

A SUGGESTED UNITED STATES HISTORY OUTLINE
DESIGNED FOR SLOW LEARNERS

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Education degree
in the Department of Education
Montana State College
July, 1958

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

An examination of available literature on the teaching of the slow learner¹ has shown that while much has been written on methods of teaching the slow learner there has been a great lack of course outlines designed for special classes.

The general feeling among authorities that there is need for segregation of these students was expressed by Heck who stated of these slow learners:

Their academic ability is too low to enable them to profit from the regular school program; neither content nor methods would be suitable. When forced to compete with children of average or high I.Q., these pupils fail; they develop a failure complex toward life; ambition is either destroyed or never developed. They are virtually taught that they cannot succeed.²

General recognition among authorities as to the need for special course outlines for slow learner classes was typified by Davis:

Expecting the slow learner to assimilate our present-day courses is a big folly. Our courses must be made more basic and above all, must be vitalized to the point where they hold the interest and understanding of the student. Too many of our administrators

¹The term "slow learner" is defined here as a student who has an I.Q. of between 75 and 90.

²Heck, Arch O., The Education of Exceptional Children, p. 331.

and teachers are hide bound by the past and archaic practices. They are afraid to make changes in these time-honored courses for fear of criticism, but at the same time they realize that present courses are inadequate. The writer is advocating more down to earth, more humane, more realistic courses for the slow learner.³

The desire to provide a special course outline in United States History for this particular type of student led to the selection of the problem of this investigation.

The Problem

During the first year of teaching the writer became conscious of the problem of the slow learner's inability to benefit from the regular course offering in history. To arrive at an acceptable solution to this problem seemed to entail the use of special materials. While deciding what materials were usable two questions arose. The first of these was "What are the characteristic skills and traits of the slow learner?" Once the skills and traits were determined a second question evolved: "What specific subject matter materials are appropriate for their learning abilities?" It was decided to incorporate the findings into an outline of a specific course, United States History. Thus the topic of the present study, "A Suggested United States History Outline Designed for Slow Learners" was derived.

³Davis, Tom M., "Administrative Aspects of a Slow Learner Program," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin 41:91, October, 1957.

Procedures

The first procedure used in determining the traits and skills of this type of learner necessitated the setting up of some means of classifying the characteristic abilities of the slow learner in order to develop a basis for planning the rate of progress and determining the difficulty of subject matter that could be used. In doing this eight measureable traits and skills were selected as basic in judging the capacity to learn. Most of these were taken from those suggested by Bobbitt.⁴ The areas selected were as follows:

1. Vocabulary level
2. Reading ability level
3. Comprehension of concepts by verbal means
4. Abstract reasoning power
5. Comprehension of concepts by visual means
6. Memorization and retention span
7. Attention span
8. Repetition needed for permanent learning

These areas were used as guides in the location of materials during the investigation of literature.

Determining appropriate learning materials suggested the construction of a special course outline for United States

⁴Bobbitt, John Franklin, How to Make a Curriculum, pp. 44-59.

History tailored to the characteristic skills and traits of the slow learner. It was decided to construct such an outline for the United States History course with the subject material divided into units. This was to be followed by the making of a skeleton outline of subtopics and very specific points to be memorized or concrete questions to be answered within each unit. The first unit was to be expanded into detailed lesson plans to serve as an example to the classroom teacher and was designed to secure maximum learning for this type of learner.

Need for the Study

An examination of literature in the field of the slow learner has shown that it may be divided into three general areas. In none of the three areas were there answers to the questions posed in this problem.

Many studies made on this subject, such as those by Dressel⁵ and Keim⁶, have been concerned with the teaching of slow learners in general and have not dealt with one specific subject field.

⁵Dressel, Paul L., "Working With Youth of Below Average Ability," Personnel & Guidance Journal 34:348-350, February, 1956.

⁶Keim, Edwin B., "How Can the School Best Provide for the Slow Learner?," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin 41:77-81, April, 1957.

Studies, such as the one by D'Ambrosio⁷, have been concerned with activities in which the interest of the slow learner may be strengthened.

Other studies, such as those made by Blaha⁸ and Frederick⁹, have been concerned primarily with the evaluation of a single aspect of a program for the slow learner.

While the main objective of the study was to construct a course outline in United States History for the slow learner, the first part of the problem was a classification of the traits and skills of this particular type of learner through a review of literature. The findings of this review appear in Chapter Two.

⁷D'Ambrosio, Louis M., "Adjusting the Social Studies to the Non-Academically Inclined Child," High Points 34:13-18, January, 1952.

⁸Blaha, M. Jay, "How Shall We Select and Develop Appropriate Learning Experiences for the Slow Learner in the Senior High School?," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin 38:16-19, April, 1954.

⁹Frederick, Leo, "Questions Involved in Setting Up a Program for Slow Learners," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin 38:20-22, April, 1954.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Moskowitz, "The slow learner differs from the normal not so much in his desire to learn but in his capacity for, and rate of learning."¹ Thus it was decided that a valid course outline could be constructed for this type of student by tailoring it to no other requisites than specific learning traits and skills.

The survey was limited to literature concerned with slow learners of the age level² of primary interest in this study.

The eight specific traits and skills³ mentioned in the preceding chapter were chosen as guides in estimating the general ability of this particular type of student. It was believed that an evaluation of these characteristics would indicate where specific changes in normal course outlines must be made to adjust the learning material to this type of learner. One of the skills upon which learning was felt to

¹Moskowitz, Myron, "Teaching the Slow Learner," School Review 56:482, October, 1948.

²Fifteen to seventeen years of age.

³These were vocabulary level, reading ability level, comprehension of concepts by verbal means, abstract reasoning power, comprehension of concepts by visual means, memorization and retention span, attention span, and repetition needed for permanent learning.

be most dependent was the ability to understand and use vocabulary.

Vocabulary Level

There was general agreement among the authorities reporting in literature that the academic achievement of the slow learner was relatively low in vocabulary. Typical of the statements was that of Davis who wrote, "The slow learner suffers from vocabulary deficiency and inability to read."⁴

Important in this study was a knowledge of the degree of retardation in vocabulary. On this point there was a variance of opinion. A central estimate was given by Keim who placed it "at least two years below normal grade achievement when he arrives in high school."⁵

Enlargement of the slow learner's vocabulary in a history course is complicated by the number of difficult words in the field as Bolzau has stated:

Only seven history words are among the first five hundred easy words on the Thorndike list, and only six per cent of the first thousand on this list are history words.⁶

⁴Davis, op. cit., p. 91.

⁵Keim, op. cit., p. 78.

⁶Bolzau, Emma L., "Adapting American History to Slow Learners," Social Education 14:116, March, 1950.

A method of teaching vocabulary was suggested by Blaha in his statement that the slow learner should "keep a notebook including facts, vocabulary, spelling lists, and simple outlines."⁷

The need for finding more appropriate methods by which the vocabulary of this type of student may be enlarged was expressed by Roy:

Words are verbal symbols; the more methods we can find for making words meaningful to children the easier it will be for them to learn to read.⁸

Two things were indicated concerning the vocabulary level of the slow learner: (1) vocabulary must be taught on a level two to three years below the grade level and (2) the number of history words required for learning should be restricted to only the very necessary ones.

Another skill held to be important in classroom learning and interdependent with vocabulary level was reading ability level.

Reading Ability Level

Of particular importance in a history course is the ability to read. The low status of the slow learner in

⁷Blaha, op. cit., p. 18.

⁸Roy, Isabel, "Enriching Backgrounds of Retarded Readers," The Instructor 67:36, February 1958.

this area was vaguely described by several writers:

The slow learner suffers from vocabulary deficiency and the inability to read.⁹

Low intelligence is accompanied by relatively low accomplishment in reading, language, and other subjects which depend heavily upon language skills.¹⁰

The achievement of the slow learner is especially low in reading comprehension.¹¹

Slow learner reading will be below average in quality and quantity.¹²

In searching for an answer to the question "What is the reading level of the slow learner in numerical terms ?" a variety of answers were found. Levisohn estimated the slow learner "to have reached a reading level of sixth grade by the time entry into high school is attained."¹³ Allingham made the assertion that the slow learners rate of progress "approximates five-sixths of the average child."¹⁴ This

⁹Davis, op. cit. , p. 91.

¹⁰National Education Association Research Bulletin, "High School Methods with Slow Learners" 21:61, October, 1943.

¹¹Keim, op. cit. , p. 61.

¹²NEA Research Bulletin, op. cit. , p. 61.

¹³Levisohn, Hortense H., "What Program for the Slow Learner ?," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin 33:62, May, 1949.

¹⁴Allingham, R. Bruce, "What are Secondary Schools Doing to Develop a Program for the Slow Learner ?," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin 40:261, April, 1956.

would place the reading level of the student involved in this study at about eighth grade level. It seemed that the latter was a valid estimate to use. The fact that the reading interest level of a slow learner is nearer his grade level than is his reading ability level led Holt to point out the need for having reading materials for both interest and comprehension:

A prime essential in working with the slow learner is simplification of materials and methods both in terms of abilities and interests. We need to collect a library of books at different reading levels and interest levels.¹⁵

In relation to the reading ability of the slow learner literature revealed two points: (1) reading ability level will be at least three years below grade level and (2) reading interest levels will vary within a class but will generally be nearer to grade level than will the reading ability level.

Dependent upon both vocabulary and reading levels and believed to be important as a guide in judging learning ability was the slow learners' faculty to comprehend concepts by verbal means.

¹⁵Holt, Charles C., "How Can the School Best Provide for the Slow Learner?", National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin 41:163, April, 1957.

Comprehension of Concepts by Verbal Means

The authors that were consulted in determining the skill of the slow learner to comprehend concepts by verbal means were in general agreement with the idea of Kleinhenz, that this type of student is decidedly limited in this particular area because of inability to deal in abstractions:

The capacity to develop skills involving verbal facility is limited by a demonstrated inability to form and apply abstract ideas.¹⁶

Kleinhenz further described a point of diminishing returns for abstract concepts in which advancement would probably not go much beyond fourth grade level:

The slow learner is so awkward in grasping necessary concepts for abstraction that there is doubt whether verbal skills will progress beyond the third or fourth grade level.¹⁷

Obviously if verbal skills remain at the fourth grade level, the comprehension of concepts by verbal means will progress further only with special attention to concrete learning experiences. Summarizing the feeling in this area

¹⁶ Kleinhenz, Francis A., "Defence of the Less Gifted," The Clearing House 32:80, October, 1957

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 81.

was the statement of Connelly that "learning experiences must be personalized, specific, and concrete."¹⁸

Found to be closely associated with comprehension of concepts by verbal means was the ability to reason abstractly. An evaluation of this skill seemed necessary and was taken up next.

Abstract Reasoning

There seemed to be general agreement of the authorities with Frederick that the slow learners ability to think abstractly is greatly limited:

His intellectual grasp, particularly as it relates to abstractions, is decidedly limited.¹⁹

This limitation becomes even more pronounced as the reasoning becomes involved. Allingham observed the fact that confusion arises when the slow learner is extended to think abstractly:

The slow learner prefers concrete, practical learning. He becomes confused when involved with reference work from multiple sources, generalizing, and developing abstract concepts.²⁰

¹⁸Connelly, George W., "What are Secondary Schools Doing to Develop a Program for the Slow Learner ?," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin 40:263, April, 1956.

¹⁹Frederick, op. cit., p. 19.

²⁰Allingham, op. cit., p. 261.

The student, unable to comprehend abstractions, naturally dislikes to deal in them and prefers the concrete and practical:

Slow learners prefer concrete or practical learning to the abstract or general.²¹

Most slow students desire to manipulate the concrete rather than understand the abstract.²²

Holt recognized the immediacy of goals as being important in setting up a course for the slow learner:

He must have more immediate goals and less abstract materials than the fast learner.²³

Indications are that the slow learner should be given little work involving abstract reasoning.

The attempt to find an alternative method of teaching much of the material ordinarily offered through verbal means and employing abstract reasoning led to the review of literature concerned with comprehension of concepts by visual means.

²¹Moskowitz, op. cit., p. 478.

²²Baker, Harry J., "Helping the Slow Learner," National Education Association Journal 39:179, March, 1950.

²³Holt, op. cit., p. 162.

Comprehension of Concepts by Visual Means

The difference between the intellectual capacity of the slow learner and that of the average pupil seems to be less pronounced in the area of visual conception than in any other. Making a favorable comparison of visual and auditory perception between the slow learner and the average learner was Moskowitz who stated, "In visual and auditory perception there is little difference between the two groups."²⁴ The NEA Research Bulletin²⁵ presented material that agreed with this statement. Defining this ability in terms of teaching, Levisohn suggested useful projects in the statement, "The slow learner profits from the graphic and the specific, audio-visual aids, excursions, and first-hand experiences."²⁶

Kelly and Stevens advocated audio-visual aids in teaching the slow learner as motivational as well as educational devises:

Audio-visual and kinesthetic aids have been found to be excellent not only in supplementing the

²⁴Moskowitz, op. cit., p. 477.

²⁵NEA Research Bulletin, op. cit., p. 62.

²⁶Levisohn, op. cit., p. 64.

educational material available but also in motivating the pupil in various learning activities.²⁷

Two useful inferences were drawn from literature in this area: (1) the slow learner can learn better by visual means than by verbal means and (2) visual aids should be used extensively in a slow learner program.

History is a field in which much memorization and retention of material has been expected of the student. Therefore that area was chosen as the next topic for investigation.

Memorization and Retention Span

Limitations of the slow learner in the capacities of memorization and retention have been recognized by several writers and are typified by the statements, "The slow learner has a short memory span"²⁸ and "The slow learner possesses limited attentive and retentive powers."²⁹

²⁷Kelly, Elizabeth M.; and Stevens, Harvey A., "Slow Learners," The 49th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, p. 252.

²⁸Bolzau, op. cit., p. 116.

²⁹Moskowitz, op. cit., p. 477.

The significance of these limitations, that impaired reasoning ability results, was brought out in a statement by Moskowitz:

There is a marked differentiation in the reasoning processes of the average and the slow learner. The slow learner is handicapped by not being able to remember experiences against which to test possible solutions to problems.³⁰

Here again this type of pupil, not being able to memorize or retain well, was pointed to as expressing a "desire for short simple units of work."³¹

In order to allow the slow learner to succeed it was concluded, as Bolzau suggested, that frequent tests should be given.

Findings in literature regarding the area of memorization and retention were: (1) the slow learner has a short memory and limited retentive powers and (2) frequent tests over short units are desirable.

It is generally accepted that permanent learning results most quickly when the learner is attentive. A desire to classify the attention span of the slow learner led to the investigation of this trait.

³⁰Ibid. , p. 477

³¹Baker, op. cit., p. 179.

Attention Span

Curtis gave the impression that the slow learner is impatient and has a short attention span:

The dull-normal pupil is characteristically impatient of delay and is inclined to lose interest unless he is conscious of steady progress.

The attention span of dull-normal pupils is short. Two or three major changes of activity must be made during each class period.³²

A more definite time limit on the attention span of the slow learner was pointed out in a statement by Bolzau that the teacher must "change the type of work about every twenty minutes."³³

It would seem to be desirable to employ several teaching methods, a variety of specific projects, and many types of assignments. These should be used alternatively, two or three during each class period.

Since the attentive and retentive powers of the slow learner have been shown to be below normal, it was thought that perhaps much repetition would be necessary for permanent learning to take place.

³²Curtis, F. D., "Specific Suggestions for Teaching Dull-Normal Pupils," School Review 44:526-27, September, 1936.

³³Bolzau, op. cit., p. 117.

Repetition Needed for Permanent Learning

The great need for repetition in teaching the slow learners because of their ability to master only the simpler skills of associative learning was expressed by Baker:

They are capable of only the simpler forms of associative learning. They depend upon rote repetition or repeated drill as their surest method of learning.³⁴

The same feeling regarding the need for repetition and drill was found in the statement of Allingham:

The slow student learns by comparatively simple mental processes. Drill and repetition, judiciously administered, are necessary to fix his learning.³⁵

Curtis suggested that in dealing with this type of student "it is a good practice to intersperse a discussion with frequent summaries"³⁶ and Heck³⁷ felt that constant repetition must be made.

It was definitely the agreement of the writers that part of each class period should be devoted to drill and repetition of important points.

³⁴Baker, op. cit., p. 178.

³⁵Allingham, op. cit., p. 261.

³⁶Curtis, op. cit., p. 528-29.

³⁷Heck, op. cit., p. 331.

These reports from literature have shown several specific provisions which must be made in a special course for slow learners. Particular care must be taken to offer reading and vocabulary work on the students level of attainment, to use audio-visual means of teaching often, to test frequently over short units and to use a great deal of drill and repetition on material intended for permanent learning.

The next chapter will be devoted to the construction of a course outline of United States History using these eight characteristic skills and traits as criteria in choosing subject materials.

CHAPTER III

SKELETON COURSE OUTLINE OF UNITED STATES HISTORY
FOR SLOW LEARNERS BASED UPON EIGHT
SPECIFIC SKILLS AND TRAITS

Three objectives were kept in mind in constructing a skeleton course outline for the slow learner in United States History. They were:

1. To make the units of learning short.
2. To limit the required permanent learning to a few specific points.
3. In limiting the quantity of material to be covered, to keep the basic principles and values of the course intact.

Relative to the first objective, the usual content of United States History was divided into fifteen broad units. Each of these was found to contain too much material to be appropriate as a unit of learning for a course for slow learners. Therefore, each of these broad units was broken down into a number of sub-units¹ which were to be the units of learning in this plan. Tests were to be given at the end of each of the sub-units. Selection of units and sub-units were made so that any one of several textbooks could be used.

Relative to the second objective, a limited number of key questions² were formulated for each unit of learning.

¹These are designated by Roman numerals in the outline.

²These are designated by capital letters in the outline.

These indicate the specific points which the student will be held responsible for learning.

In connection with the third objective the question, "How much material shall be given in the course ?" was found to be answered in the statement of Allingham:

A course should provide the slow learner with a core of understandings and skills, constituting about sixty per cent of an average program.³

The basic principles and values that a United States History course should develop, most of which were listed by the National Council for the Social Studies, NEA⁴ are:

1. An appreciation for human achievement.
2. An appreciation of the American heritage.
3. An organized knowledge of the nations past.
4. An understanding of democracy.
5. An understanding of the nations place in the world.
6. A realization of the continuous changes that take place in our social, political, and economic views.

The first unit of the outline was expanded into lesson plans to serve as an example for the teacher. The other fourteen retain their skeletal nature.

³Allingham, op. cit., p. 261.

⁴National Council for the Social Studies, NEA, "A Guide to Content in Social Studies," National Elementary Principal 37:21-24, May, 1958.

Unit One - Colonial Days⁵

I. Discovery and colonization

- A. Who were some important early explorers?
- B. What nations planted colonies in North America?

II. Life of the colonists

- A. What were the principal occupations in the Southern colonies? The Middle colonies? The New England colonies?
- B. What were some of the forms of amusement found in colonial times?
- C. Describe the clothing worn by the average person in colonial times.

III. Development of self-government in the colonies

- A. What were the three types of English colonies?
- B. What were some causes of friction between the colonists and the English king?

Lesson plans for Unit One.

Length of unit: eight class periods of fifty minutes each.

First unit of learning⁶ (Discovery and colonization) - three class periods.

Names, places and terms
to recognize:

Americus Vespuccius
Francisco de Coronado
John Cabot
Lord Baltimore
Mayflower
pilgrim
puritan

Names, places and
terms to learn:⁷

Christopher Columbus
colonization
Jamestown
plantation
raw materials
William Penn

⁵To allow ease in reading single spacing was used throughout the outline.

⁶It was shown that the units of learning should be kept short on page 16 of this paper.

⁷That the number of history words required for learning should be restricted to only a few was shown on page 8 of this paper.

First class period:

Reading assignment⁸ (Early explorers; nations involved in colonization) - 15 minutes⁹

Discussion of reading assignment¹⁰ with emphasis on Columbus. Have oral map exercise on location of important nations involved in explorations.
- 20 minutes

Film showing¹¹ ("Christopher Columbus", an Encyclopaedia Britannica film; rental through Eastin Pictures Inc., Colorado Springs, Colorado.)
- 15 minutes

Second class period

Filmstrip showing with an integrated review¹² ("Age of Exploration", a Life magazine filmstrip of 50 frames in color; rental through Purdue University Library.) - 20 minutes

Reading assignment (Important early colonies and some of the men involved in setting up the colonies.) - 15 minutes

⁸On page 10 of this paper it was shown that reading materials selected for slow learners should be at least three years below the grade level in difficulty. This should be kept in mind when a textbook is being selected for this course.

⁹Two or three major changes of activity should be made during each class period as pointed out on page 17 of this paper.

¹⁰It was shown on page 15 that the slow learner can learn better by visual means than by verbal means. Since discussions involve verbal skills to a great degree, wide usage of visual material such as pictures and objects would seem advisable during these sessions.

¹¹That extensive use of visual aids should be employed was suggested on page 15 of this paper.

¹²It was shown on page 18 of this paper that much repetition is needed for permanent learning to take place.

Assign two oral reports on important men (William Penn and Lord Baltimore) of the colonial period to be given the following day (provide a reference to be used).

Discussion of the reading assignment with emphasis on Jamestown. - 15 minutes

Third class period:

Presentation of the oral reports that were assigned the day before. - 10 minutes

Review of material covered in the unit of learning and drill on the vocabulary selected to learn.
- 20 minutes

Quiz over the unit of learning.¹³ - 20 minutes

Second unit of learning (Life of the colonists) - two class periods

Names, places, and terms
to recognize:

almanac
cape
garrison
Harvard
house raising

Names, places and
terms to learn:

artisan
Benjamin Franklin
work bee

First class period:

Reading assignment (Cultural aspects of colonial life.) - 15 minutes

Discussion of colonial life with emphasis on the social life of the colonists. - 15 minutes

Filmstrip ("Life in Colonial America", a Classroom Review Filmstrip; rental through Montana State Department of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana.) - 20 minutes

¹³Frequent tests over short units were shown to be desirable on page 16 of this paper.

Second class period:

Reading assignment on the economy of the colonies.
- 15 minutes

Discussion of the reading assignment with emphasis
on the occupations in the three main areas of
English colonization. - 15 minutes

Review of unit of learning. - 5 minutes

Quiz on the unit of learning. - 15 minutes

Third unit of learning (Development of self government in the colonies) - four class periods

Names, places, and terms
to recognize:

Boston Massacre
charter
House of Burgesses
Mayflower Compact
minutemen
proprietor
quartering of troops
royal colony
Thomas Paine

Names, places, and
terms to learn:

democracy
representative
revenue
town meeting

First class period:

Reading assignment (Three types of colonial govern-
ment in the English colonies.) - 20 minutes

Discussion of the reading assignment. - 15 minutes

Writing assignment (an essay in the form of a
newspaper article on the three types of colonies).
- 15 minutes

Second class period:

Filmstrip showing with review integrated
("Colonial Government", an Encyclopaedia Britannica
filmstrip of 47 frames in color; rental through
Eastin Pictures Inc., Colorado Springs, Colorado.)
- 20 minutes

Reading assignment (concerning the friction between
the colonies and the English king.) - 15 minutes

Discussion of the reading assignment (with emphasis on the revenue problem.) - 15 minutes

Third class period:

Filmstrip showing with review integrated ("Development of the Thirteen Colonies", an SVE filmstrip of 41 frames in color; rental through Montana State Department of Public Instruction, Helean, Montana.) - 20 minutes

Drill on important points in unit of learning.
- 10 minutes

Quiz on unit of learning. - 20 minutes

The following fourteen units appear in skeleton form. They may be expanded into lesson plans just as Unit One was. Before this is attempted a close examination of the findings that appear in Chapter Two is suggested. The conscientious application of the findings to classroom situations should help the classroom teacher obtain desirable results with the slow learner.

Unit Two - The American Revolution

I. The immediate causes

- A. How were the colonists taxed by the English?
- B. Why was the First Continental Congress called?
- C. What important principle was set down by the Declaration of Independence?

II. The War for Independence

- A. What were two important contributions of George Washington during the Revolutionary War?
- B. How did France help the United States?
- C. What did the colonies gain from the war?

III. The Critical Period

- A. What is a confederation?
- B. What were some weaknesses of the central government under the Articles of Confederation?

Unit Three - Adoption of the Constitution

I. The Philadelphia Convention

- A. Name three noted delegates at the convention and the contributions of each.
- B. What is a constitution?

II. Drafting the Constitution

- A. What was the "Great Compromise"?
- B. Define the term "federal government".
- C. What is meant by "checks and balances"?

Unit Four - Growth of our National Government

I. Early developments

- A. What are the "Bill of Rights"?
- B. How did political parties develop in this period?
- C. What was the United States position on foreign relations as established by George Washington?

II. Jefferson in power

- A. Why did France sell the Louisiana Purchase?
- B. What was the purpose of the Lewis and Clark Expedition?

III. Further growth

- A. What did the War of 1812 prove as far as the United States was concerned?
- B. How did John Marshall's decisions affect the power of the United States Supreme Court?
- C. What countries besides the United States were affected by the Monroe Doctrine?

Unit Five - The Jacksonian Era

I. Social advancements

- A. How did free public schools develop?
- B. What changes made the United States a "reading nation"?

II. Economic opportunity

- A. Why was there an abundance of good, cheap land for sale?
- B. How was business developing during this period?
- C. Why was there said to be equality of economic opportunity?

Unit Six - Westward Expansion

I. Background

- A. How did the United States attain the Louisiana Territory?
- B. What were the boundaries of the United States at the time of the Louisiana Purchase?
- C. What lay west of the United States as it was then?

II. The Northwest

- A. Who were some important explorers in the Northwest?
- B. How did missionaries help in settling Oregon?
- C. Why was the Oregon Trail important to the region?

III. California

- A. How did the discovery of gold affect California's development?
- B. What three routes were open to the "Forty-niners"?

Unit Seven - The Civil War

I. The slavery system

- A. Why was the average slave more valuable on a plantation than anywhere else?
- B. How did the invention of the cotton gin affect slavery?
- C. How were slaves generally treated in the South?

II. Conflict between North and South

- A. How did the economies of the North and South differ?
- B. Why did the states of the "Deep South" secede?
- C. Compare the Confederate states with the states remaining in the Union as to number.

III. The war

- A. What was a "Reb"? A "Yankee"?
- B. In what ways did the North have the advantage in the war?

- C. What was the condition of the army of the Confederacy in the final months of the war?
Of the civilians in the Confederate states?

Unit Eight - Reconstruction

I. Lincoln's death

- A. Describe the career of Abraham Lincoln.
- B. What were Lincoln's views on reconstruction?
- C. How was Lincoln assassinated?

II. The tragic era

- A. Why was President Johnson's reconstruction plan opposed by Republican leaders in the North?
- B. What were carperbaggers and scalawags?
- C. What was the purpose of the Klu Klux Klan?
- D. How was "home rule" restored to the South?

Unit Nine - Age of Industry

I. Agriculture

- A. What is meant by the "agricultural revolution"?
- B. How did the use of improved farm machinery affect agriculture?
- C. Why did farmers influence Congress to regulate railroads?

II. Big Business

- A. Name several inventions which assisted the growth of nationwide businesses.
- B. Name some good effects resulting from consolidation of businesses.
- C. Name some bad effects resulting from consolidation of businesses.
- D. In what sections have American cities grown most rapidly?

III. Labor movement

- A. In what ways were wage earners worse off because of the rise of big business?
- B. Why did unions generally go to pieces during hard times?
- C. List the aims of labor unions.
- D. Why did labor leaders demand laws to curb immigration?
- E. How did the United States federal government first treat the labor unions?
- F. What type of wage earner belonged to the American Federation when it was first formed?

Unit Ten - The Progressive Era

I. Background

- A. Why were the common people discontented prior to this era?
- B. Name some "muckrakers" and the subjects on which they wrote.

II. Theodore Roosevelt

- A. What did Roosevelt mean by a "square deal"?
- B. What were two important things that Roosevelt advocated in the way of reforms?
- C. What was meant by "direct election of senators"?

III. Woodrow Wilson

- A. During Wilsons' administration what was done for labor? For the farmer?
- B. Summarize the accomplishments of the progressive movements in the following:
 - 1. popular control of the government
 - 2. attitude of big business toward the public
 - 3. regulation of business
 - 4. social reforms

Unit Eleven - United States as a World Power

I. Gaining Possessions

- A. How did the United States acquire Alaska?
- B. How did Americans become interested in the Hawaiian Islands?
- C. What affect did the Spanish-American War have on United States expansion?
- D. Why did the United States desire a canal across the isthmus of Panama?

II. Gaining influence

- A. What has protected the Caribbean nations from European countries?
- B. Of what importance are the small islands that are under the protection of the United States in the South Pacific?

Unit Twelve - World War I

I. World War I before the entry of the United States

- A. What causes for complaint did the United States have against Great Britain early in the war?
- B. Why did Germany decide on all out submarine warfare?

II. World War I after United States entry

- A. Why did the German high command think it must win its spring and summer offensive of 1918 or lose the war?
- B. Is it true that the United States was responsible for the defeat of the Central Powers in the war?

Unit Thirteen - Period Between the Wars

I. Failure to win the peace

- A. What was the League of Nations?
- B. What was the official United States attitude towards the League of Nations?
- C. Why did the League of Nations fail?

II. the twenties

- A. What contributed to the growth of big business in the twenties?
- B. Why did manufactured goods begin to pile up in the months before the "crash"?
- C. What were some of the fashions (clothing, cars, entertainment, and slang) during the twenties?

III. The depression

- A. What is a depression?
- B. Describe life in the early depression years.

IV. Franklin D. Roosevelt

- A. What were some of the steps taken to relieve the conditions of the depression when Roosevelt became president?
- B. How did labor benefit from the "New Deal"?
- C. What is meant by "social security"?
- D. Why did Franklin Roosevelt run for a third term?

Unit Fourteen - World War II

I. Causes

- A. How did Hitler rise to power?
- B. Why and when did Britain and France declare war on Germany?
- C. Why did Japan attack Pearl Harbor?

II. The part of the United States in World War II

- A. Why was rationing of some goods necessary in the United States during the war?
- B. How did the United States raise money to pay for World War II?

- C. Why did Russia keep calling on Britain and the United States to open a second front in Europe?
- D. How was Germany defeated?
- E. What were the principal objectives of the United States in the "Pacific Theatre" of the war?
- F. How did the dropping of the atomic bombs hasten the surrender of Japan?
- G. What were the terms of surrender of the Axis Powers?

Unit Fifteen - The United States as a World Leader

I. The United Nations

- A. What is the purpose of the United Nations?
- B. What was the part of the United States in the Korean Conflict?
- C. What have been some accomplishments of the United Nations?

II. The United States position today

- A. What is the purpose of United States aid to foreign nations?
- B. Why is defence such an important and costly item today?
- C. What is the present standard of living in the United States? In other countries of the world?

The writer has, in this chapter, attempted to construct a course outline in United States History for slow learners that will be useful to any classroom teacher. It is the belief of the writer that in using this outline the teacher should follow the advice of Bolzau in covering a few topics thoroughly:

Develop outstanding topics in detail rather than covering sketchily the whole gauntlet of the course. Details make the past real for the student.¹⁴

¹⁴Bolzau, op. cit., p. 115.

Elasticity was provided for in the construction of the outline so that any question, subtopic or unit may be altered or replaced by the teacher as available materials, need or inclination dictate.

A summary of the findings of the work and a list of the important conclusions arrived at during the study appear in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this study has been to construct a special course outline in United States History for slow learners tailored to the specific skills and traits of this type of student.

Summary

The first part of the study was a review of literature which showed that there is general agreement on the need for segregation of the slow learner and also for construction of special course outlines for classes of such students. It was shown that there are a number of characteristic abilities which are similar among slow learners. First the vocabulary level was found to be from two to three years below the grade level of the student. Secondly the reading level of this particular type of student was found to be characterized by a reading ability of at least three years below the grade level of the student but by a reading interest about on the grade level. Next it was found that while the slow learner can be expected to progress only to about fourth grade level in verbal skills and is unable to reason abstractly his capacity to learn by visual means will differ little from that of the average learner. Further it was shown that the slow learner, having a short memory span and limited

retentive powers, expresses a desire for short, simple units of work. The attention span of this type of student was found to be of a maximum length of approximately twenty minutes. Last of all the slow learner was shown to be characterized by a dependence upon rote repetition and repeated drill as the surest method of learning.

The second part of the study consisted of the construction of a special course outline of United States History for slow learners tailored to the findings made in the review of literature. In the construction of such an outline examples of selection of learning materials fitted to the traits and skills of the slow learner were made. The choice of specific learning materials such as films, filmstrips, and terms to learn which would involve one or more of these characteristic abilities were actually made by the writer based upon suggestions of authorities. Because of the low level of achievement of the slow learner in vocabulary usage and verbal skills the number of history words required for learning was limited to a few important ones. The fact that this type of student was shown to learn better by visual means than by verbal means led to extensive use of visual aids and a minimum required amount of abstract reasoning. The findings relative to the short retention span, desire for short, simple units of learning and limited powers of memorization of this type of student led to the provision for the employment of

frequent tests over short units of learning. The fact that the attention span was found to be so short led to the decision to make two or three major changes in types of activity during each class period. The use of constant repetition and drill on points selected for permanent learning was decided upon because it was shown that these are necessary to fix the learning of the slow learner.

Another factor considered in the construction of the special course outline was that the slow learner can be expected to assimilate only about sixty per cent of the information that an average student does. Therefore, the quantity of material to be covered in the course was reduced to approximately one-half that covered by an average class.

The differing levels of ability and interest that the slow learner was shown to have in reading pointed up the need for specially written types of reading materials that would satisfy both of the needs. The probability that the type of available teaching materials and aids would vary in different high schools led to the construction of an outline form that would be flexible in nature. A great variety of materials and aids could be adapted for use in such a course without revising the outline.

Conclusions

From the findings of this study the following conclusions seemed justified:

1. The usual courses in United States History prohibit the success of the slow learner because of the lack of specially designed course materials for this type of student.

2. Appropriate learning experiences for the slow learner, because of his limitations in vocabulary usage and reading ability, can best be provided in a program based upon homogeneous grouping of students by abilities.

3. The selection of course materials and choice of classroom teaching methods for special classes for slow learners will be more valid if they are based upon specific skills and traits of this type of student.

4. There is a great need for United States History textbooks written at approximately eighth grade reading level but with an interest level of the eleventh grade student and designed for the slow learner.

5. The total amount of material covered in a course for slow learners should approximate one-half that covered by the average student.

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