, Bernice J.; "Values and the primary school teacher"; Social Education; Vol. 31; No. 1 (January 1967), 37 - 38 .

beginning step in the analysis of value system, which is a function of the child's intellectual and moral level of development. So, we find that schools also are concerned with moral education of children, helping them make distinctions between right and wrong. Here, the role of the teacher, is not to teach directly moral behavior, but to set a moral atmosphere in the classroom. This role goes beyond the confines of any portion of the curriculum but must pervade the entire-environment of the classroom .

So, we can conclude that there is a great relationship between social education, values learning and moral education, which should be somewhat informal, but not unplanned .

4.6.2. OBJECTIVES

1. Social studies help the child grow in the ability to live and work harmoniously in a group, to follow rules, resolve conflicts, and get along with other children .
2. The child acquires a feeling that he belongs to the community, that it serves him and that, as a part of it, he has not only privileges but responsibilities.
3. It helps the child to develop an understanding of the society in which he lives .
4. It helps the child with cultural values, traditions, and rituals need to be included to help children

become better acclimated to the surrounding social scene .

5. Social studies help in the process of child's socialization .
6. It helps the child to achieve personality integration, social intelligence, social sensitivity and developing social skills, attitudes and socially approved behavior .

4.6.3. CONCEPTS

Teachers should develop the important concepts which are organized in six major areas :

1. The child is an individual .
 - * Individuals have names and are distinguished by physical attributes .
 - * The child grows physically, mentally and emotionally .
 - * The child develops his own body image through movement and performance .
2. The child is a family member .
 - * The family lives together .
 - * Family members have different roles .
 - * The family interacts with the community .

3. The school community .

- * The school provides for the child .
- * The class is a learning group .
- * Adults in the school group help children to learn .

4. The community .

- * The community has a geographic location .
- * Members in a community play different roles .
- * Agencies in a community provide needed services .
- * Members in the community have different responsibilities .

5. Understanding the world .

- * Members in community may come from different countries .
- * People live in different type houses, they dress differently and speak different languages .
- * People around the world have similarities and differences .

6. The child participates in his culture. Independence day, labor day, tree day, mother's day, child's day, teacher's day, religious feasts .

4.6.4. ACTIVITIES

1. The child may be encouraged to explore the question "Who am I ?" by several activities of drawing self-portraits, telling stories about himself. Teachers can provide the child with mirrors, tape recorders, class activities photographs, or trip photographs, so that the child can see and hear himself in different situation, and can deduce the difference between himself and his friends .
2. Children are constantly assuming adult roles and imitating the activities in which they see adults engaged. Many activities, in which the child describes or role plays the activities of his family, in the doll corner and house keeping play, will help develop the concept that each family is unique .
3. Through many opportunities to engage in constructive work and play activities with other children, the kindergarten child learns how to co-operate, to get along well with others, and to begin to subordinate his own wishes to those of the group .

Taking turns at easel painting, sharing materials, taking turns in speaking, greeting friends and assumption of roles in dramatic play, is essential to democratic kindergarten living .

4. Trips into the community, play an important part in the social studies program, for they give children first-hand experiences with many aspects of the environment of interest to them .

Through the use of carefully chosen and planned field trips, it is possible to incorporate certain concepts in geography (map reading for instance) and history (historical locations in the community) which will further enlarge the child's concepts of social group membership .

5. Through reading international stories, through films of different countries, through foreigner songs and dances, the child will begin to become aware of the interdependences and the contributions of all groups .
6. The celebration of holidays is an important activity in the kindergarten. Holidays provide excellent opportunities for creative activity of all kinds. Children make cards and gifts for their families and friends, make decorations in the classroom .

The celebration of holidays, even birthdays, also provides an excellent opportunity for teaching children certain social values. Through planning parties, room decorations, and other holiday activities, the children learn to cooperate in carrying

out group goals. By participating in the celebration of national holidays, the child learns something of our Lebanese heritage and way of life. He begins to identify himself with customs and traditions, he begins to feel that he is part of larger social group, that he belongs to .

Listening to stories of historic figures and heroes, reading of traditional stories, singing of traditional songs, teach the young child something of his cultural heritage .

7. Activities of clean up time assure responsibility for cleaning up after themselves; developing consciousness of a clean room; leaving materials ready for others to use .

Children can be helped also to develop responsibility for keeping school property in order; understanding need for keeping clean. They can be taught also to remain quiet in the rest period, so as not to disturb others .

4.6.5. TEACHER'S ROLE

The teacher plays a vital role in helping children to become aware of the various groups in which they hold membership, such as families and friends .

- The teacher's role, is guiding children to an understanding of the values of each child to the group .
- Providing opportunities for responsibility .
- Including some group times in her daily schedule .
- Helping children learn that, although they do not like everyone, they can live socially with everyone .
- She increases her children's interest in an understanding of their immediate world .
- The teacher must understand the society in which they are growing and learning. The teacher must not only plan for the growth of the children but also "grow" continually herself, so that she can meet the needs of children in a rapidly changing world. This means that the teacher must keep informed about developments in technology, national and international affairs, events and problems on the local community level that are reflected in and influence her pupil's views of the world .
- Shy children will need to be encouraged to assert themselves more .
- The teacher does not employ authoritarian techniques. Only through democratic living can earliest concepts of democracy be taught. Self-discipline grows pro-

portionately as the teacher shows faith and confidence in the children .

The kindergarten teacher needs to constantly check herself to assure that she is being fair to all children, and that she is treating them all as equals. She has the responsibility of respecting the personalities of all the children .

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5. EVALUATION

Evaluation is a judgement-making process by which the teacher gathers and organizes information, weighs evidence, makes inferences, and reaches decisions .

The major methods teachers can use for gaining information are observations of children's behavior and tests; and the main purpose is accumulating data is to help teachers make judgements about children's learning and about the results of the program so that these decisions will be translated into action which results in improved programs and increased learning .

Evaluation requires a statement of goals or desired concepts to be developed. These goals must be translated into desired behavioral outcomes or understanding which can be achieved by five-year olds. These outcomes become the WHAT of the evaluation program .

Teachers can use many efficient and fruitful ways to appraise children's learning and their ability to understand and use the concepts selected. Teachers can use the nonstandardized techniques as well as the standardized tests. These techniques become the HOW of the evaluation .

Nonstandardized tests are generally more used in kindergarten, because they generally permit more frequent evaluation as well as appraisal of qualities which are not covered by standardized tests. At the same time standardized tests are not yet available for evaluating conceptual learning in the kindergarten; specially for the Lebanese kindergarten children .

It should be stressed that all evaluative techniques are methods of sampling behavior and therefore it is generally better to obtain several samples than only one, for greater reliability. It is also preferable to use more than one evaluative method for cross-checking. Where possible greater objectivity can be attained when more than one person evaluates the results independently .

TECHNICAL EVALUATIONS

1. NONSTANDARDIZED TECHNIQUES :

Nonstandardized means of data collection include; observational techniques, checklists, rating scales, sociometric techniques, collections of children's products, cumulative record folder and teacher-developed tests .

A. Observational techniques :

Teachers can know more about children by observing them. When teachers have selected specific concepts to develop with children, they know what they are looking for and their observations can be focused sharply on behavioral evidence rating to

such concepts .

Events must not be interpreted but recorded as accurately as possible. The key to the successful collection of running records is in the regular systematic sampling of all the children and in the careful reporting of behavior in descriptive rather than judgemental terms .

A careful recording of the interaction of a child with others, or the way he plays, he responds, may provide the basis for judgement made about how a child is thinking or feeling. This observational technique must be made for a long time. This makes this sort of record time-consuming; for this reason, teachers should develop ways that are practical, take up little time, and still provide an adequate picture of children's behavior .

Teachers must guard against generalization about children's behavior from only one or two instances. Over a period of time, when samples of behavior begin to confirm a particular hypothesis or to define behavior clearly, the teacher can feel more secure in reaching conclusions .

The most important guidelines are; recording behavior without judgemental assessment, selecting relevant behavior to record, collecting sufficient anecdotal records over a period of time so that some patterns emerge, appraising these records, checking these records against collateral evidence, and making

balanced evaluation. Systematic collection of observational material can be facilitated by the use of checklists, rating scales, time samplings, charts, observation guides, and other forms .

B. Checklists and rating scales :

Both checklists and rating scales are limited to the evaluation of visible and readily ascertained qualities. Simple checklists can be set up to mark progress or achievement levels in regard to specific concepts .

In some classrooms, teachers ask children to check their own names on a list which she posts in a convenient spot on the wall. For example, children who play with blocks, furnishing the teacher with an easily recorded form of valuable information as to which children frequently, rarely or never play with blocks.

Rating scales require a judgement to be made at the time of recording and should therefore require the recording of only such judgements as can be made readily and objectively. The traits to be evaluated should be selected with care, not only as to their ease of rating but also as to the significance of the item rated .

Checklists and rating scales can be compiled with ease and speed for the whole class, providing comparability and complete coverage, and these can be compared at different times, to note changes and progress .

Time sampling, or the observation of a specific child's behavior at regular time intervals, is also limited to readily observed behavior .

Taking a series of planned observations assures a better sample of the child's usual behavior .

When children engage in self-selected activities during their work periods, a wealth of observational material is available to the teacher, if she has found some useful forms in which to record and preserve these observations for purposes of evaluation .

Sometimes it is possible to tape record a classroom experience, to be studied and analyzed in depth at a later time. Studying such recording helps the teacher to realize how selective and unreliable one's memory can be, and how much of verbal interaction can be missed, because of one's failure to hear, observe, or immediately comprehend all that is going on .

C. Sociometric techniques :

This is a simple way of determining the social structure of the class, it can be done by asking each child a set of questions to elicit his choice of friends; with whom he prefers to play, to eat, to visit, to go with .

The children's responses to the questions can be plotted on a chart, which is called sociogram, this sociogram must be

made over a time; by this the teacher can determine the most popular and least popular children and what groupings of friendships exist in the class .

A teacher has to remember that children are not stable as adults in their relations; for this reason sociometric techniques provide less reliable information about children .

D. Collecting pupil products :

Children's drawings and paintings, their stories and mathematics work, as well as the reports that they have prepared, may be collected and stored for later study and evaluation .

E. Cumulative record folders :

Schools often prepare a record folder for a child at the time he enters, that will remain with him throughout his career in that school system. The information from this folder may also be passed on when the child moves to another school .

The home, and family background; developmental history, health, weight, height, and growth data; data on social behavior and interaction with peers and adults; recurring patterns of behavior; dislikes and avoidances; achievements, potentials and interests; and apparent feelings about themselves and other people, all of these data can be collected in the cumulative record folder .

F. Maintaining classroom records :

Records of daily attendance are generally required allowing the teacher to keep track of absences and the reasons for them. A teacher has to contact the family every time the child is absent and hence keeps records about the reasons of his absences .

G. Communication with parents :

There are various ways for parents and teachers to communicate about children : letters and notes, checklists, conferences - individual and group - scheduled and informal, visits to home and school, and telephone calls for informal contacts. All are important means of communication .

Observational data-gathering are possible and can yield a great amount of information, but they are cumbersome, time-consuming and expensive .

The amount of time and energy necessary to conduct such observations would completely remove the teacher from any teaching .

In order to achieve the level of confidence, teacher must be sure that the sample she selects is representative of the total population of possible products and behaviors; in order to insure representativeness, a systematic procedure must be adopted .

2. STANDARDIZED TECHNIQUES :

A. Tests :

There are some standardized tests which measure certain kinds of conceptual ability, which teachers are not trained to use them. There are also many kinds of "Readiness" tests which teachers are familiar and which are regularly administered in many kindergartens. Many tests depend heavily upon verbal ability and tend to discriminate against children from culturally different backgrounds. While standardized tests have a place in a balanced program of evaluation, teachers may wish considerable assistance from expert personnel on the school staff before selecting administering or interpreting such tests .

At any rate, in Lebanon we have not many standardized tests which are made specially for Lebanese kindergarten children, and till such tests will be available a teacher can use her own tests and the tests which are now available .

Young children usually have to be tested individually, rather than in groups. Teachers may have to request assistance during any teaching period in order to permit completion of the planned testing program .

It is important to avoid subjecting children to long or too-frequent tests. This means careful selection of concepts to test; and a test structure which can yield profitable data, within a minimum period of time .

Test questions must be clearly and simply worded, instructions must be concise and as fool-proof as possible, and that wherever possible, children should be required to respond in non-verbal or performance ways .

The tests available for use in the early years of schooling can generally be categorized into developmental tests, intelligence tests, readiness tests and achievement tests .

a. Developmental tests :

Developmental tests are often given to young children. They are used to determine the degree of maturation. Observation of a child's physical characteristics, can be used to assess maturation. The tasks described in many of Piaget's reports may also be considered a series of developmental tests .

The information from these tests is useful in deciding whether a child is ready for a particular school experience or whether he can handle the content of a particular set of instructional tasks. At any rate, human development is highly plastic and a child's experiences tend to modify his development, for this reason teachers should be careful not to exclude children from formal educational experiences because of lack of maturation .

b. Intelligence tests :

Intelligence tests are usually used to determine the level

of general intellectual behavior. The assumption underlying them is that if all children have equal opportunities to learn skills, the differences in levels of performance are the result of differences in inherent ability .

Intelligence tests were originally designed to provide a way of predicting the academic achievement of children. Most intelligence tests can predict academic performance well when there is no significant change in the child's educational circumstances .

Moving children with low IQ levels from an educationally dull environment to one that is educationally stimulating may not only increase educational performance but may also lead to increases in scores on intelligence tests .

Significant decisions about a child's education are often based upon the results of the intelligence tests administered when he is young. For this reason, great care needs to be taken in interpreting and using the results of these tests .

c. Readiness tests :

Readiness tests are specific to one or more areas of learning for which predictions are made, and items on these tests may be more sensitive to specific instruction .

Readiness tests are used to assess the child's ability to profit from instruction. The most prevalently used readiness

tests are in the area of reading. Since readiness is conceived not merely as a maturational state, but as a state in which a child has achieved some pre-requisite learnings, these tests are actually early achievement tests .

d. Achievement tests :

Standardized achievement tests are used to assess a child's or class's achievement in the areas of academic learning. A number of achievement tests are available for different curricular areas, and teachers may select a full battery of tests or administer only a single subtest .

In interpreting achievement tests, teachers should be aware that they do not sample the total curriculum offerings of the school but generally limit themselves to academic skills .

B. TEST LIMITATIONS :

Sometimes there are difficulties in securing a good physical setting for testing, including privacy comfort, freedom from interruption, and lack of distracting noises. All of these difficulties must be regarded as possible sources of test limitations so that teachers who give tests must be ready to appraise their usefulness in the light of all their limitations .

Administration of tests early in a child's career has certain inherent pit falls. Many young children are unfamiliar with testing procedures and do not know appropriate response

behavior, thus making tests results invalid. It may be well postpone administering tests to young children until they have been in school long enough to have been acculturated to the way of the school .

C. INTERPRETING TEST RESULTS :

Much can be learned about the test results simply by scanning them, noting high and low scores, medians, and items which fared particularly well or poorly in the test results. Thus it can be seen which test items appeared most troublesome to the class and which received the best responses .

C O N C L U S I O N

All the techniques stated above help in evaluating the program; but modifications in educational programs do not occur automatically. They are the product of extensive collaboration by many people at different levels of the educational enterprise .

It is unlikely that kindergarten teachers can take the full responsibility or initiative for substantial curriculum change all by themselves. Yet there are important contributions which must come primarily from the classroom teacher if major changes in program are to be attained .

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6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Having seen the importance of preschool education in awakening children's minds and in helping their personality development, and its effects on their later growth and development, the ministry of education in Lebanon should make major efforts for the organization of public preschool education.

In this essay we tried to explore some of the possibilities of a preschool curriculum in Lebanon, hoping that the ministry of education will consider our effort and will try to execute our recommendations which are as follows :

1. We recommend that the ministry of education should do everything in its power to make kindergartens available to all children, by opening preschool classes in every public primary school in Lebanon .
2. We recommend that the ministry of education should be responsible for all Lebanese kindergartens, private and public; and design for them the basic objectives that are essential for every Lebanese child, leaving the door open for the creative teacher under these objectives .
3. We recommend that the ministry of education compile yearly

statistics data about the number of kindergarten children and thus deciding the number of kindergarten teachers and classes needed in every district .

4. We recommend that the ministry of education make a study on the Lebanese children language needs, and prepare stories and poems that are convenient to the Lebanese child and his environment, and do not depend only on the imported children library .

5. We recommend that the ministry of education permits the kindergarten teacher to make excursions for her children in order to complete the demands of the curriculum which continues activities inside and outside the school .

6. We recommend that the ministry of education supply the teacher and children with all demanded equipment in order to assure the integral development of the children personalities .

7. We recommend that the ministry of education organize a group of specialists (psychologists, sociologists, educators) in order to study the Lebanese child in his environment and formulate a system of standardized tests which help the teacher in evaluating her children .

8. We recommend that the ministry of education open teachers' colleges for preparing kindergarten teachers, and prepare convenient curriculum for them .

9. We recommend that the ministry of education open a special

department for the kindergarten specialists, whom will be responsible for all kindergartens and will follow up kindergarten teacher in their work .

10. We recommend that the ministry of education prepare studied radio and television programs for children, teachers and parents .

11. We recommend that the ministry of education study the possibility of a transportation system for kindergarten children

12. We recommend that the ministry of education establish standards of age and of grouping children in classes, and study the possibility of receiving two groups by day of twenty children each, inspite of one large group by day, in order to leave the chance for all Lebanese children to enter kindergartens .

13. We recommend that the ministry of education study various means of assuring pre-school education to children in rural areas as well as disadvantaged areas .

14. We recommend that the ministry of education make efforts to reach the parents of young children and to involve them in the educative process. The emphasis should be upon parent involvement in their child's education both at home and at school, and helping parents become more adequately functioning members of society .

15. We recommend that the ministry of education apply this curriculum on a certain number of kindergarten classes in

different districts for at least one year, and thus judging its validity for official adoption .

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