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Correlating and Integrating Subject Matter in the Booker T. Washington High School, Dallas, Texas

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CORRELATING AND INTEGRATING SUBJECT MATTER IN THE
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL, DALLAS,
TEXAS

By

E. J. Johnson Williams

A Thesis in Education Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Bachelor of Science

in the

Division of Arts and Sciences

of the

Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College

Prairie View, Texas

August, 1938

Alford Randall
7-21-38

Dedicated to my deceased

Father and Mother,

Mr. and Mrs. John Robertson

and

my devoted husband

Mr. Alex Williams

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Scope of the Study -

In selecting for this study the Booker T. Washington High School, Dallas, Texas, it is not the writer's intention to compare the work being done in this school with other schools of equal rank. An effort is being made to describe the actual work being done in this school in the matter of subject correlation and integration. Attention has been given especially to the various methods employed by the teaching staff in effecting the program.

The writer was influenced in her selection of this particular phase of the school's work as a result of her efforts to become better acquainted with the aims of secondary education, and especially with the contribution being made by this high school.

Certain limitations, it must be admitted, were presented throughout the study. The most important of these, is the fact that the writer is not, nor has ever been a member of the faculty in the high school here studied. She has gathered information from personal observations during school visits.

A considerable portion of the first-hand information given in this paper was obtained from the high school principal and records in his office. Much of the rest of the materials was gathered from such sources as counseling

officers, home-room advisers club sponsors, study-hall teachers and the librarian.

Definition and Explanation of Terms -

Correlation: - By correlation is meant the bringing together of subjects or elements of subjects in the same or in different fields of knowledge for the purpose of showing their relationship.

Subject correlation, like other classroom procedures, is usually done as a result of careful planning, and generally grows out of the teacher's study of pupils' interest and needs in their relation to the general objectives sought. Haphazard, unplanned attempts at subject correlation, which are sometimes characteristic of the less experienced classroom teacher, or of the poor teacher, makes for waste of time pupil confusion, a loss of student interest and a failure to achieve desired results.

Integration -

Integration ¹ is achieved as a result of correlation and an inter-correlation of subject matter, both within and without organized fields of knowledge. Primarily, it is a function of the intellectual and emotional life of the individual, working in pleasing combination.

Subject Matter -

Subject matter is conceived of as being any

¹ Floyd, O. R. - Selecting and Organizing the Contents of an Integrated Curriculum.
Page 577.

material either in printed form, or otherwise, used by the teacher in bringing about the desirable changes and developments necessary in the education of his pupils. While it is generally accepted by the leading educators that the organized fields of knowledge furnish the best source of subject matter. It is also known that much valuable subject matter is found in the unorganized fields abounding in one's environment or in society.

The nine commonly accepted organized fields of knowledge from which subject matter is culled are: Social studies, science, commerce, mathematics, physical and health Education, foreign languages, fine arts, practical arts and agriculture.

From these large fields our schools draw the subject matter of their curricula; the subjects or courses selected depending on local conditions. Each of the subject-matter fields represents a valuable means of interpreting social institutions, based on the assumption that the school has accepted or should accept as one of its important responsibilities, the job of interpreting to the pupils' life in our society, or training them to live more wisely in the present as well as the future society. In many instances the less thoughtful of our educators have not recognized this responsibility - the tendency being to conceive the aims of education in terms of subject matter.

The Unit - CHAPTER II

Henry C. Morrison in *The Practice of Teaching in Secondary School*, has defined the learning unit as a comprehensive and significant aspect of the environment of an organized science of an art, or conduct, which being learned, results in an adaptation of personality. More specifically, as applied to the high school, a unit may be defined as any division of subject matter, large or small which when mastered gives the learner an insight into, and an appreciation of, or a mastery over some aspects of life.

Many persons fail to realize that subject matter has been divided into units from the earliest times, and that this process is likely to continue as long as schools exist. When subject matter is divided by any arrangement for assimilation and mastery, it becomes a series of units.

Of the above subjects, American History and World History are required, but the student may substitute a course in Economics and Civics for the same. Latin History, an elective, is open only to seniors, 31 and 32 students.

Of the above subjects, American History and World History are required, but the student may substitute a course in Economics and Civics for the same. Latin History, an elective, is open only to seniors, 31 and 32 students.

Science courses offered in the high school are as follows: I. Chemistry, 1 and 2; II. Physics, 1 and 2; III. Biology, 1 and 2; IV. General Science, 1 and 2.

CHAPTER II

THE HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Analytical Review of Course Offerings in the
Booker T. Washington High School, Dallas, Texas -

The course offerings in the Booker T. Washington High School in Dallas, Texas with the exception of physical education and agriculture, are those of the usual subject-matter fields. These are social studies, natural science, commerce, mathematics, English, foreign languages, fine arts and practical arts.

The social studies include the following required and elective courses, I. World History, 1 and 2; Modern European History, 3 and 4; Ancient and Medieval History; United States History, 1 and 2; Texas History, 7 and 8; Negro History. II. Social Science, Community Civics (Social Science 1), Vocational Civics (Social Civics 2). III. General Civics.

Of the above subjects, American History and World History are required, but the student may substitute a course in Economics and civics for the same. Negro History, an elective, is open only to seniors, 4A and 4B students.

Science courses offered in the high school are as follows: I. Chemistry, 1 and 2; II. Physics, 1 and 2; III. Biology, 3 and 4; IV. General Science, 1 and 2;

and V. Physiology.

One unit in each, - Physics, Chemistry, and Biology, is required. The Booker T. Washington High School offers the following commercial or business subjects

I. Commercial Arithmetic, 1 and 2; II. Elementary Business, 1 and 2; III. Accounting, 1 and 2; IV. Commercial Law; and V. Economics. All of these subjects are electives, earning one-half unit each for the semester's work.

Mathematics, an important subject field in this school, carries as its offerings the following courses:

I. General Mathematics, 1 and 2; II. Algebra, 1, 2, 3, 4; III. Plane Geometry, 1 and 2; IV. Solid Geometry; V. Trigonometry.

One unit in general mathematics, or one and one half units in Algebra plus one unit in Plane Geometry, are the requirements set up for the pupils. First year pupils must take one of these subjects; and college entrance pupils are required to take Algebra 4.

English is unquestionably the main subject field in the High school, being the largest department with the largest number of teachers, and is required throughout the high school. English courses are required as the "core"¹ of the curriculum. Course offerings are as follows: I. English, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8; II. Journalism, 1

¹ Williams, L. V. - Handbook - page 10.

and 2. English 5 is American Literature; while English 6 is composition. Three units in English are required of all high school students, and four units for college entrance students. Journalism is offered only to senior students.

Spanish 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 and Latin 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 make up the foreign language field. None of these courses are required for graduation, although they constitute popular electives among the students.

Music, the only offering of the Fine Arts field, although not a major subject in this school, yielding only one-fourth credit for the semester's work, has proved, nevertheless, to be one of the best liked fields of the high school curriculum. Much of its popularity is believed to grow out of the tendency to link this subject with extra-curricula activities.

The music courses offered are music 1, 2, 3, 4; chorus, band, glee clubs, boys chorus, and music appreciation. Each of these subjects earn one-fourth unit for a semester's work, and not more than one unit can be earned by the student during his four years in high school. Any extra work done in music goes without additional credit.

With such fields as English and mathematics, the practical arts make up two distinct departments, namely, Home Economics and manual training. In the former are found the following courses: Foods 1 and 2; clothing 1, 2, and 3; Home Economics 5 (maidcraft); Home Economics 6 (child care); Home Economics

7 (home planning); and Home Economics 8, (home management). Each of these subjects, being major in content, earns one-half unit for the semester's work. None are required for graduation.

The manual training department offers the following shop courses: Shop 1, 2, 3, and 4. All courses involve phases of woodwork, and being major in content, earn one-half credit toward graduation.

Industrial arts courses easily offer the most popular, practical, and best liked course of electives in the high school, indicating the definite trend toward a more practical and useful type of high school training among the students.

Curriculum Revision in the Booker T. Washington High School and how it Functions Toward Correlation and Integration -

Well before the state-wide program of curriculum revision was launched, the Booker T. Washington High School faculty, working under its professional advancement committee, had begun its study of curriculum revision. Faculty committees were appointed to work and report on various phases of the subject, using as their basis for the study prevailing school conditions, and as their main laboratory - school, home and community life.

Throughout the study, emphasis was laid on the social-civic responsibility of the training for wiser living and the study was carried out from this point of view

as the basic idea. The different committees drew up aims and objectives for the various high school course offerings - always basing their work on social needs.

One of the proposals stressed by the committee was the removal of the various subjects as a means of realizing the broader social purpose of Secondary Education.

Learning materials are still presented in the form of organized bodies of subject matter, enlisting and encompassing as fully as possible, pupil interest.

The committee as well as the entire personnel of the faculty, is not sold on the idea of allowing pupils unrestrained freedom in the selection of their learning materials or projects; but believe that this should be the job of the teacher. Improvement, however, was recommended in the matter of using organized information, securing a sound, comprehensive point of view, and carrying out the various methods of instruction.

The committees' work thus gradually began to involve concentrated attention on the unit as an instructional tool. After some considerable study of this one item, it was the consensus of opinion that the unit was the most adequate instructional tool yet found by the teachers. Further study and experimentation only served to establish the unit in the school as the principal tool of instruction.

As a result of curriculum revision in the school, the unit assignment has become generally adapted in class-

room practices. Regardless of various individual methods of presentation used by the teacher, the general lesson plan is characterized by unit assignment.

The Departmental Plan -

The departmental plan, characterized mainly by committees is the most important feature in the high school organization, as it relates itself to the curriculum and classroom instruction. The chairmen, selected and appointed by the principal, act as co-ordinating supervisors and general steering agents for the teacher of their subject field. The important work of the committees may be mentioned, - the checking upon classroom activities - teaching practices, and pupils response and achievements. The committee is chiefly concerned in the improvement of the general instructional program.

Remedial practices, tests and measurements, and co-operation with other departments in the matter of subject correlation and integration are done largely through departmental activities with members or instructors of the particular department or departments.

The value of correlation and integration may be easily seen in such a flexible arrangement, and the method has proved highly important in this respect alone. Besides this, it is conservative of school time.

CHAPTER III

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

The Principal -

The high school principal stands as the administrator and co-ordinator of the high school departments and their activities in the curriculum and the extra-curricula. He appoints departmental heads, and is generally consulted in important procedures being considered by the teachers. Reports of departmental work are made to him for any suggestions or recommendations.

The principal has at hand full information regarding classroom activities, and is, therefore, in position to select and evaluate those procedures and practices which seem best to lend themselves to effective correlation and integration. Accordingly, he acts as the director and supervisor of subject correlation and integration. One of the important activities of the high school principal in this connection is that of pointing out and interpreting to classroom instructors newly discovered educational methods that hold integrating possibilities.

The School Supervisor -

Since the supervisor is directly concerned with classroom instruction, the departmental plan is well adapted to his work. Frequent contacts are made by him with departmental chairmen. This may be done during or after classroom visits. He is often called into group

meetings to discuss or explain problems arising in the daily instructional program; and serve as a central administrator between the school and the general administration.

The Student Council -

The student council was organized recently and has had little opportunity to prove its worth. Primarily, it is designed to serve as a strong social factor in integration. Composed of outstanding or leading students, selected for their officers by the student body, the student council is representative of student self-government in the school. Here full opportunity is given through actual experience in citizenship and practice for the pupils to round out their personalities. Here academic ability is used along with knowledge gained through the child's experiences at home, and school, and in community life. Opportunity is also given for character training which must be had in developing the whole child.

Because of the chance for full and free expression, and of unlimited activity along many varied lines, the student council is expected to make an important contribution to the program of correlation and integration.

CHAPTER IV

CLASSROOM PRACTICES IN CORRELATION AND INTEGRATION

The Unit Assignment and the Project Method -

Prior to its work of curriculum revision some four or five years ago, the Booker T. Washington High School faculty made considerable use of the project method of lesson instruction. The project is perhaps the earliest method employing the unit assignment. For some fifteen years, dating from 1916 to about 1930, this plan was widely recommended by educators and used by classroom teachers.

According to Bode,¹ - "A project was regarded as a very specific kind of teaching or learning unit, which involved something done for its own sake - learning itself being incidental. Defining it further, the 'project' is a unit of work holding the intrinsic interest of the pupil".

The project method was first used in the Industrial Arts and Home Economics classes in the Washington High School. It was later adapted by science and other classes. Among the student activities engaged in under the method were such projects as: the making of a dress, baking a cake, building library furniture, making soap, and

¹ Bode - Modern Educational Theories.
Page 150.

ink.

While the method was successful in some instances, it had certain definite limitations. It could not be applied well in the departments; it failed to enlist sufficiently wide pupil interest; and it was not adaptable to all phases of school work, and activities.

Another special difficulty of the method as encountered by the classroom instructors was that many of the course offerings did not lend themselves very well to a method which emphasized, as did this method, incidental learning. This developed among the teachers a tendency to define as a project many activities that were in actuality not projects. This, of course, brought about considerable confusion in classroom aims and methods.

Despite these unquestionable disadvantages and shortcomings, however, the project method lent itself very well to subject correlation, though not as wide in scope as later methods. For these differentiated assignments, short "units" were usually employed by instructors. The supplementary projects assigned to the different pupils acted as strong correlative factors. Little integration, however, was accomplished, partly because no one had yet realized this larger end to be sought.

The project method in this school is a notable example of the failure of a procedure to meet changing demands. Instead of being wholly abandoned by classroom instructors, it was incorporated in another more advanced

method which is now in use.

The Laboratory Plan -

Curriculum revision in the Booker T. Washington High School brought on a gradual disuse of the project method which evolved into the broader and more effective Laboratory Plan, now in use in the school. The Laboratory method was adapted out of the efforts of teachers to render their technique to a school that was attempting to function under inadequate conditions during a period of rapid growth and expansion.

The laboratory method was introduced out of the natural desire to improve the general instructional program in the matter of wider correlation and integration.

The Booker T. Washington High School now makes wide use of the Laboratory Plan. Excellent examples of its workings may be seen in units in the English, Foreign Languages, social studies, and music departments as well as in the well known Home Economics, shop and science classes. All the laboratory tools available are assembled for student activities under this plan.

Unit assignments are differentiated according to the pupils abilities, needs, previous experiences, and immediate school and home environments. Pupil interest does play a major part at this point.

At the beginning of the unit, the following steps are taken by teachers: (1) Outlining to pupils directions for study; (2) giving reading references;

(3) Listing supplementary projects; (4) Outlining minimum essentials; (5) Giving time allotments; (6) Listing laboratory tools to be used; (7) Suggesting sources of information outside the classroom.

The more formal assignments also include as a rule: (1) An approach to the units; (2) A statement of objectives, (3) A list of basic questions; (4) Explanations that may be necessary; (5) A vocabulary list; (6) Experiments to be performed; (7) Topics for discussion during or after the completion of the unit. Sometimes this may consist of dramatizations, demonstrations, or similar activities; (8) Special difficulties to be watched for; (9) Assignment of individual reports; (10) Suggested Correlation with other subjects; and (11) A final Test.

Under this arrangement, the textbook is usually discarded, being used only as a sort of guide for mastery of units. In some cases, as in science, shop, and Home Economics, it is completely discarded. Some instructors use the textbook intermittently, or periodically.

Once assigned their unit, the pupils are given the fullest possible freedom in working toward its completion. Here pupil interest is manifested voluntarily, - the usual tendency being for the pupil to explore those fields of knowledge, and to engage in those activities in the realization of the unit that appeals to his interest. During the time allotted for the working out of the unit, the pupil becomes a vital wide-awake, alert individual,

displaying every personal trait, and developing himself along various lines.

The Laboratory method is the most valuable method yet used in the school for correlation and integration. Its chief characteristics are along unit assignment, a wide variety of activities, a large number of laboratory tools, and freedom in the methods and materials used in working out the unit.

The facilities offered by the library in facilitating work correlation and integration are its book collections, and progress of instruction in the use of books. Directing these, is a well organized library staff, headed by the librarian, and including as assistants librarians, and student assistants. All of these workers possess their special duties in regard to pupils and classroom teachers.

The book collection is of first importance in the library and care is being taken to have the shelves well balanced collection in the various fields of knowledge. The success of the work program of subject correlation and integration depends on the quality, quantity and adaptability of this collection.

CHAPTER V

PLACE OF THE HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY IN THE PROGRAM

How the Library Functions Toward Correlation and Integration -

The library in the Booker T. Washington High School is centrally organized and administered. Its chief aims, as stated by the librarian, are enrichment of subject matter or the curriculum, training in the use of the library and providing worthy leisure time. Regarding either separately or combined, these aims embody and imply correlation and integration on all sides. Library activities, accordingly, are strongly correlative and integrable.

The facilities offered by the library in realizing such correlation and integration are its book collections, and program of instruction in the use of books.

Directing these, is a well organized library staff, headed by the librarian, and including an assistant librarian, and student assistants. All of these workers perform their special duties in service to pupils and classroom teachers.

The book collection is of first importance in the library. And care is being taken to keep on the shelves a well balanced collection in the various fields of knowledge. The success of the whole program of subject correlation and integration depends on the quality, quantity and administration of this collection.

The students are required to familiarize themselves with all these tools, for they must be brought into daily use in working out lesson assignments.

Under the librarian's instructions, some time with the teacher's assistance, lessons are given in such phases as arrangement and classification of the library, the card catalog and the use of dictionaries and encyclopedias.

Through this instruction, students gain a clear understanding of the uses to be made of books and all other library materials, and their relation to classroom work. Here they are able to sense at last the curriculum as a unit instead of a conglomeration of course offerings. Correlation is unlimited under this scheme and integration is the natural outcome.

Library Classroom Co-operation -

Every means is used by the library to interest and motivate classroom teachers in its work. Among the methods used are library publicity, classroom visits, voluntary services to clubs, club sponsors and home-room advisers - inviting teachers to give book reviews, holding class recitations in the library and to take pupils on library excursions, or to send pupils to the library for some library program.

Once the support of teachers has been secured, the work of correlation and integration of learning activities proceeds smoothly. The librarian acquainted with

unit assignments in all classrooms, selects the materials that make for subject correlation and enrichment. Integration is made possible through the methods employed by librarians and classroom teachers in presenting the materials to the pupils. If this is done skilfully and with a clear conception of the aims sought, the program succeeds. Fortunately, the work is well presented in the Booker T. Washington High School.

Methods employed by teachers to co-operate with the library include the following: (1) Acquainting the librarian with the lesson assignments and classroom activities; (2) Posting reference and supplementary reading lists in the library; (3) Assisting the librarian in library instruction; (4) Following up pupils' library activities; (5) Making bibliographies in the library; (6) Sending extra reading materials to the library; (7) Reserving books; (8) Selling the library to pupils and to disinterested teachers and (9) Contacting the teachers of other schools through the library.

Very often the teachers themselves, sensing the possibilities in a combined attempt at subject correlation, make their plans and present them to the librarian collectively. Cases of this type are found in the following examples which were observed: English and Home Economics are correlated with science while literature is correlated with history.

CHAPTER VI

THE EXTRA-CURRICULA

Scope of the Extra-Curricula and its Functioning
Toward Correlation and Integration of Subject
Matter -

Booker T. Washington High School is well "sold" on the extra-curricula activities as an important part of the educational program. Its most enthusiastic supporter is the principal, who believes that very little differences exist between the curriculum and the extra-curricula. A look at the extra-curricula here further tends to confirm this stand.

After some ten years of constant growth and development, the extra-curricula in this school now embraces the following clubs: Forensic (debating); Quill (poetry), Ambassadors (school chorus); Spanish club; Library club; Better Home-Makers Club; Handicraft; Philosophic Club, Science Club; Hi Y; Girls Reserves; Boy Scouts; English Club.

Since club sponsors are appointed from the teaching staff, a strong relationship exists at all times between curricula and extra-curricula activities. It is often difficult to distinguish between the regular course offerings and the extra-course offering. It may be seen in numerous activities of the music, Spanish, Better Home-Makers, and Science Clubs. Indeed the correlation and

integration are often so effective in aims and outcomes, that they sometimes surpass the curricula offerings.

Because of the wide student interest in such activities, and the enthusiasm with which they enter them, it is possible to bring about integration of the finest type. Here every conceivable resource of school, home, and community is thoroughly explored and utilized by the pupil.

The extra-curricula must be reckoned with, therefore, when attempting to discuss correlation and integration in the school.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

That subject matter is being effectively correlated and integrated in the Booker T. Washington High School, Dallas, Texas, is proved by an examination into the inner workings of the school. Without going into numerous detailed examples and specific instances of classroom activities in this respect, a brief study of the methods employed by classroom instructors, together with a look at the complete high school organization and set-up, imply a program of effectively strong correlation and integration throughout the high school curriculum and extra-curricula. Further substantiating this are the larger combined activities of the school, which are often so broad in scope, purpose, and results that they become a part of the community life and thought.

The present organization of the school, and the way in which classroom work is supervised and administered show that the high school faculty is consciously making use of well established practices in subject integration as advocated by our leaders. It is easy to believe, too, that the teachers have adapted sound philosophies of education, growing out of rightly conceived, and correctly interpreted ideas concerning education of today. By continuous study and experiment, they seem to be evolving a highly efficient method of classroom technique that must finally reflect itself in pupils' achievements.

It is proved, by observation, that aiding the classroom teachers in their work, is a well organized smoothly operating administrative set-up which includes the principal and his office force, counseling officers, study hall teachers, club sponsors, and student council officials help comprise this group.

Although noting final can be said of the value of the Laboratory Method as used by classroom instructors, its wide acceptance by teachers and its popularity among the students indicate that it is serving the purpose for which it was adapted. Especially is it believed to be the best instructional tool for that part of the educational program which depends on and relates itself to course offerings and classroom procedures. The teachers, who have been seeking broader means of expression for their pupils and more effective methods for themselves, find this the best method yet introduced in the school.

There is every reason to suppose that as a result of the present success of the school in expressing itself more definitely and more broadly as a compelling force in community life - interpreting to pupils their place in the social and economic structure, and training them for worthwhile participation in it - the school has entered a new epoch in its growth and development as a leading high school for Negroes in the state and the nation.

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