

Summer 8-1-1961

## Using Guidance Techniques in the Typewriting Class

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### Recommended Citation

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USING GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES IN  
THE TYPEWRITING CLASS

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A Research Paper  
Presented to  
The Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington College of Education

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education

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by  
Helen Hanson Hartman  
August 1961

THIS PAPER IS APPROVED AS MEETING  
THE PLAN 2 REQUIREMENT FOR THE  
COMPLETION OF A RESEARCH PAPER.

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Loretta M. Miller  
FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

. . . to my sons without whom I would never have been able to progress from the two-syllable MAMA to the one-syllable M.A.

. . . to my "better half," for empathy, with all that encompasses.

## PREFACE

"I read in a book  
About a man  
Who went about  
Doing good.

I find it  
Most disconcerting  
That I am content  
With merely going about" (8:39).

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## CHAPTER I

### OVERVIEW

#### Interpretations

"What lies behind us and what lies ahead of us are trifles compared to what lies within us" (2:31).

If that be the awe-ful truth--and who would deny it--efforts of all people everywhere had better turn to analyzing and releasing such atomic energy!

Fortunately, teachers are becoming more aware of their responsibility in unearthing hidden powers. This is evidenced by titles of recent articles in professional business education magazines: "Let's Teach Our Students More Than Shorthand and Typewriting!" - "Typewriting, and What More?" - "Students Need Our Personal Interest."

#### Definitions

One might assume, from reading and observing, that the present objective of schools is to pour into the individual all he can hold, intellectually speaking. But education means to lead out, to help a human being uncover what is within, to understand himself first of all, in order that he may try to understand others, and they him. That is where good guidance begins.

From two scholarly books come these clarifications:

The guidance point of view will lead to a fuller understanding of every pupil and consequently to individualization of instruction. The guidance process includes work both with groups and with individuals (10:352-3).

The counselor's task is helping the student examine and analyze his own problem so that he grows constantly less dependent upon others and more considerate of the welfare and rights of his fellow citizens (16:934).

There are many kinds of guidance, but "it is difficult, if not impossible, to divorce one type from another. Each plays its part . . ." (3:9). So one would not minimize any form of learning. Rather, one might say general education is good, specific education is better, but personal education is best. Head + hand + heart = well-balanced individuals.

Hopf (12:17) deliberated thus:

It is well to note that programs of guidance, . . . must be student-centered to be effective. Everyone concerned needs to be enthusiastic advocates of student viewpoints.

The end result of education in any system is knowledge, . . . achieved by the individual student . . . .

The next step, then, is to approach the procedures by which students (1) may be led to analyze themselves, and (2) may be assisted in communicating their findings.

### Objective

Specifically, in this paper, the aim will be to

challenge vocationally-minded business education personnel to devote some thought, time, and energy to making their departments into laboratories from which to obtain documents for personal counseling. This can be done through divers devices explained fully in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES AVAILABLE

Wattenberg (26:335) said, "The ability to understand oneself is called 'self-insight,' and strengthening it is the goal of counseling." The layman may question the means of that process. The answer seems to be from information about the person.

This data can be gathered from various sources: the student; school, court, and legal channels; and tests and measurements administered by the counselor (13:393). In this study, only the first source of information, the individual, is being considered.

However, one may think such a goal hopeless. But certain tools may be used to explain behavior. Valuable characteristics--physical, social, educational, mental, and emotional--may be depicted through the written language.

Driver (6:Ch.IX) believes that teen-agers enjoy self-appraisals, and that such appraisals give students experiments in analyzing themselves. In this connection, one might say, "Practice, then produce" rather than "Practice makes perfect." For it is doubtful if anyone ever truly recorded all the facets of his personality, partly from faulty insight, partly from faulty communication.

Though many of the devices for obtaining guidance data overlap, herein they have been divided into eight groups for convenience in discussing. The forms consist of autobiographies, compositions at the typewriter, projective techniques, games, miscellany, opinionnaires, questionnaires, and sociograms.

Autobiographies come first, not only because the list is alphabetical, but because they are perhaps the most important. That deduction would be indicated since this section is the only one for which there is any sizable amount of resource material.

### Autobiographies

In discussing techniques for understanding others, Rusher (18:25) implied that teachers should talk with their students out of class, and be able to answer not only "what is the person like?" but also "why does he act that way?" In order to be practical and contact more students, the author of this paper would augment the spoken word to include the written.

The most thorough reference to this type of self-appraisal was an article based on an unpublished doctoral thesis by E. Evan Shaffer, Jr. He stated (19:395-8):

It was concluded from these analyses of the autobiography that it is a useful technique and that counselors might well attempt its increased use: a high percentage of students produce

documents; they accept assurances of confidence; rapport is not essential for group administration; students report accurately; the documents can be assessed accurately.

A different view is that of Don Dinkmeyer (5:42), who advises: "Establish rapport for maximum cooperation. Wait for good relationship even though personal documents would be helpful at the beginning of the term."

Many teachers (in other subjects as well as typing) feel they must get to know their students quickly in order to impart knowledge, be it subject matter or values, direct or subtle. These people contribute to the basic needs of adolescents (belongingness, participation, stature or recognition, and security) the very first day of classes by asking for a brief get-acquainted sheet from each member of the class. When students are hesitant what to include, a few ideas may be written on the blackboard: name (obviously--yet how many papers, even on college level, are turned in without it), address, birth date, home background, school level, current subjects, health, siblings (that term might need explanation), and work experiences, plus anything else they wish to add.

To make this a timely assignment in the typing classes, students might mention if they have a typewriter at home, if they have typed before, and why they are taking typing (neophytes may write in longhand) (24:35). All students may

include any further items they desire. This then becomes the autobiography in embryo.

After the first days of orientation, the teacher takes time to reflect, "If I'm to do my duty, I must understand students. To do that, I need to know their backgrounds. I must know more than what they are, I need to know why they are what they are" (22:426-7). So she suggests a story. About what? Something they know, someone they know, ah - how about you? This, then, is the start of many things, patterns rather than isolated fragments of their lives.

The autobiography is one of the most simple but effective counseling tools, for behavior is being interpreted from the point of view of the individual himself. This is termed the "phenomenological" approach, which means that since reality differs with individuals, the task is to determine how the individual perceives the entire universe. This story of oneself may supply the missing pieces of information necessary for understanding oneself (5:40). The result may vary from a simple sentence or paragraph to a work bearing relationship to a Freudian psychoanalysis.

The student should be encouraged to view his writing as a means of understanding himself. He should be made aware that he may describe everything--problems, attitudes, interests, associates, thoughts, feelings, fears, angers,

joys and pleasures, sorrows, dreams (both day and night), expectations, disappointments, experiences--this lengthy list is not all-inclusive nor need he cover all topics mentioned.

Inasmuch as many high school students may not have had practice in this style of writing, a structured instrument, serving a purpose similar to the autobiography, is the biographical inventory. Listed in this personal record are items pertaining to the history, activities, and experiences of the individual. The pupil is required to check those areas that apply to him, probably school experience, self-appraisal, family relationships, and type of friends (23:140). Forms of this type will be discussed more fully under the heading "Questionnaires."

Before leaving this area, attention should be called to the scope of the device being discussed. Students may be urged either to begin keeping a journal or to continue a diary already begun, with the stress on psychological concepts, in order to summarize contents into a permanent record. Also, the general topic could be broken down into the past, the present, and the future, since the limited arrangement fits into class schedules better.

To avoid repetition, procedures for obtaining personal documents from students will be discussed in the next section.

## Compositions at the Typewriter

Truly, Trytten (25:35) described the value of composing at the typewriter when he said:

The ability to express oneself effectively on paper is usually accepted as one of the most important elements in general education. It is a skill that demands a laboratory; it cannot be acquired by listening to lectures, by reading, by looking at a film, or by a discussion. It comes only through practice. There is no better laboratory for this practice than the typing class.

Thinking on paper is obviously more profitable if we make sure that the student has something to say . . . . It is important that the student be permitted to select something of real interest to himself.

In 20th Century Typewriting (14:121), the first composing appeared in the form of a short questionnaire asking the kind and serial number of typewriter the student was using, in addition to pertinent facts. Soon followed a short paragraph concerning geography, with spaces left for the name of the state, capital, bordering states, city student lives in, et cetera. Then came an exercise for writing on topics suggested: The Career for Me, I Believe, The Skill I Have, and A Play to Remember.

If one were to carefully analyze these lessons, there would appear a persistent characteristic in all--that of "probing" into personality. Notice further topics: Work I Enjoy Doing, My Hobby, My Favorite TV Program, Sports I Enjoy, An Interesting Trip, My Ambition, and An Exciting

Experience. For variation, the student was given a choice of forms (personal letters, themes, or news articles).

The climax to the build-up comes in the Personal Information Blank, which asks for Hobbies or Interests, and Vocational Interests or Plans (14:121, 124).

In "Keep Calm and Compose," Caroline Beckner (1:10) supports this device by stating:

Composing provides students with the diversion they need and enables the teacher to learn about them as individuals.

If you want to know more about the individual characteristics of each student, and if you want to prod him into expressing his own ideas on social attitudes and otherwise stimulate his creative abilities, give him additional opportunities to compose.

Anyone who thought for just a few moments could come up with some good main topics, and students would enjoy filling in the sub-topics. For instance, the overall theme might be "Values" - from which could come "What I Think of Myself," "What I Value," "What I Own" or "What Is Mine," "What I Identify With" or "A Description of the Person Most Like Me."

Again, Future Plans might be sub-divided into: "What I Want to Do Ten Years From Now," "The Person I'd Like to Be," "My Future," "What I Would Like to Do."

Exercises composed at the typewriter fit into the school schedule very well just after a vacation, while fingers

are getting back into practice. Usually students can think of a title for their ramblings, or "Activities During \_\_\_\_\_ Vacation" will cover all phases. A comparison of the work done in September (only second year students, of course), in early January, and in the spring is rewarding, for as skill in typing has grown, so, too, has ability to "compose."

The artistic student may find outlet for his creativity in the typing class by doing artyping, or drawing pictures with typewriter symbols rather than words. Should anyone need help deciding on the "motif," he might be referred to literature (a scene from a story or poem), history (an historical event or figure), social studies (people or customs of foreign lands), or guidance (a scene of home or family life) (4:39).

There is even a possibility of offering a delinquent adolescent not merely an outlet for his emotions, a catharsis, but an opportunity to put into some order and unity all his hopes and ideals (11:19).

Composing at the typewriter can be a means of ferreting out students who have exceptional facility with words. Classes should be urged to write freely their responses to things they can see, feel, hear, smell, touch--for example: slippery, warm, dark, yellow, feathery, wrinkled, cool, wrinkled, forlorn, dismal, drizzling, bubbly, tinkling. Be sure to let them write without worrying about spelling,

punctuation, or grammar, so they can be creative and use their imaginations (4:42). Then the results can be edited and copied, resulting in further repetitious typing practice without boredom.

"We have a tendency to make typing too easy for the academic student, whose primary need probably is the ability to compose at the typewriter," wrote Marjorie Mestad (15:7). Since college students will mainly be concerned with typing thoughts they wish to express, they need to be taught to think at the typewriter. Such composing is an art that can be learned by trying, doing, and repeating. If necessary, further subjects or more difficult topics may be suggested: "The Hardest Think I Ever Had to Do," "The Most Interesting Think I Ever Did," "Favorite School Subjects," "Preferences in \_\_\_\_\_ (Clubs, Clothes)," "Tastes in Food." (The brighter ones will catch the play on words in that one, since semantics mean much to them).

If a little imagination does not produce topics for composing, one can continue into projective techniques, which have some similar elements. Shakespeare (Romeo and Juliet) says that "a rose/ By any other name . . . ." That can be applied to free association words and their close neighbor, open-end or incomplete sentences, which we will now discuss.

## Projective Techniques

Shaffer and Shoben (20:339-341) in their chapter on measuring personality discuss several areas touched upon in this paper. Especially interesting are their examples of free-association words and items from an incomplete sentences test.

Word associations. "The basic method used in assessing personality as a whole, as exemplified in projective devices or non-structured instruments, is free association" (23:103). Since this technique is psychoanalytical, the material received is invaluable in understanding students. Sometimes, therapy is experienced by people being relieved of frustrations. (An interesting experiment would be to have students type up dreams) (21:37).

Sentence completions. The open-end or incomplete sentence becomes an interest inventory, showing hobbies, skills, likes, activities, and ideas. Samples of the technique, showing how students' interests offer an advantageous starting point (7:212), are:

I like \_\_\_\_\_; The snow \_\_\_\_\_; My teacher \_\_\_\_\_;  
 Typewriting \_\_\_\_\_; When will \_\_\_\_\_; The horse \_\_\_\_\_;  
 My favorite \_\_\_\_\_; You \_\_\_\_\_; The trouble with  
 parents is \_\_\_\_\_ (14:119).

Illustrating the reader's interest, one might write,  
 "I like to go on to the next part about games."

### Games

Several other informal techniques may be used in typing classes to identify individuals--herein they shall be termed "Games." These are technically known as sociometric tests, but experience has shown the writer that many teenagers withdraw from such words, though they may find the exercise "Guess Who" enjoyable.

### Miscellany

This paper would not be thorough nor complete were other forms not mentioned, since some personal information about students may be sifted therefrom. But inasmuch as most data in this category is of a vocational nature, space and time will not be given to anything but naming a few, such as applications for employment, and, later, Student's Record-Report to Employers (9:292).

### Opinionnaires

Perhaps information secured from opinionnaires is sketchy, but since in doing the typing exercises, students use figures and repeat the same words over and over, they develop typing skill at the same time as they give vital guidance clues. Typical open-end sentences might read: In my opinion, the best TV show is \_\_\_\_\_; In my opinion, the worst radio program is \_\_\_\_\_; In my opinion, educational films, in order of preference, are \_\_\_\_\_.

Were the wording changed slightly, the foregoing section could easily be incorporated into the next one.

### Questionnaires

The technique here mentioned, without doubt the most familiar one, is an easy way to get much information in a short time. Kinds range from simple to complex, from one paragraph to many pages. Perhaps all other areas spread from this central one as the spokes in a wheel. Unfortunately, parents do not cooperate by filling in carefully and returning promptly.

### Sociograms

For varied reasons the last device on the list, the sociogram, is not as popular as the questionnaire. Sometimes, students hesitate and even refuse to enter names of peers in certain places, thinking such action disloyal or even hurtful. Then, when the forms are filled in, there is still much work to be done recording results in graphs showing the relations existing among class members.

As used in a typing class, the sociogram does have an important place. The teacher may truthfully say that she needs the information for seating chart purposes, and then she may try to better student relationships by changing the seating periodically. This can be done smoothly, using different kinds of typewriters as a reason.

By giving and studying sociometrics, one understands the apt quotation (17:20), "It is the inability of people to get along with others that lies at the foundation of most of our trials and tribulations."

## CHAPTER III

### SUMMARY

#### Evaluation

Just discussed in the main body of this paper were many ways of obtaining information. As evidenced by various writings, all techniques had one thing in common--contributing to the well-being of students, both from the counselor's and the individual's points of view. Securing data from a "natural" laboratory (the typing class) should contribute greatly to the success of the guidance program.

Traxler (23:29-32) has listed ten areas from which information should be gathered. They were home background, school history and record of class work, emental ability or academic aptitude, achievement and growth in different fields of study, health, out-of-school experiences, educational and vocational interests, special aptitudes, personality, and plans for the future.

As was stated before, this paper does not study the securing of information assembled from office records, such as grades, nor that available only from objective tests, such as Intelligence Quotients. But by eliminating those specific items from Traxler's list, one can judge how many kinds of information can be gathered from the student himself through the channels described previously.

## Findings

Since about one-third of public high school students are in business education and particularly because many are in more than one commercial class, there are advantages to the program advocated herein. Some of the more obvious are: (1) regular guidance personnel could happily use time saved in this area to devote to other functions; (2) some data could be obtained in groups with a minimum expenditure of time and confusion in other departments; (3) voluntary information could give the student opportunity to show how he views life's experiences; and (4) spontaneous outpourings through the devices mentioned aid in interpreting facts obtained otherwise--for instance, inconsistencies or inaccuracies may give personality clues.

But, to be fair, disadvantages must also be listed. The most important one is that the data obtained (from an autobiography, for instance) might be highly exaggerated and even untrue or the interpretation difficult and almost impossible. Again, much of a composition could be useless and trivial or misleading due to an individual justifying his behavior by distorting the report of experiences (19:396-7; 5:41).

If honesty be questioned, a conscientious counselor may check with grades or health record or records of siblings. Perhaps the solution is to require less information at one

time, starting with the least significant and progressing into the complicated as the individual gets practice.

### Recommendations

The opinion of the writer is that everyone concerned would benefit from combining efforts, as already set forth. Typing students would enthusiastically respond to increased variety in their practice routine as well as appraisal of themselves, guidance personnel would profit by obtaining information (confidential, that is) from more students, and typing teachers would have the satisfaction of greater class and individual achievement.

May typewriting classes be used more as laboratories for obtaining information to turn over to the guidance department.

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A P P E N D I X

