

State Normal School of Colorado



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SUGGESTION FOR PRACTIS*
TEACHERS

OF

The Training Department

OF

COLORADO
STATE NORMAL
SCHOOL

*In all publications of this institution is employed the spelling
recommended by the Simplified Spelling Board.

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Introduction

The suggestions contained in this bulletin have been put in printed form primarily that they may be more helpful to the senior teachers. Though expressed in condensed, perhaps at times in brusque, language, they are intended to convey on the part of the superintendent of the training department and the training teachers only the kindest personal feeling for the members of the senior class and the warmest appreciation of their work, as a rule, in the training school. We wish, however, to emphasize the fact that whole-hearted, enthusiastic co-operation is expected of every senior in the work of building up the department. Especially do we deprecate on the part of any senior the tendency to assume that her obligations to the training school are fulfilled when she has done the requisite amount of teaching acceptably enough to secure the desired credits for this work. It is expected that every senior teacher will feel that this is her school and that she will be vitally interested in its welfare, and especially in the welfare of every child committed to her charge. The measure of her highest efficiency, that is, of her most devoted and, if need be, self-sacrificing service—not merely the fulfilment of the minimum standard of requirements—is what is expected of every member of the senior class.

We believe that by working together in this spirit

we can make this school one of the best places in this country for the education of children. This must always be regarded as the ultimate test of the efficiency of a training school. Are you doing your part to contribute to this result? If not, it is time for you "to get busy." Feeling as we do about the future of the school, we purpose constantly to demand higher attainments in your teaching. In order that you may be able to meet these demands, we ask you to consider very carefully and to put into operation the suggestions contained in this pamphlet. We especially desire you to bear in mind that the mere ability to hold the attention of, or to entertain, a class is not enough. We expect positive educational results in the way of increased knowledge, better self-control, and most of all a higher type of conduct on the part of the children under your care. We expect you to secure these ends or to make way for those who can. Let us all work together for the attainment of the highest possible results.

THE SUPERINTENDENT AND TRAINING TEACHERS,
State Normal School Training Department.

General Duties

I. There are no excuses from teaching except sickness. In cases of sickness notify your training teacher at once, suggest a substitute, and send the plan for the lesson.

II. Begin and close your work promptly : every class needs the full time allotted to it.

III. Have your material ready and at hand at the beginning of the lesson; return it to its proper place immediately after class.

IV. Never disturb a class which is in charge of another teacher.

V. Be thoughtful about the ventilation, heat, light, and general appearance of your recitation room.

VI. Be friendly and dignified in your relations toward your pupils outside of school. Visit the homes occasionally when you feel that you could secure better work by knowing the home life of the pupil.

VII. Careless work before the pupils, on the teacher's part, is exceedingly bad. An essential part of your influence upon the pupils is conveyed in your habits, which tend to become theirs. For example, the character of your thinking, oral expression (exact and adequate, or loose and inelegant), penmanship, spelling, and the like.

VIII. Cultivate a low, distinct voice. There is no physical factor more conducive to restlessness and inat-

tention than a loud voice and too much talking on the part of the teacher.

IX. The teacher is responsible for the conduct of her class until it is turned over in a formal and definite way to another teacher, or dismissed. There should be no doubt as to who is in charge. In dismissing a class the teacher must see it out of the building.

X. See that all books used by your class are charged by number to the individuals using them and that all are returned in good condition when no longer needed. Report any failures to comply with this rule or stand good for the loss.

XI. Your general appearance, including dress and carriage, and your attitude toward your class as shown by your interest, alertness, and enthusiasm are important elements in success or failure.

XII. Co-operate in every way possible for the interests of the school. Think of ways in which your work can be improved and talk them over with the superintendent or training teacher; but do not discuss school affairs except with another teacher.

Disciplin

I. Activity largely initiated by the pupils, and order which is self-sustaining (to which the class gives intelligent and full obedience) is the ideal to be striven for. But this can not be secured in a day. Rigid dis-

ciplin is better than none; and freedom can be given only as pupils prove their right to it.

II. Disorderly, ill-mannered, or impudent conduct *must not be tolerated*. Teachers who fail to deal promptly and effectively with such cases will be relieved of their classes. No one who is a poor disciplinarian, can by any possibility be a good teacher.

III. The ability to discipline easily is usually dependent upon the ability to teach well. Discipline is also made easier by attending scrupulously to the many small things that make up class conduct. Remember the following points in this connection:

(a) Do not permit conduct which interferes with the work of the class: no one can *regulate disorder*. Do not permit pupils to divide their attention between class work and the manipulation of knives, pencils, and the like.

(b) Protect furniture, books, maps, etc., from vandal knives and pencils.

(c) Remember that lack of absolute fidelity in carrying out well-known principles of government in passing pupils to the board, in collecting or distributing materials, and the like, affects the entire *conduct* and *tone* of your work; so that these neglected matters cause more worry and fatigue than the whole burden of your work. Have a plan for everything. Do not be "at a loss" for lack of active forethought. Be systematic. Be consistent. Be persistent until you secure the results you desire.

(d) Never allow yourself to become involved in an argument over a matter of discipline in the presence of the class, or in the presence of another pupil.

IV. To secure the desired order you are at liberty to use any means you would employ in your own school. In difficult cases consult your training teacher or the superintendent. If you have difficulties with discipline, analyze the situation after the lesson to discover the causes. Determine then how you can successfully meet such conditions in the future.

Class Management

(Refer to the section on discipline, which is inseparable from management).

I. The class is a group in which the teacher and the pupils work together for common ends. Every member of the class should be occupied during the entire period with some phase of the common work of the class. The recitation is for the *whole class*. Do not allow your attention to be centered upon the individual reciting, to the neglect of the rest of the class.

II. The teacher should not allow suggestions to be made by the pupils without her permission; by so doing she invites confusion and the disruption of her class. On the other hand, the spontaneous interest of the child, which prompts him to speak up, must not be neglected. The teacher's own interest, rising out of thorough mas-

tery of her subject, must give her the alertness necessary to *utilize* all the pupil's responses.

III. Do not excuse or palliate the pupil's failure or countenance bluffing; by so doing you put a premium on shiftlessness. It is due to him to know when he has failed. It is due to him to fail beyond doubt when he depends upon bluffing thru.

IV. Be judicious in the use of criticism, both favorable and adverse. Both have a place and should be used when due. In no way can the standard of good work and conscientious effort be better imprest upon young people.

V. Send pupils from the class, if possible, feeling that they have really accomplisht something. That is to say, do not discourage them by making them over-conscious of the limitations of their knowledge. An intelligent summarizing of the lesson at the close of the hour is conduciv to the desired end.

Questioning

One of the most important qualifications of a teacher is the ability to question well. Though this cannot come without experience, attention to the following points will nevertheless enable you to improve more rapidly.

I. The prime requisit for intelligent questioning

is a thoro, accurate, analytical knowledge of the subject-matter to be taught.

II. The *trend* that any discussion is to take must be clearly in the mind of the teacher before she can by questions *direct* the discussion.

III. Good questions cannot be formulated off-hand by the unskillful and unpracticed teacher; hence, many of her questions should be carefully thought out and formulated in advance.

IV. Distinguish between *test* questions and *thought* questions. The former call to consciousness what has already been learned; the latter stimulate the mind to trace out new relations. Tho the kind of questions used will depend in part upon the subject matter being treated, all good teaching uses freely the thought question.

V. Let your questions be clear and *definit*. Do not ask questions that are ambiguous or so vague that it is difficult to tell what you mean. In formulating your questions scrutinize them carefully to see whether a listener, who may not have been following exactly your order of thought, will know what you mean.

VI. Never ask foolish or unanswerable questions.

VII. Do not ask leading questions; that is, questions which imply their own answers through the form in which they are asked, the inflection of the voice, etc.

VIII. Do not frequently ask questions that can be answered by *yes* or *no*. Such questions are legitimate *occasionally* to get the assent of the pupil to some proposition that you wish to discuss further. In fact, it is an

indication of bad teaching for many questions to be answered by single words. The most helpful school-room environment is not where the teacher is simply testing the children, but where teacher and pupils are absorbed in the solution of some problem. Under such conditions questions are asked because the information is desired, and this information will usually have to be expressed in full sentences. Many of the questions moreover will be asked by the children; the higher the proportion of questions thus asked, the greater the presumption in favor of efficient teaching.

IX. Choose your words carefully and state your questions in as few words as will make your meaning intelligible.

X. State your question once and *wait for reply*. Do not become nervous if the children do not answer at once. Allow them time to think their answer and formulate it well. Do not, in the interval, repeat your question in slightly different forms: this disturbs the thinking of the children and leads them into the habit of not paying close attention to a question the first time it is asked.

XI. If the class after reasonable time for reflection cannot answer the question, this is usually a sign that you need to ask another question in regard to some more familiar fact which will enable him to understand the first point. For example, the child who cannot tell the number of square feet in a square yard will probably be able to give the number of linear feet in a

linear yard and on this basis would be able to construct a square yard and compute its area. The ability to change quickly one's plan of procedure to meet an unexpected situation presented by the inability of the child to answer the question asked, is one of the highest tests of efficient teaching. After the lesson is over analyze the cases of this kind that have occurred and determine whether you have dealt wisely with them or not. This examination will enable you to meet more successfully similar cases in the future. Remember, however, that there is a limit to what can be developed: many things have to be told outright. Don't encourage guessing by over-questioning. Don't waste time trying to develop something that needs to be told at once.

XII. Let your questions form an organic whole. That is, the sequence should not be determined by haphazard, but should lead up in logical order to some important thought that you wish to develop.

XIII. Never repeat the answers of the children. This is a waste of time and usually an uncalled-for implication that the child cannot express his own thought. If he does not so express himself, confine your efforts to helping his expression rather than to relieving him of the responsibility for good expression.

XIV. Always state your questions to the entire class. Before you call upon an individual to answer, expect and require every member of the class to attempt to formulate the answer in his own mind. Do not follow any discoverable order in putting questions to indi-

viduals, such as the order in which they are seated. Each child should be lead to expect that the question may be asked of him even if asked of someone else first.

XV. Do not call merely upon the bright pupils and those who volunteer to answer. The teacher who accepts largely the volunteer recitations of her pupils has ceased to manage and direct the activities of her class. In effect she allows them to choose upon what they will recite as if her wish in the matter or her assignment were of no consequence.

Assignment of Lessons, and the Study Period

I. Growth of the ability to study independently is the test of progress in school work.

II. In many cases it may be necessary for the teacher to give definit instructions to the pupils as to how to study; e. g., how to use the text book; how to outline or organize topics; how to analyze a problem; how to see questions in a written discussion; how to observe an object, etc.

III. The teacher must see that the pupil puts forth his best effort and does independent, honest work during the study as well as the recitation period.

IV. The character of the work during the study period will depend very largely upon the manner in

which the assignment of the lesson is made. In this connection the following points should be kept in mind:

(a) The work of the class during the recitation hour must lead up to and prepare for the work of the study period. Do not send pupils to the study period to do work they are not prepared to do.

(b) In the assignments of lessons, specific and definite directions must be given. They may be put in the form of topics, questions, outlines, and the like. When outside information is asked for, the teacher must exercise great care not to let the pupil waste time searching for the book, page, or other source of information.

(c) The teacher must maintain the dignity of her work by making her assignments well worth the pupil's effort and then seeing that the pupil makes the effort. "Off-hand" assignments will not do: assignments are designed for the advantage of the pupil, to teach him *how and what to study*. The assigned work must be religiously called for, else the pupil will not long put any strength or heart into mastering it, and rightly so. Failure to call for assigned work is a fruitful source of inattention, disorder and hostility in the class.

V. Do not neglect to *correct all written work and hand it back* to the pupil. In no other way does written work gain worth in the pupil's eyes. See then that the criticisms are noted by the pupils, and have it understood that the same mistakes are not to be repeated. Once corrected, a given error should not appear in a pupil's paper again.

Standard of Teacher's Efficiency

I. The ideal teacher, besides being scholarly must be absolutely faithful—so that she will work as well in the absence of her superintendent as in his presence; so that she will have a permanent atmosphere about her room. Work that is uneven, erratic, no matter how brilliant it may occasionally be, cannot do most for the pupils. They require the guidance of a steady hand.

II. Each teacher will be held responsible for the attainment of results in the subject she is teaching. The results of the work may be tested at any time by the supervisor, superintendent, or training teacher, by means of oral or written questions given to the class, or by examination of the regular written work.

III. It is expected that teachers will have a thoro grasp of the large final purposes of their subject, so that pupils will experience to the fullest degree the benefit supposed to be derived from the study. This is true, not only of the newest art and manual subjects, but as well of the old subjects of the regular curriculum.

IV. Many teachers of good scholarship fail daily from depending upon their general knowledge of the subject to be taught. Nothing but conscientious *daily preparation* of the *identical lesson* to be taught will answer. This preparation should always go beyond the text-book, of course. Abundant illustrative and supplementary material must be gathered before the teacher can feel that she is prepared.

V. An essential part of her preparation is to inform herself in regard to the work which the pupils have already done in the subject which she is to teach. Do not over estimate the pupil's ability.

VI. Children will put their time on those studies which are backt by the most persistent, energetic, interesting teachers. A test of efficiency is the amount of work you can get the children to do.

VII. Your tests given the children from time to time are tests also of your teaching ability. If the majority of the class fail to respond, it means that your teaching has been poor or your test injudicious.

Suggestions For Observations.

Look for good qualities rather than for bad ones. Let your criticisms be impersonal as far as possible. Look for fundamentals; let trifles go. Be sympathetic. Be definite. Don't discuss your observations out of class—unless you have something to commend.

The following topics are merely suggestiv. Supplement them wherever you can.

I. Hygienic conditions of the room.

- (a) Ventilation, satisfactory? how secured?
- (b) Temperature.
- (c) Lighting, from what direction? are all parts of the blackboard visible to all pupils?
- (d) Postures of pupils, hygienic? restful? are the seats adapted to them?
- (e) Change of positions of pupils for rest, etc.
- (f) Neatness of room, floor, desks, blackboard, etc.

II. Relation of teacher and pupils.

- (a) Teacher's attitude toward the pupils, facial expression, gestures, voice, standing position.
- (b) Pupils' attitude toward the teacher.
- (c) Pupils' attitude toward one another.
- (d) Disciplin.
 - (1) Prominent or unobtrusiv?
 - (2) Rigid or mild?

(3) Spontaneous or enforced?

(4) Devices of disciplin.

(e) General spirit of the class, busy, inattentiv, contented, restless, fatigued? causes?

(f) Distribution of work and attention; do all receive a just share? treatment of backward and aggressiv pupils?

III. The recitation,

(a) Aim, clear? how brought to pupils' minds? is it worth while? is pupil's aim the teacher's aim?

(b) Realization of aim.

1. Utilization of past experiences; to what extent? how brought about?

2. Selection of topics; how determined? systematic? important? adapted to pupils?

3. Method of developing new knowledge in class.

(a) Discussion.

(b) Text book.

(c) Development.

(d) Observation or experiment.

IV. Response of pupils.

(a) Is activity free or restrained?

(b) Forms of expression, oral; writing; drawing; construction; dramatization; what attempts to improve on crude expressions?

(c) Mechanics of the recitation.

1. Passing and collecting of materials. How

accomplisht? orderly?

2. Questioning. Questions clear? simple? consecutiv? leading?

3. Devices to secure interest. Natural or artificial?

(d) Results obtained.

1. Correlation. With other subjects? with life experience of pupils?

2. What facts have been learned?

3. What generalizations have been made by pupils or teacher?

4. What applications have been worked out by pupils or teacher?

5. Was the aim of the lesson realized?

6. What oppportunities for self-initiativ, choice, development of self-centrol, etc., on the part of the pupils?

(e) General criticism.

1. Give the best feature of this recitation.

2. State its weakest point.

3. Suggest any alternativ procedures that would have been as good as those used.

4. Was it the pupils' recitation or the teacher's?

5. Miscellaneous suggestions and questions.

