

culture of the child.

2) Learning will emphasize the skills and abilities that enable people to function productively in their culture.

3) The tools of learning will be manipulated actively by the learners themselves.

4) Different children will learn in different ways.

5) Curricular activities will be designed to integrate the subject areas.

6) Curricular activities will build on the experiences and strengths of individual children.

7) Curricular activities will actively engage community resources, both inside and beyond school walls.



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8) Honor will be accorded children's work through maximum public display.

Task Forces

An illustration of how these goals can be attained by child-created video is outlined in the following project, planned for fifth and sixth grade children of an elementary school near Toronto. A newspaper article headlined "HOW METRO CONSUMERS FIGHT RISING FOOD COSTS: USE IMAGINATION" was chosen as the starting point. The class, numbering about 35 children, is broken down into six or seven task forces of varying sizes. Each task force works on a manageable portion of the whole production.

Taking a specific quotation from the article as a cue, Task Force One plans and executes a portapak field trip to the local supermarket to investigate some causes and effects of the food cost spiral. The kids price selected food items on camera, and conduct interviews with the store manager and randomly selected customers. Prices are compared with those of one month and one year ago, and percentage increases are calculated.

Task Force Two and Three start from a quotation which reports on a woman who, in protest, is cut-

ting meat from her family's diet entirely. After figuring out how to contact the woman, Task Force Two invites her to the school to discover, among other things, the woman's reasons for going meatless, her plans to compensate for the lost nutrition of meat, and the resources other like-minded people might use to do the same thing. Task Force Three asks the woman for one of her favorite meatless recipes and conducts an on camera cooking lesson.

The article reports that this woman's four children are unenthused about the new dietary regime. These children can also be invited to the school so



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that Task Force Four can explore the issue from another perspective. The next task force arranges to take the portapak to the city nutritionist who, it is reported, will mail free recipes for economical dishes on request. The nutritionist is questioned in her office about her specific responsibilities, avenues for citizen action, and food economy.

The sixth task force puts the documentary together. Each of the first five groups selects a representative to the sixth which then selects and rejects raw material from the previous five videotapes, and edits it into a unified whole.

Task Force Seven is the publicity committee. It arranges with the local cable television operator to broadcast the final tape two or three times. (Technically, this is a simple procedure.) Then, the dates and times of broadcast are publicized by posters, personal visits, mimeographed letters and pre-broadcast promos on the local CATV channel to potentially interested individuals and institutions.

Open Classroom Video

These activities have been sketched to show the potential relationship between the open classroom and child-created video. The eight goals mentioned above are met in the following ways: