

1964

Off to a Good Start: an Educational Film Depicting the Orientation of Teachers

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OFF TO A GOOD START:
AN EDUCATIONAL FILM DEPICTING THE
ORIENTATION OF TEACHERS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

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

by
John Bert Liboky

June 1964

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SPECIAL
COLLECTION

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express sincere appreciation to Dr. Donald J. Murphy, committee chairman, and Dr. William G. Gaskell and Mr. Charles W. Wright, committee members, for their guidance and valuable suggestions offered throughout the writing and filming of the manuscript.

Special acknowledgment is made to Gerald R. Magelssen for his assistance in the filming portion of the presentation. Help given by Morag M. Liboky, Alfred E. Kluth, John S. Pifer and the staff of Hebelers Elementary School was greatly appreciated.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The orientation of newly appointed teachers is an important administrative responsibility. Experiences during the first few months of employment often effect the future success of a teacher.

The necessity for an orientation program is substantiated by Worth McClure:

The need for special help for new teachers has always existed. It has been brought into sharper focus in recent years by the shortage of teachers, the greater mobility of the teaching force, and the lure of other occupations. With some school systems having as high as 30 per cent of their staff new to their jobs each year, helping new teachers get off to a good start has become a compelling administrative problem. (14:2)

In most school systems the orientation period takes time out of the busy days before the school year starts. It takes the time of many people in a school to carry out a successful orientation program.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this study is to produce a film that would inform a beginning teacher of areas that he might become familiar with before the start of the school year. The writer believes that a film

could do this in a more relaxed and less time consuming manner than practices now being used.

The following assumptions were made:

1. Films combine sight and motion with various sounds to act upon two senses at a time.
2. The orientation program could be carried out as effectively as the programs now being used without involving as many persons.
3. The time required for orientation meetings could be shortened thus giving the teacher more time in the classroom to prepare for the opening of school.
4. Routine information concerning orientation could be covered more effectively with a film, thus enabling the principal to cover other areas of orientation more thoroughly. As each school's orientation program varies, a brief follow-up may be necessary in the building to insure that all areas are covered.
5. Information in a film is more concise and more easily understood.

Importance of the problem. The writer believes that there is a need to explore new methods in presenting orientation information to beginning teachers. The writer

believes that in this exploration, audio-visual aids have a definite role to play.

Many schools have started programs of orientation. The main purpose of the orientation program is to help the teacher become acquainted with his new surroundings in as short a time as possible. Barrate (1:49) states, "The orientation program is an attempt to teach teachers important facts about their new environment."

Through the use of an educational film many of the routine problems of orientation could be covered easily and effectively. The educational film could help the teacher avoid the feeling of being overwhelmed by the multitude of details that face him when he is actually on the job.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Beginning teacher. (1) Any person in his first teaching position; (2) more specifically, a person who has completed a regular course [degree program], including practice teaching, in a teacher-training institution and is legally certified to teach, and who is just entering upon the work of his first teaching position (9:55).

Orientation. The process of making a person aware of such factors in his school environment as rules, traditions, and educational offerings, for the purpose of facilitating effective adaptation (9:379).

8-millimeter magnetic-striped film. 8-millimeter motion-picture film to which a narrow stripe of magnetizable material is added which will accept sound impulses in the form of magnetic variations (12:163).

Editing. The selection and proper organization of the various scenes after the filming has been completed.

III. PROCEDURE

The survey of orientation procedures of first-year teachers, who were graduates of Central Washington State College, was made in the State of Washington during the fall of 1963. The survey was in conjunction with research being carried on by a graduate student in the field of administration and supervision at Central Washington State College. (13)

The results of this survey indicated that some first-year teachers found areas that had not been covered during their orientation program. The writer chose four of these areas as the basis for an 8-millimeter magnetic sound film:

1. The classroom
2. The school building
3. School policies
4. The children

The writer received permission from the Director of Hebeler Elementary School to do a portion of the filming in that building.

Adults who appeared in the film were graduate students at Central Washington State College and staff members at Hebeler Elementary School. The children appearing in the film were students at Hebeler Elementary School.

The writer's own equipment was used for the filming with the exception of the flood lamps and tripods which were obtained from the Audio-Visual Department at Central Washington State College.

The script and shooting schedule were prepared before actual shooting began. In order to determine the proper length of each section of the film, the script was recorded on a tape recorder. Then each portion of the script was broken down into a scene or a series of scenes and timed. A shooting schedule in the form of a chart was prepared including information on the scene subject and length. (See Appendix A)

Each roll of film was sent to the Kodak Company for processing and as each roll was returned it was projected, and preliminary editing was done. Notes were taken on footage which had to be retaken. Satisfactory footage was timed and a description of the content of each scene was written on the film container.

At the completion of the filming, final editing began. The film was cut up into scenes which were placed in their proper sequence with the aid of the shooting sequence charts.

The completed film was sent to a commercial laboratory where a plastic binder of ferromagnetic powder was coated along one edge of the film.

When the film was returned from the commercial laboratory it was projected and each scene was timed. The narrator recorded the script by speaking into a microphone connected to the 8-millimeter sound film projector. This projector is equipped with a small tape recorder. If mistakes are made the sound can be erased and rerecorded using the same procedures that are used on a tape recorder.

The following steps were pursued in planning and producing the film, Off To A Good Start:

1. A topic was selected for the film.
2. Permission to film at the Hebel Elementary School was obtained from the building director.
3. The necessary equipment for filming was secured.
4. A script and shooting schedule were prepared.
5. The filming was completed.
6. The film was sent to a commercial laboratory for processing.

7. After the film was returned from the commercial processor preliminary editing was done.
8. The edited film was reviewed and notes were made on any shots that were to be retaken.
9. Final editing was completed and the length of each scene was checked with the script.
10. The completed film was sent to a commercial laboratory where the magnetic sound stripe was added.
11. The selected music and narration were added to the film.

IV. EQUIPMENT USED

1. Canon Zoom 8 movie camera
2. Argus 8-millimeter silent projector (model M-500)
3. Sylvania Sun Gun
4. Spectra Professional exposure meter
5. Tripods: Argus Elevator and Huskey Quick Set
6. Fairchild 8-millimeter sound projector (model HLH-1).
7. Colortran Senior flood lamps with stand and converter
8. Yashica-8 editor and splicer
9. Kodachrome II type A color film

10. Miscellaneous equipment: film cement, emory board, and white cotton gloves.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A survey of the current literature on teacher orientation indicates that many school districts are conducting a formal orientation program. Superintendents, principals, and local education associations are giving added attention to smoothing the way for the new teacher in hopes their first year will be successful.

In discussing the purposes and methods of an orientation program, Elsbree and McNally state:

. . . the principal is a key person in the orientation process and therefore needs to be fully acquainted with modern methods and procedures of introducing new staff members to their respective roles in the school system. First of all, it is essential to formulate the objectives of an induction program in order that the procedures used may be appropriate and effective. While some variation in objectives is conceivable, it is now rather generally agreed that the chief purposes of an orientation program are:

- (1) To assist the new teacher in settling down quickly to the work of the school,
- (2) To familiarize the recent appointee with the philosophy and resources of the school system and community.
- (3) To assist the new teacher in developing the kind of social and professional contacts essential to satisfactory adjustment,
- (4) To improve the teaching skills of the newly appointed staff member, and
- (5) To give the new teacher a sense of belonging and help him develop a healthy emotional outlook. (6:49)

Cable points out that a new teacher has to meet and solve many perplexing problems during his first year in a particular school community. He further comments:

. . . Supervisors and staff members should be constantly seeking better ways and means to bring about a successful and fruitful orientation program for new teachers. (2:102)

An important reason for adequate orientation of the beginning teacher is stated by Rycheck:

In recent years, much has been said about the teacher shortage and the amount of teacher turnover. School systems today are faced with the problem not only of attracting competent teachers from a limited supply but also of keeping them. An induction program which gives the new teacher a feeling of belonging is the first and very necessary step in reducing teacher turnover and insuring maximum efficiency in the operation of our schools. (15:79)

Various educational writers have stressed the need for carefully planned orientation programs. Stoops and Rafferty believe that the induction program fulfills two goals:

. . . the morale lift attendant upon successful adjustment, and the increase in teaching efficiency which follows the supplying of the teacher with ample and to-to-date data on pupils, school facilities, community problems, and district philosophy. Proper orientation should be carefully planned and objectively conducted. (21:380)

A review of the current trends in orientation programs show that most programs are conducted immediately prior to the time children return to the classroom after their summer vacation. These programs range from one day

to one week in length and the major portion of the program is usually conducted in the school.

Many different types of teacher orientation programs are in existence in our schools today. One that is currently being used with success is the "buddy" system.

The "buddy" system involves an experienced teacher who volunteers to act as a personal guide and a friendly counselor to a beginning teacher. This experienced teacher becomes acquainted with the new teacher and introduces him to other staff members. He explains procedures that may seem unclear to the new teacher and answers any question that may arise. The experienced teacher may continue to function as an advisor throughout the school year.

The "buddy" system has been beneficial to the beginning teacher and it has been very helpful for the administrator. Elsbree and McNally substantiate this in the following statement:

. . . The principal stands to benefit from this arrangement since much time is required to meet the needs of new teachers. Moreover, it is not easy to remove quickly the psychological barriers that exist between administrator and teacher. A teaching colleague is more likely to gain the full confidence of the beginning teacher and hence learn of his true needs and concerns. Principals are often loathe to admit the gap which is inherent in the administrative structure found in most school systems. The administrative authority which principals exercise limits communication between new teachers and the school principal. (6:52)

Holding a workshop for beginning teachers just before school opens is another approach that is used in some school systems. The workshop consists of a series of meetings planned to cover information about the school district and the individual school to which the beginning teacher has been assigned. These meetings inform the new teacher of the organization and routine of the school. They also provide an opportunity for the newly appointed teacher to become acquainted with other teachers and supervisors.

Some schools handle the orientation program in a faculty meeting where the principal covers areas of routine importance. Teachers may be furnished copies of rules and regulations, and a statement about the school district's policies, philosophy, and practices.

A survey of the current literature reveals many practices of orientation being carried on in our American schools today. Cronin states:

It would seem that no one blanket program of "orientation" will solve the needs of all the individuals needing it. . . . A few principals intuitively perceive the need to tailor these programs to the special needs, but the trend seems to be toward more formal, organized programs. (4:159)

With the start of a new school year being such a busy time for both teachers and administrators, the use of audio-visual aids in conjunction with present

orientation practices could reduce the amount of time needed for planning and carrying out a successful program.

Elsbree and McNally stress the need for new approaches to orientation:

What is most needed in the area of orientation is creative imagination. The old patterns need to be examined critically and some new procedures considered. Films, trips, conferences, and planned activities, especially designed for the newly appointed teacher are elements in a comprehensive program of in-serve education. (6:54)

CHAPTER III

THE SCENARIO: OFF TO A GOOD START

<u>Scene</u>	<u>Narration</u>
1. Principal walks into the classroom and goes to the teacher's desk	The orientation program conducted for beginning teachers is an essential part of the school program and is given a great deal of consideration by administrators. The building principal is asking Bob Martin for his assistance in the orientation of a new teacher for the next school year.
2. Bob Martin seated at his desk	Bob realizes the need for teacher orientation and proceeds to plan a program he hopes will be helpful to the new teacher.
3. Bob Martin walks to the chalkboard	What could a beginning teacher do on his own that will make adjusting to his new job easier?

SceneNarration

- The teacher might have an opportunity to become familiar with much of the routine policies and essential information about the school before the opening day.
4. Bob Martin standing at the chalkboard
- Let's start with the classroom. The classroom is where the teacher and children will spend most of the school day.
5. Windows, lights and thermostat
- Proper lighting and ventilation are beneficial to the learning situation. Heat control is also important to classroom comfort.
6. Classroom
- The room furniture should be arranged to take advantage of the best possible lighting, ventilation, and chalkboard visibility.
7. Desk and a chair
- The teacher should also see that desks and chairs

SceneNarration

are the proper size for the children and be prepared to make any adjustments that might be necessary.

8. Bulletin boards and chalkboards

Proper use of existing bulletin boards and chalkboards adds to the learning environment. An attractive well-planned bulletin board adds interest to the room.

9. Globes, feltboard, and science equipment

A survey of the instructional aids available in the room should be made.

10. Storage area

Storage space is necessary and should be used to the best advantage. Some time should be spent finding what supplies are already available in the room.

11. Athletic equipment

Knowing what athletic equipment is available may help in the planning of your program.

<u>Scene</u>	<u>Narration</u>
12. Room library	Many teachers find it convenient to have their own room library. An attractive display of library books often helps children gain interest in reading.
13. Bob Martin standing at the chalkboard	Becoming familiar with the rest of the school building is necessary to the new teacher. Most orientation programs include a tour of the building.
14. School office	The teacher might explore such facilities as the school office. A teacher should make a point of stopping at the office at least once each day to become familiar with current happenings in the school. He should also check his personal mail box.
15. Teacher's work area	A teacher spends a great deal of his time preparing materials for his class.

SceneNarration

Many schools provide work areas for the teacher.

Proficiency in the operation of equipment will be gained quickly.

16. Supply room

The location of the school supplies will be made known to the beginning teacher as well as the procedures for obtaining them.

17. School gym

It will be necessary to know what facilities are available in the gym and what policies govern its use.

18. Audio-visual storage area

Many schools have a central area for the storage of audio-visual equipment. Knowing what equipment is available and having some knowledge of its operation is quite helpful for the beginning teacher.

<u>Scene</u>	<u>Narration</u>
19. Library	The school library is one of the most important rooms in the school. Acquaintance with the library is not gained in just one visit: frequent exploration of the library will be beneficial and reviewing new books should become a habit. The librarian can be of great assistance to a teacher.
20. Bob Martin standing at the chalkboard	Many school administrators have found it helpful and necessary to compile a handbook containing detailed school policies for teachers. A teacher should spend some time before the start of the school year becoming familiar with items included in the handbook. Some of the information contained in these books that could be helpful at the start of

SceneNarration

a school year is information such as: school calendar, teachers duties, attendance reports and school policies.

21. Children playing on the school playground

Teachers should be aware of the responsibility they have when on extra duties, such as hall duty, playground assignment, or noon hour supervision. They should know what action is to be taken if a child is injured while they are on duty.

22. Bob Martin seated at his desk

There are many other items included in the handbook and policy file that would be of interest to the beginning teacher. Being familiar with the handbook and policy file is a professional responsibility.

23. Bob Martin standing at the chalkboard

It is beneficial for a teacher to look up information concerning the class

SceneNarration

he is going to teach.

Usually a cumulative record folder is kept for each child in the school.

24. School office

The children's cumulative records may be filed in the school office as shown here, or they may be kept in the classroom. There is no standardized record system in use in American schools today. The cumulative record is a means of collecting all the important information about each youngster as he progresses through his school career.

The school principal and experienced teachers will assist the new teacher in interpreting the cumulative records.

<u>Scene</u>	<u>Narration</u>
25. Bob Martin seated at his desk	The areas depicted in this film are but several that a new teacher will become acquainted with.
26. Classroom	The summer has passed and a new school year is beginning. It is hoped that the preparation Bob Martin made in the spring will help you and this new teacher to get "Off to a Good Start."
27. The End	Music

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

This film was planned and produced to assist in the orientation of beginning teachers. The writer believes that the use of this twelve-minute film would make it possible to cover routine orientation procedures more quickly and effectively. An attempt was made to cover much of the information presented by the building principal in a teacher's orientation program.

Through the use of a documentary 8-millimeter film with color and sound, various activities of a teacher orientation program were shown. Actually being able to see these areas might be more meaningful to the teacher than a verbal presentation alone.

The classroom, the building, school policies and children's cumulative records were shown and some suggestions were offered concerning each of these areas.

The experienced teacher was very conscientious and interested in presenting the best possible program of orientation to the new teacher. Administrators and teachers may lack the necessary time to orient a beginning teacher to all phases of the school program. The 8-millimeter

sound film points out possible areas where a new teacher might gain additional information.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are some of the recommendations to be considered:

1. That the film be shown to beginning teachers and/or experienced teachers who will be advisors to the new teachers.
2. That the film be utilized at Central Washington State College in such professional courses as:
Education 316 Instructional Aids: Utilization,
Education 579 Elementary School Principal,
Education 585 School Supervision, and other courses in which the topic is pertinent.
3. That school districts investigate the possibilities of producing a film unique to their teacher orientation program.
4. That the exploration of possible uses of 8-millimeter magnetic sound films in other areas of the school environment be made.

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A P P E N D I X E S

APPENDIX A:

SHOOTING SCHEDULE

Location: Classroom

Scenes: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Use Colortran lights and Sun Gun on all scenes.

Equipment and materials needed:

Colortran lights
Sun Gun
Exposure meter
Camera
Tripod
Script
Film
Standard classroom facilities

<u>Scene 4:</u> Wide angle shot	Teacher standing with his
Time: 10 seconds	back to the camera writing on the chalkboard
<u>Scene 5:</u> Wide angle pan	Show windows, lights and
Time: 15 seconds	thermostat
<u>Scene 6:</u> Wide angle shot	Show as much of the room as
Time: 20 seconds	possible. Shot from the rear of the room. Include as much of a bulletin board as possible.

Scene 7: Close up shot Show one desk and one chair

Time: 10 seconds

Scene 8: Wide angle shots Shot of a bulletin board

Time: 20 seconds and a chalkboard.

APPENDIX B:

FINANCIAL COST

The following is an itemized account of the financial expenditures for the film OFF TO A GOOD START:

Film	\$14.56
Processing	9.80
Sound Stripping	4.50
Tuff Coat (film cleaner)90
Narrator (services contributed)	----
Title Set	<u>5.71</u>
Total	\$35.47

All other processes were accomplished by the writer.