

Set directions

"A good teacher will have definite goals." The master teachers state that these goals apply both to the teacher and to the student. Goals cannot be set too early. One teacher has this philosophy: "Although goal-setting and evaluation are daily functions, I like to make long-range plans about July 1. A new teaching year begins then and this is a good time to set goals for the coming year for myself and the program."

The direction teachers set for themselves should be realistic, attainable, and tailored for the individual. Claims one teacher, "Success is possible for the teacher of agriculture if he or she is willing to apply himself/herself to the job, develop courses that fit the needs of the students, and at the same time develop a schedule the given teacher can manage. Don't look at someone who is teaching and say, 'I have to do everything they are doing or I won't be successful.' Use others for ideas, not for duplication, and let your own personality show in your teaching."

Evaluate performance

No teacher can improve without asking the question (and carefully considering the answers), "How am I doing?" "Evaluating the past year," suggests one teacher, "will help to revise the curriculum and prepare yourself educationally and mentally for the coming year."

Students also need to develop the ability to self-evaluate. A good teacher will help them develop this ability. Some advice about this help is given by a teacher, who urges "... a teacher to be a little fussy. Students who don't do a good job according to their abilities do it again."

Develop a positive attitude

There's no question in the minds of our master teachers that a teacher's degree of success is affected by his/her attitude. As summed up by one teacher, "... teaching excellence ... involves ... a very healthy, positive attitude about one's self, one's students, and the job purpose. A positive mental attitude is hard to conceal; it is almost contagious. It is 'caught' not only by the students, but also by nearly everyone else with whom the teacher comes in contact."

Helping students develop a positive attitude toward learning is also the mark of teaching excellence. States one teacher, "I keep a sign in front of the classroom which reads, 'Learning is fun,' and learning really is fun. Sometimes, those of us who teach work at making it (learning) dull, monotonous, and a drudgery." This same teacher echoes an earlier premise, "... teaching excellence ... involves a caring attitude, a desire to do your best, and taking pride in your work."

Conclusions

What the master teachers have told us about teaching excellence seems to be this: excellent teaching involves more than the traditionally advocated characteristics/traits enumerated by professionals such as

Rosenshine and Furst (1971), and taught in the usual college pedagogical courses. Teaching excellence centers around the relationship between the teacher, the student, and the job. Teaching is student-centered; the objectives of the teacher, the motivation to act, the evaluation of teacher performance, all start and end with the student. Perhaps the orientation of new teachers in our colleges ought to give more emphasis to the development of the ingredients for teaching excellence seen as so important by these master teachers.

References Cited

Rosenshine, Barak, & Furst, Norma. 1971. Research on teacher performance criteria. In B.O. Smith (Ed.), *Research in Teacher Education: A Symposium*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Whatever Happened? To The Field Trip

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A field trip, when properly carried out, may be one of the best devices in making instruction more effective and relevant. While most audio-visual and teaching methods textbooks have contained information relative to institutionally sponsored field trips, and trips have been a part of the instructional programs for years, many college teachers seem to hesitate to use such trips for reasons that reach far beyond college budget considerations.

Some college teachers feel that the planning and problems connected with a field trip fail to justify the learning that takes place. On the other hand, many teachers, with well-planned field trips, have felt very positive with the outcomes.

College teachers should not expect learning to take place only within the confines of the four walls of a building. College teachers must be encouraged to gain experience in utilizing field trips in their instructional programs in all classes at all levels. Most college teachers seem to perceive the positive aspects of the field trip experience with regard to their present program, but appear preoccupied with their regular program efforts which may restrict the use of field trips. Some teachers would rather make assignments and correct papers than organize, promote, conduct, and evaluate a field trip.

Teaching and learning must be based upon information that is both intelligent and environmentally accurate. This needed knowledge can be obtained from daily experiences, some from activities provided from outside of the classroom.

Mendenhall (1967) suggests that there are five types of field trips: (1) the local field trip, (2) the community field trip, (3) the tour, (4) the in-

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tercollegiate visit, and (5) the individual trip. He explains each type as follows:

(1) The **local field trip** is the least difficult to arrange and usually lasts for one period or less. Local trips can be used to observe other class activities, study nature, visit a laboratory, or observe some selected activity on or nearby the campus. Transportation to and from the visit must be planned and schedules arranged and cleared in advance.

(3) The **tour** is a type of field trip that has become popular in many colleges and universities. It usually involves a trip of some distance and may last from a few days to several weeks. Groups use this type of a trip for short outings such as contests and judging or debate teams. The students are generally transported by specially chartered public transportation. Detailed plans are always an essential part of the planning.

(4) The **intercollegiate visit** is very similar to the community trip. Students may visit surrounding institutions in their area to observe and exchange ideas with other students with regard to preselected areas of interest. Planning and coordination between the two institutions must be carefully handled.

(5) In the **individual trip**, students in a class may be assigned or permitted to take a specific trip by themselves. The time and arrangements are usually made by the student as a part of the class requirement and a report is made to the class. Such a tour may allow a class the needed flexibility to meet the various interests of each individual.

All field trips must be carefully planned, effectively conducted, and systematically reviewed. Some suggested questions to be asked before taking a field trip include:

1. Will the field trip compliment classroom instruction?
2. Will there be adequate time available to meet the objectives of the field trip?
3. Is the field trip justifiable in regard to the students' needs and interests?
4. Will the field trip provide experiences which are not available to the students in other ways?
5. Will it be possible for students to be released from other classes if necessary?
6. Will transportation be a problem?

Answers to these questions should be determined before going ahead with plans for the field trip.

To justify the field trip, a number of benefits may be identified. Benefits that may be derived from a field trip include:

1. Provides firsthand information.
2. Gives realistic understanding of the world outside of the classroom.

3. Motivates for the topic under consideration.
4. Serves to bridge the gap between classroom theory and the real world.
5. Verifies what has been studied in the classroom.
6. Exposes the students to a broader range of career opportunities.
7. Offers opportunities for socialization of classwork before and after as well as during the trip.
8. Provides for the development of initiative, favorable attitudes, and appreciations.

A list of procedures and techniques could be developed for planning field trips. A few of the major points are:

1. Determine the values to be gained from the field trip.
2. Plan the trip to meet each objective.
3. Study the trip in detail to determine all the educational possibilities.
4. Prepare for the trip by setting the stage in classroom studies and by encouraging students to think about possible questions.
5. Develop a systematic plan for instruction during the field trip.
6. Visit the site ahead of the field trip — tell the host, if appropriate, what you wish to accomplish and what you would like to see and have discussed.
7. Encourage students to ask relevant questions during the field trip.
8. Devote a class period to considering the outcomes of the field trip.
9. Allow for both student and teacher evaluation of the field trip.

At the culmination of the field trip, both the students and the teacher should evaluate the field trip, as indicated. The trip should not be evaluated only in terms of the present class but also in terms of use with future classes. Major considerations in evaluating a field trip are:

1. Evaluate as soon as possible, otherwise important considerations will be forgotten.
2. If appropriate, write reports. These reports can also be used for public relations articles in the local newspaper, etc.
3. Compare the original objectives of the field trip with the outcomes.
4. Emphasize career implications during the field trip.
5. Display all items collected on the field trip for viewing by all students.
6. Write a letter of appreciation to the field trip host if appropriate.

¹Mendenhall, Elton B., "Organizing Industrial Tours" (unpublished Master's report, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, August 1967), pp. 12-13.