THEME: Student Management
Student Management is essential if a good learning environment is to be established. Teachers must recognize their roles in student management. Many of the criticisms of education today are rooted in the lack of initiative by teachers in "taking charge" and managing students for educational purposes. Observations of classrooms quickly reveal that student management problems often occur first with teachers who have not planned their work and "taken charge" of the class.

Students should have some input in structuring the nature of a class, but it is the teacher who is responsible. Students must be assertively guided into meaningful learning activities. When students are idle, they look for activities to occupy their time. These activities often lead to discipline problems. Student control is necessary to accomplish the purpose of the school.

The best solution to discipline problems is prevention. Class should be conducted so that students know the teacher means "business." An atmosphere should be established so that students come to class expecting to learn and use every minute of class. Wasted time is fuel for discipline problems.

Kreb's on Discipline

In the October, 1955, issue of The Agricultural Education Magazine, Alfred H. Kebr authored an article titled "Discipline: Problem and Opportunity." This article was written and concisely offered assistance for vocational agricultural teachers. A part of it is reprinted here.

To Obtain Good Discipline

In general, the problem of good discipline has approached discipline problems from the standpoint of both prevention and control. Preventive measures have stressed those kinds of teaching procedures which help to create a school environment largely free of the causes of student misbehavior. Examples of such teaching procedures are:

1. Teach in such a way that both teacher and students always know what work is to be done, and the reasons for doing the work. Variety in teaching techniques is also very important.

2. Follow a definite routine for such daily matters as roll-taking and daily announcements. Begin and end classes promptly.

3. Practice caution on how long and temperature conditions of the classrooms at the beginning of each class as well as on the seating arrangements.

4. Provide for definitive instruction (as a part of the course of study) on such topics as the kind of behavior acceptable in school, how to get along with others, and how to get the most out of school. Too often we take for granted that someone else has taught our students how to behave.

5. Establish early the rules needed for orderly conduct of the class. The making of the rules for the class can be shared with the students. Above all, be certain that the rules are reasonable.

6. Treat all students fairly, consistently, and impartially. Students can ill afford to "lose their tempers" when dealing with trying situations.

7. Learn as much about each student as possible from available sources of information. This should include a knowledge of the home situation.

8. Challenge constantly the best in each student by giving an additional responsibility as he is ready for.

9. Use praise and reward to promote good conduct. This will also help develop good morale in the group.

10. Be alert to everything going on in the classroom. Notice the little things which lead to student misbehavior.

There are undoubtably many more examples of good teaching procedures which would illustrate the point. Anything done which helps provide the student with an educational program for his interests and abilities will help prevent misbehavior.

To Correct Poor Discipline

Since preventive education and procedures are not always successful, additional plans in the way of control measures are needed. Use of the more severe control measures should be provided by a central study of the entire discipline situation, including a thorough case study of the student. Some of the more familiar control measures are:

1. Ignoring minor classroom misbehavior. This control measure is used to a greater or lesser extent by all good teachers. Many teachers, however, hold to its disuse because of the difficulty of ignoring what misbehavior may be safely ignored and what misbehavior must not be ignored.

2. Using simple classroom control measures. Teachers are often being told to do everything to keep the room in order and by using a warning look, a shake of the head, or an immediate question to call attention to the teacher's directions. Many teachers recommend this kind of control as the first step rather than ignoring misbehavior. It is with-
Student Management:
(Continued from Page 3)

6. Suspension and expulsion. These are severe forms of loss of privilege, since the student is being denied the privilege of attending class or school. Such action cannot be taken without consultation with the administrator.

Measures to Avoid

Control measures to be avoided include public reprimand, enforced apology, group punishment, threats and humiliation, corporal punishment, and punishments involving activities which students are supposed to do as a part of their school work. These include outlining pages of books, writing themes, and other "extra" schoolwork assignments. Such "punishments" tend to create strong dislikes for school and school work.

This Issue

Dr. J. David McCracken is The Ohio State University served as Theme Editor for "Student Management." His assistance in compiling articles and photographs is greatly appreciated.

THEME

Student Management:

Capitalize on Your Advantage

The management of the classroom and laboratory is not a unique concern of agricultural educators. Public opinion polls have consistently indicated dissatisfaction with the level of discipline in schools. Agricultural educators, however, are in a singular position to be more effective managers of student behavior than most teachers.

Goals of effective classroom management include the development of self-control, self-discipline, and self-discipline in students. Vocational agriculture teacher can better accomplish these goals by developing an effective partnership with the parents, and in some cases, an employer. Home or occupational experience visits and parent-teacher conferences can be helpful in at least two ways. They can assist the teacher in understanding a student. They can assist the parent in reinforcing the teacher's standards.

Most vocational agriculture teachers maintain a relationship with their students over more years and for a longer period of time each week than other teachers. This enables a closer student-teacher working alliance. This provides an advantage to the agricultural teacher: understanding the students in achieving their goals should be maintained. Enthusiasm for students and for agriculture and a business-like approach to learning are also needed in effective classroom management.

The Cover

Parent-teacher conferences are an effective method for encouraging appropriate student behavior. In the cover picture, Dr. and Mrs. Roger Roediger play the role of parents and Rosemarie Gundell the role of the vocational agriculture teacher. Dr. Roediger is a consultant with the Ohio Agricultural Education Curriculum Materials Service. Evelyn Roediger is a secretary with the Ohio Cooperative Extension Service. Ms. Gundell is a former teacher of vocational agriculture and is currently a graduate student at the Ohio State University. (Photograph courtesy of J. David McCracken, The Ohio State University.)

THEME

Schools Should Solve Discipline Problems Not Cause Them

Both discipline and the lack of discipline are learned. Daily life within the school teaches one or the other. In those schools that seem to have the best discipline, students are more likely to be taught to do well in school. In those schools that seem to be the worst, students are taught to do the opposite.

5. developing closer relationships with parents and the community.
6. helping the staff and students with their personal problems;
7. making curriculum and instruction more interesting and effective;
8. improving the appearance and utilization of the buildings and the grounds.

Changing the disfunctions is the way to solve discipline problems. Both discipline and academic achievement are closely related to those features. They make up a "living curriculum" that teaches students and school personnel "how we behave around here." All school staff members must take responsibility for improving discipline by examining those parts of school life and by improving them.

Improvements are not easy, but they are the best way to create a school that teaches self-discipline rather than causing disruption.
Student Management: The Why and How of Discipline

By James A. Knight
Editor's Note: Dr. Knight is Assistant Professor, Department of Agricultural Education, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210.

It should be clear that teachers' perceptions and student self-image are closely related and, indeed, are not independent of each other, but interact to influence student behavior to a great extent.

The concept of reinforcement is also closely aligned with teacher and student perceptions. This concept suggests that if a behavior is desired to be repeated, it should be reinforced when it occurs. The way the schools are organized, the way they treat people personally, the way rules are made and enforced, etc., influence student behavior either appropriately or inappropriately by using reinforcement techniques.

Preventative Strategies

In working with discipline it is clear that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Some strategies that can be utilized by teachers are described here.

Make students feel important. All students have a basic need to feel important. This can be made possible by giving students responsibilities and by involving them in activities. One of the great teaching tools that vocational agriculture instructors can utilize is the FFA. If the FFA is used correctly, it puts students in a position where they can become involved and experience success in serving on committees, holding offices, participating in contests, and competing for awards. Further, as instruction is centered around the problem-solving approach, student involvement is much more likely to occur and, as a result, the students will feel more important.

Make the students feel invited. As the students feel and believe they are wanted within the classroom environment, they will respond more positively. As teachers, they can make specific efforts to acknowledge each student on a daily basis, to be warm and friendly.

Deal with needed improvement of student behavior from the beginning. Research indicates that criticism is negatively correlated to learning. Generally the more criticism that is given the less students learn. Research also indicates that positive feedback is positively correlated to learning. A simple activity to demonstrate this principle would be to grade papers by checking those items that the students have done correctly, and mark wrong items as opposed to subtracting points. As people view things from the positive point of view, they tend to focus on the things that are going right rather than to the things that are going wrong. If criticism is necessary, it must be specific and precise so that it is clear to the student what is being criticized. This allows students to separate their actions from themselves.

Make nonverbal cues. Most of what students learn is learned through their eyes. Often teachers don't realize the importance of their dress, or their hair, or a pat on the back. Those are simple, nonverbal gestures which, when done appropriately, can go a long way to making students feel good about themselves and influence their behavior in a positive way.

Know each student personally. The home visit is clearly one of the major strategies which will allow a teacher to get to know the student on a personal basis. As the teacher learns to know who each student is, to learn of their needs, desires and home backgrounds, clearly a better perspective from which to deal is developed. As a result, the behavior of students is influenced in a very positive way.

Empathize. A simple rule of thumb in determining how students are treated is to simply ask ourselves how we would want to be treated if we were in their shoes. If that question is answered honestly, then a pretty good idea can be obtained about what should be done in terms of offering discipline action or in terms of general treatment of the students.

Establish parameters. Parameters must be set so that it is clear and precise and that the students can understand. As it is made clear what is expected of each student, and as each student learns where they can and cannot go, what they may and may not do, their behavior is adjusted appropriately. A good strategy to assist in this effort is to involve students themselves in establishing such parameters.

Use student-centered instruction. It is clear that more growth and success is achieved when students are "inquiring into" as opposed to "being instructed in." Subject matter. As student involvement is increased, the student's self-esteem tends to increase. The average high school student's attention span is generally somewhere between 10 and 12 minutes. It should be clear that a 55 minute lecture is probably not the best idea when it comes to instructing students, particularly at the high school level. It should also be pointed out that teachers are not there to teach a course, but of students studying vocational agriculture. Problem-solving, as an approach to teaching, has major impact upon student behavior because of the attention given to real problems which encourage student involvement.

Be enthusiastic about teaching. Research done by Rosen- shine and Furst and by Duncan and Biddle indicates that enthusiasm is directly related to student learning. Generally teachers tend to be most enthusiastic about those topics which they know best. Therefore, to be enthusiastic about a particular subject, the teacher must have good knowledge of that subject.

(Copring Strategies)

The next question is, "What if?" This is a very difficult question to answer because each discipline problem brings with it its own unique environment. This is the reason that discipline work can really be written about discipline. However, there are some very specific strategies that can provide general direction in thinking as real-life discipline situations are faced.

Several simple strategies that will help in dealing with discipline situations should be kept in mind. Leave it alone. Over and over again it appears that many different discipline situations are created and escalated because the situation is left alone. Leave situations as they are and not the student. It is important for the teacher to know when it is appropriate to see and hear, and also to know when it is not appropriate to see and hear. There are some circumstances where student behavior should essentially be ignored.

End the action. In many cases, discipline situations have a tendency to escalate as the teacher gets more involved. It is appropriate, in some cases, for the teacher to simply end the discipline situation by creating a halt in the argument, discussion, or the difficulty. This halting of the situation can provide a "cooling off" period, and allows both parties time to see the situation more objectively.

Give attention to the cause not the symptom. It is important for the teacher to identify the causes of the discipline problem along with the symptoms. Students are often disruptive in class to express frustration or some other feeling which is deeper than the actual behavior expressed.

Define the discipline situation. Rather than the teacher raising his/her voice when a student is upset, it is often appropriate to lower the voice and to become more calm.

This definition of situations can result in the student situations have a tendency to escalate as a teacher's own emotions get wrapped up in the discipline situation.

Isolate the situation. It is clear that the most powerful pressure comes when the pressure is not isolated. By isolating and dealing with the student on an individual basis when discipline situations arise, the individual student can be dealt with more precisely and with much less chance of escalation occurring.

Be clear in directions and expectations. Student (stra- tegy) and disruptive behavior. Some occur when they feel confused or treated unfairly. Make sure that the student understands exactly what is expected and that the guidelines are clear and that each student knows clearly what can be expected.

The Best Advice

Perhaps the best advice that can be given regarding discipline is to be as open and as responsive to the needs of students as possible. It is important to recognize that perhaps the most important aspect of discipline is that it be a process of change and/or improving discipline in the schools is good preparation, planning and teaching of lessons. In addition,

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THEME

Student Management:

Policies on Discipline

Teaching vocational agriculture is a rewarding occupation. We have a variety of activities, some independence, and the opportunity to try our own ideas. However, we will enjoy our relationships with students only if they are cooperative and willing to learn.

Far too many vocational agricultural teachers leave the profession because of the age-old problem called "discipline." "I didn't go into teaching to spend most of the day yelling at students, ducking flying objects, or dreading each day, because students are more than I can handle." Why shouldn't we have cooperative students that are willing to learn in an elective class? We know the students quite well. We can take the students home and discuss school activities anytime. We ought to be better able to teach young people whom we know than those teachers who know their students less well.

I feel that each individual student has a right to learn in the classroom, agricultural mechanics laboratory, or during a field trip. The instructor has an equal right to teach without a hassle each day. The teacher has needs, wants, and feelings and expects students to listen, respond, follow directions, cooperate, and show respect for instruction. The school should provide an instructor to maintain a class structure that provides optimal learning. Individual students should be expected to be cooperative in our classes regardless of problems at home. Problems in other classrooms, low learning ability, dislike for the teacher, hyperactivity, and other reasons.

I believe that students should be informed the first day of school as to what is expected of them during the year. The policies should be discussed with students and parents. Each student should also sign an agreement to follow these rules.

The vocational agricultural advisory council can be helpful in reacting to and approving policies relating to student behavior. The principal must also be involved and agree with them. Policies need to be changed and updated each year. At the Fairfield High School we have developed and used written procedures in student management in vocational agriculture.

Rules For Success in Vocational Agriculture

Fairfield High School

Fairfield, Iowa

The following rules are necessary to insure the safety of students in vocational agriculture and to maintain a desirable atmosphere for learning. All students must adhere to these rules and agree to willingly follow them.

1. I agree to go directly to the vocational building after school.
2. I agree to remain quiet on the school bus during field trips. There will be no shouting to others outside of the bus.
3. I will stay in a group assigned by the instructor when on a field trip.
4. I agree to stay in the assigned seat and remain quiet on the school bus between the Senior High and Junior High School.
5. I agree to dress neatly and wear shop clothes in the agricultural mechanics lab.

Be Keith Wells
Editor's Note: Mr. Wells is a Vocational Agriculture Teacher at Fairfield High School, Fairfield, Iowa 52556.

Student Management:

Assertive Discipline

Assertive discipline was initiated at the Montgomery County Junior Vocational School in the fall of 1980. With 113 vocational teachers, 21 academic teachers and 2,376 junior and senior high school students, the school has always been a top priority. Students at the school come from five counties and 27 high schools in southwest Ohio.

What It Is

What is assertive discipline? It is a take charge approach for today's teacher. Lee Canter published his ideas on assertive discipline in 1976. He has now two easy-to-read booklets titled Assertive Discipline, How's the Discipline in Your Classroom, and Assertive Discipline, Competency Based Resource Materials and Guidelines. The latter includes sample charts and letters.

The assertive approach to discipline in the school is based on the concept of "I care about you." There are three basic premises for students: Making clear what students are expected to do, explaining exactly what the consequences will be if they don't do what is expected, and an overall program of positive reinforcement — accentuating the positive.

What We Have Found

The result has been an increase in the effectiveness of communication between teachers and students. Teachers waste few words making the point that they will not tolerate any student causing an interruption in class. At the same time, students and parents know what the penalties will be if a student chooses to disrupt class.

The overall climate at our school is much improved. Increased communication and a more efficient system of education appears to be the biggest advantage of using the assertive discipline approach.

The junior author, a beginning horticulture instructor, found assertive discipline to be a real asset. It helped handle situations without creating scenes and made the classroom have a pleasant atmosphere. It helped provide positive reinforcement to students.
Student Management:

Hope for the Misbehaving Student and Discouraged Teacher

Sometimes teachers wonder if there is any possibility for a return to the "good old days" when most of the students were attentive and eager to learn. Of course the good old days are gone forever, but there is hope for the teacher who will take time to learn some new coping strategies.

Vo-ag teachers frequently have the notion that we know all there is to know about teaching and the misbehaving student. We sometimes fail to recognize that new information has been discovered that could be helpful to us.

Some of this information is so simple that it could pass us by. With the right insight and motivation, we could accept our group by their peer group. To some extent, the behavior of students indicates the ways and means by which they wish to be recognized among their peers. Students who use anti-social or disrupting means of getting attention have obviously not learned acceptable ways to find their place in society. Can teachers help students learn acceptable behavior? We think there is a chance, but before we can help students understand why they are misbehaving, it is essential for us to understand several possible causes of misbehavior.

Diagnosis Critical to Successful Treatment

How students look at life, at others, themselves, and their behavior, depends upon how they view themselves as persons. Most of the time students are not aware of the reasons for their actions. A teacher can help students understand their acts and the motives behind those acts. In other words the teacher must help the student to understand why he/she is misbehaving. Sometimes a one-on-one conference (possessing an OCR of the student and a trusted teacher can bring these causes to the surface.

Vocational agriculture teachers have an edge on this kind of diagnosis because the very nature of vocational agriculture is in preparing students for real life. Through "hands-on" experiences in the classroom and shop, as well as FFA activities that build personal value and achievement, students with a low value of themselves can be helped to see that they really can be someone.

Dreikurs (1973) suggests that individuals can be placed in four groups in terms of causes of misbehavior. We all are aware of the first one — the attention getter, there is usually one in every classroom. It is one of the easy behaviors to recognize, but a behavior that requires careful thought and response. To ignore the behavior guarantees further misbehavior. For the teacher to over-react with punishment just to get the attention he/she needs, and the misbehavior continues.

Giving personal attention is one solution. Provide the student with attention as soon as he/she enters the room in a positive rather than negative manner. This can be done with "chit-chat" such as "gee, I like that shirt you have on today, Sally," or "Bill, did your sow have pigs yet?" This kind of individual attention can be easily continued in the mechanics laboratory through individualized instruction. By being friends and building rapport with the attention seeking student, the teacher need to gain attention in the classroom can be reduced.

The second behavior is that of the power seeker. Power is a strong force in many peer groups. Recognition of this is very important to correctly diagnose misbehavior. If we place ourselves in a power struggle with a student we may lose, except in a few short-lived episodes where the teacher succeeds in "eating the student down." The "eating down" may convince the student even more, that power is all that counts in life. Vo-ag teachers that act as autocrats, always telling and ordering, tend to have more power seeking students. On the other hand, teachers that demonstrate a democratic style of teaching and leadership tend to have less power-seeking students. Part of the reason for this is that democratic teachers allow their students to have some "say" in really class decisions as well as having member-led FFA activities. If we do not recognize the problem of the power seeker, the relationships between students and teacher can further deteriorate, causing the student to move to the third cause of misbehavior — revenge.

When the state of affairs in our schools has reached the revenge stage, it is deep. Students who are totally rejected, who have lost faith in their teachers, society, and in themselves, when the problem of gaining status cannot be achieved through getting power, then demonstrating power, the only option the student believes can be used in this situation is to get even with those who have hurt him/her. Many times these feelings are vented against teachers and/or school property. Fortunately, most vocational agriculture teachers have been able to stop this problem early and do not experience as much revenge seeking as do some other subject teachers. However, increasing incidents are being reported.

Assuming disability is another cause of misbehavior. After repeated failure in "getting even," students often experience a feeling of inferiority. Students behaving in this way often become passive and withdrawn in order to get special attention. Psychologically this is a most serious state for a student to be in, and many times do teachers not recognize this condition until it is too late.

Students who are passive and withdrawn need psychological help before lifetime damage occurs.

Several Strategies

Recent research conducted with the same students over a long period of time suggests that there is hope for teachers and students. Psychologically this is very basic to our human nature and the way we view ourselves and our students.

deCharms (1976) says that there are two ways of looking at students — how they are motivated, either as "pawns" or "origins."

An "origin" is a person who feels that he is in control of his/her fate; he/she feels that the cause for his/her behavior is within himself/herself. A "pawn" feels pushed around and that someone else pulls the strings much like a puppet. The "origin" is positively motivated, optimistic, creative, and has self-confidence. Research has found that students who are treated as "origins" learn more than those treated as "pawns."

We must be cautious not to conclude that the "origin classroom" is a place where there is complete freedom. In fact, teachers with fewer student misbehavior problems, often have a firm and accepting feeling for their students, along with firm, consistent rules and high expectations. External controls may be used when clearly needed for the good of the students. The goal is to convert external control from within. Research merely indicates what successful vocational agriculture teachers have always known: students treated as human beings will show kindness in return.

SITuation:

When does all of this leave the vocational agriculture teacher? First of all, it takes the emphasis of control away from punishment. The problem is that giving out punishment is easier than problem diagnosis. The only hope for teachers to maintain their faith and happiness in teaching is to take time from their daily routines to learn how to diagnose student problems. This can be done through reading or attending classes on human behavior. The alternative may be more of the same, student misbehavior, day after day, and discipline problems will continue to be one of the major reasons why teachers leave teaching.

References


What is Left?

What Teachers Say

In a recent survey of Indiana vocational agriculture teachers, 93 percent agreed that throwing objects is a discipline problem. That is not surprising except that one might have expected the percentage to have been higher. In the same survey, 48 percent of the teachers responding felt that inattentiveness or daydreaming was also a

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What Is a Discipline Problem?
(Continued from Page 11)

discipline problem. Sixty-four percent felt that sleeping in class is a discipline problem, but only 24 percent perceived racial disturbances between individuals to be disciplinary in nature (Camp, 1979). Those were rather surprising find ings. They imply at least one interesting conclusion: There is much disagreement among agriculture teachers as to whether any given student misbehavior should be classified as a discipline problem or as some other kind of problem. In other words, it would appear that we are not in agreement as to what constitutes the "student discipline problem" about which we so frequently hear complaints from teachers, school administrators, news media, and the general public a real discipline problem.

That implies another difficulty. Many teachers tend to view any deviation from teacher expectations on the part of the student to be a discipline problem when obviously that is not always the case. The result of such misinter pretation can only aggravate the problem.

The second situation described earlier, where the student was daydreaming, is an example of a potential misinterpretation.

Fifty-eight percent of the teachers responding to the survey and they considered daydreaming to be a discipline problem or the just indicated problem, it should be dealt with accordingly. But, if it is a problem of a different nature, then it should be handled differently.

What are some explanations for that specific example?
The student might be upset with the teacher and rebelling by refusing to work. That might justifiably be considered a discipline problem.

On the other hand, the student could be tired, sleepy, hungry, or sick. He might be unable to read the material because the size of the print is so small in that section (if you don't believe it, get out the manual and see for yourself). He might be unable to understand that section because the reading level is too high. He could be worried about a personal or family problem. Regardless of the reason, there is probably some sort of problem here and you might need to look into it. But, if you make the assumption that the student is daydreaming and, therefore, a discipline problem, you are overlooking many alternative explanations.

Further, if you incorrectly assume that the problem is one of student discipline, and treat it accordingly, you may be making complications parts of the situation. A student who is treated like a discipline problem when he or she really isn't, may well respond by becoming one.

If your car won't start and you take it to the garage, you expect the mechanic to diagnose the nature of the problem. If he is not so obvious, what one of those minor, yet obvious things happens, before you automatically put on your disciplinarian's hat, stop and think: 'What kind of problem is this, and what might be the parts changer, be like the mechanism. If the behavior is really a discipline problem, approach it that way. If it is something else, you would be wise to find another way to handle it. This certainly does not imply permissiveness nor laxness on discipline. It is not an excuse to let you student discipline standards. It only means that you should be aware of what a "real" discipline problem is and make at least an effort to adjust your perceptions to fit reality as closely as possible.

Student Management:

How To Measure Disruptive Behavior

How much time do teachers spend correcting inappropriate behavior in high school vocational agriculture classrooms? What are the typical discipline problems confronting a teacher? An instrument was developed to measure both the severity and types of disruptions which occur in vo-ag classrooms. This instrument was originally designed to collect data on the efficacy of various teaching styles in resolving discipline problems. The effectiveness of an authoritarian teacher could be compared to a more humanistic teacher as measured by the amount and severity of disruptive behavior in their respective classrooms. The instrument provides quantifiable data that is both accurate and specific.

The instrument lists four categories of disruptions: verbalizations, distractions, unproductive behavior and aggressive behavior. Each category includes several specific types of disruptions as sub-headings. A trained observer would simply circle the letter below the sub-heading best describing the behavior exhibited. There is also an opportunity for the observer to indicate severe of the numbers involved and the severity of the disruption. When the instrument was administered, three five-minute segments spread throughout a one-hour period for a total of 15 minutes observation time.

Further, the instrument is valuable to teacher educators and vo-ag teachers who may want to critique the performance of their students. An observer may often find it difficult to describe a disruptive situation in specific terms. The student teacher may simply be told "discipline problems" exist. More constructive help is provided when the observer can cite specific examples of inappropriate classroom behavior.

Many other practical applications have yet to be found for the instrument. Precise observation tool like this is needed for more scientific and conclusive educational research. If additional directions are needed for the use of the instrument, feel free to contact the author.

THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE
The A to Z of Student Management

By Richard F. Walton and John D. Parmley

The authors are faculty members in the Department of Adult and Vocational Education, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506.

Attitude of the teacher toward working with students is crucial to the development of a class climate that is conducive to learning. In order to ensure that students are engaged in the learning process, the teacher must establish a positive relationship with them.

In order to succeed, students need to feel comfortable and secure in the classroom environment. This requires a teacher who is approachable, attentive, and responsive to student needs. By creating a positive learning atmosphere, teachers can help students develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their own learning.

References


IDEAS UNLIMITED

Energy Switch Saves Electricity

By Julie Rawlings

Editor's Note: Ms. Rawlings is Marketing Representative for Monitoring Controls, Inc., Morton Avenue, Suite 1, Sunnyside, California 90270.

In the face of ever-rising energy costs, creative ways are being found to cut down on the use of electricity in schools, offices, and homes. Microtimer Controls, at the request of the University of California, has developed a classroom and office timer that reduces energy consumption. This electronic switch installs in an ordinary wall switch box and automatically turns off a light or appliance after a pre-set period of time. One version of the switch is designed to be set in 5-minute intervals, while a second is made to leave lights on for 1 hour (1.4 hours). The switch uses a regular toggle to turn the light or appliance on and off, and unlike the "clock dial" type reset timer, operation of the Energy Switch is completely silent. This makes it especially suitable for classrooms and laboratory situations, where a ticking reset timer would be distracting. Automatic shutting off of lights cuts down on energy waste and saves money.

September, 1981
Getting the Message to Young-Adult Farmers

By William C. Hershman
Editor's Note: Mr. Hershman is Young-Adult All Farmer Advisor at McCaffrey High School in Clayville, Pennsylvania. Issue 17/23

Use the Media

Feature-type articles may be presented in the local newspapers to further deliver your educational message. Timely, thought-provoking features on particular subjects can reach minds of farmers approved of management practices. For example, an annual grass seedury "alert" has helped reduce the losses of livestock due to this early spring grazing problem. A timely news article with appropriate photographs can remind many people of such standard practices as feeding magnesium oxide to prevent the problem. Another example was an article dealing with making silage from frozen corn. Numerous telephone conservations indicate widespread reading of the article and use of the information to care for the damaged crop. Another alert for good educational features to submit to the local media, the young farmer program can be spotlighted after instruction reinforced in a variety of ways.

Ideally, public relations should be part of the young farmer program of work. Relying upon a chapter public relations director is a good idea, but it is not always possible. A farmer's busy schedule may not permit him or her to do much more than report meeting dates, times, places, etc. The advisor must be willing to keep the program visible to the public by providing newsworthy materials to the newspaper prior to the deadline.

Use a Newsletter

Newsletters are effective means of education. Farmers are bombarded with newsletters and mailings from many sources besides the young farmer association. The newsletter must be one of the best they receive. It must gain their attention! News of other local farmers can do this. Be sure to clear the news release with these farmers first, however. Farmers want to hear what others are putting into practice as well as what ideas are being rejected. Having gained the readers attention, a few short education lessons can be worked into the newsletter.

The newsletter must be concise. Long paragraphs covering the entire page will lose the reader. Catchy drawings (not fancy) will attract attention. Simple stick figures can be drawn by most teachers. Many times simple drawings will get the message across better than a thousand words. Use the words you wish to gain attention, then educate in brief, clear form. The results will be predictable!

If young-adult farmer advisors are to gain the confidence of their clientele, they must present their ideas and messages in creative and innovative ways. Accept the challenge to get the message across and make your young-adult farmer program the best it can be.

The agricultural and technical colleges at the two-year level have met the challenge of feeding the nation with the needed training and knowledge to meet many of the challenges in food production. These colleges have heed- ed Goethe's words, "Nature knows no pause in progress and development, and attaches her curce on all inaction," and kept current with modern technology.

In New York State there are six two-year agricultural and technical colleges. At the State University Agricultural and Technical College at Cobleskill, about 900 students are enrolled in various agricultural curriculums. These curriculums include: agricultural business, agricultural engineering, agronomy, animal husbandry, forestry, fisheries and wildlife, horticulture, nursery production, landscape development and recreational land management. Many curriculums have specialized options. One example is agronomy which includes options in forage crop and seed production, soil conservation, and vegetable crops and small fruit growing.

With the change from the subsistence farming economy of the nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries to the semi-commercial farm of the nineteen fifties, the importance and need of the two-year agricultural college increased. Today, the large specialized commercial farm with the high cost of land, livestock and equipment has replaced the smaller farms of the 1950's. However, there is still need for "hands on" experience and "how to do it" types of education, as found at most two-year colleges. Each student must have adequate basic and technical training so there will be no stagnation in the changing world of agriculture.

Present Day Agronomy

The plow, once the universal tool for soil turning and seedbed preparation, is now being replaced by the tillage system. The present day agronomy

Agronomic Education and The Two-Year Technical College

By Ralph R. Smalley
Editor's Note: Dr. Smalley and Professor of Plant Science at the State University of New York at Cobleskill and Technical College, Cobleskill, New York 12043.

student should understand the use of herbicides which selectively destroy weeds but allow the desired food crops to grow strong and healthy. However, there should be concern for the effects of pesticide residues, excess use of fertilizer which contaminates water supplies, and air pollutants that damage the environment. Twenty years ago these problems did not concern either the farmer or the public.

Present students of agronomy should learn of crops which can uniformly supply the high quality food, are either somewhat or completely disease and insect resistant, and can be harvested mechanically. The genetic "make-up" of the seed source and the procedures required to develop new varieties of crops are understood. New crop varieties are constantly needed which successfully compete with the changing pressures of new diseases, insects, and weeds. Students should be made aware that this knowledge is necessary for an increasing world population to have food.

Modern transportation by land, air, and sea has transported plant diseases, insects, and weeds to all parts of the earth. The modern agronomist should know the exact pesticide for any given disease, insect, and weed. In addition, knowledge of the proper time of application and amount to apply is essential. Modern technology provides sensitive and accurate equipment to evaluate pesticide residues and it is essential that no residues on a crop are harmful to the consuming public. The agronomy student in a two-year college should have competencies in the use of pesticides, understand the necessity for the proper protective equipment for people, and follow methods which protect and preserve the environment.

In years past, fertilizer and growing procedures for crops were quite standard. In some areas, a given crop would do better than in other areas. Today, fertilizer and other culture pro- cedures are being followed for crop varieties adapted to specific areas. The two-year college student in agronomy should know this and continually evaluate methods to plant, fertilize, grow, harvest, and store a given crop. Efficient and high production is of great importance but of greater importance is the quality and nutrition of food for the consumer. Quality of food products is important to prevent waste as world population increases.

Agronomic subjects at the two-year agricultural college should provide students with the basic understanding of world food production. This interest developed in the undergraduate must be continued by the graduate who or not studies are continued at a four-year academic institution or entry is made into the field of agriculture. During academic studies, the importance of keeping technically up to date should be stressed. This training should be useful for a lifetime. A factor often forgotten in human relations, even in college, is that each day something can be learned and every individual is worth listening to in a careful manner.

Challenges in Agronomy for the Two-Year College

There are many problems facing those providing food for a hungry world and for which the agronomist has responsibilities. The genetic likeness of crop varieties may result in a catastrophic epidemic of either plant disease or insect pests. The present monoculture type of agriculture throughout much of the

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Agronomic Education and The Two-Year Technical College

(Continued from Page 17)

world, which is the extensive planting of
one crop primarily of the same
geographic makeup, provides few
which resistance barriers to new diseases
and insect pests. Thus, the sudden de-
velopment and spread of a mutant pest
could be disastrous to world food sup-
ply. The continuing preservation of
agronomic material by a world seed bank
is essential to prevent such a catastro-
phe.

The use of fertilizer by kind and
amount must be carefully monitored
because of energy costs, ground water
contamination, and crop response.

New crops are needed which better
use light energy and are more efficient
in the use of water. Although present
attempts to breed plants which better
use light energy have not been suc-
cessful, research needs to continue in
this area. With the decrease in the sup-
ply of quality irrigation water, there is
a need for the breeding and husbandry
of plants to conserve water resources.

Crop varieties are needed which sur-
 vive in an air-polluted environment
and are able to filter the air for high
quality food crops and human needs.
Better uses of sludge, effluent and
other waste products need to be found
to protect our land and food quality.
The major problem with sludges,
vegetation, especially those from commercial
communities, is the high content of heavy
metals such as chromium, arsenic, zinc, and lead. At present, this material is
primarily used on soils growing non-
food plants such as trees and ornamenta-
tals. Additional uses need to be exp-
lored to reduce dumping of sludge into
water resources and landfills. The
effluent is often used to supplement in-
rigation on non-food producing areas
such as golf courses, lawns, and orn-
amental plantings. Research is needed
to conserve the above waste products
to better use and to protect the en-
vironment from present methods of
random disposal.

The search for new genetic plant
material must be constant which will
reduce the need for pesticides, unless
the climatic adaptation of crops, and
produce high quality food.

Methods of farming tropical land
need to improve in order to prevent ero-
dition, formation of laterites, and gen-
eral soil productivity depletion. Later-
tites (oxisols) are formed mostly in
tropical climates and the soil is two
climatic periods — a season of high
rainfall followed by a long dry period.
Under these climatic conditions, long
periods of clear cultivation and expos-
ure of the soil to high sunlight in-
tensity, there is a loss of soil structure,
harding of the soil, and decrease of soil
productivity capabilities.

The agronomist must advertise the
expertise which can be offered in local
community planning in terms of land
development for use by future genera-
tions.

The role of the agricultural and
technical college in agronomy is to pro-
vide awareness of the problems of
smallholder agriculture as related to the
use of all factors of crop production:
soil, water, fertilizer, tillage, seed selec-
tion, pesticide use, harvesting, storage,
and sales. Last, but not least, the
agronomic student must be convinced that agronomy is an honorable profes-
sion as "husbandry of the world's
fields" and supplier of food for a hungry world.

By Robert M. Poole
Editor's Note: Mr. Poole is Vocational
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This article is based on the Ideas Unlimited
column sponsored by the National Vocat-
tional Agriculture Teachers Association.

IDEAS UNLIMITED

Constructing a Thistle Hoe

A simple mechanics activity for vocational agriculture
students is the construction of a thistle hoe. The project
can develop and reinforce fundamental agricultural
mechanics skills.

The materials needed are:
1. One old disk (for blade)
2. One thin washtub (for handle)
3. Flat metal 1/2" x 1" x 4" (brace for back)
4. Two electrodes, 3/32", E 7018

The procedure to follow is:
1. Draw blade on old disk as shown in accompanying
picture. Note: Several blades can be made from one disk.
2. Cut out with a metal shear (shear should be of 1/4" capacity.)
3. Weld together as shown in accompanying pic-
ture.

In the Nontraditional Areas:

Meeting the Need for Laboratory
Instructional Materials

Of all the problems which have ap-
peared in recent years, none has per-
sisted more to the prejudice that it
was more difficult to solve than the ques-
tion of laboratory management in non-
traditional areas of vocational agri-
tulture. To define the problem more
clearly, the question might be: Given
a non-traditional area of vocational
agriculture (examples include agri-
cultural sales and service and agri-
cultural processing) and a large block
of time designated for laboratory in-
struction, what instructional alter-
atives and curriculum materials are
available which permit the teacher to
optimize each student's learning in the
laboratory?

In the past, instructional strategies
for the laboratory have been based on
the notion that students are capable of self-directed learning and inquiry. Un-
fortunately, this is the ideal, not reall
rarely are all students able to pro-
vide their own "structure" in an unstructured laboratory situation. One
solution to the problem is an increased emphasis on the development of cur-
riculum materials designed specifically
for use in the laboratory. Tanner (1978) has indicated that the availability of
a laboratory instruction will result when
instructional materials are developed which add new depth to the related
instruction to the laboratory. However, while we acknowledge the need for the develop-
ment of additional curriculum materi-
als for use in the laboratory, the fact
remains that very little is being done to increase the quantity or quality of instructional materials available for
use in the laboratory.

Teacher education programs have
traditionally taught teachers that the
best and most appropriate curriculum
materials are those which they develop
themselves for their own particular
situations. Ideally, this may be true,
but in reality few teachers have ade-
quate time, training or resources to
develop quality curriculum materials
for laboratory instruction.

Another factor contributing to the
problem of an inadequate supply of in-
structional materials for the laboratory
has been the lack of emphasis by
teacher education programs on the
development of both lesson planning
and instructional materials for the
laboratory. While lesson planning is
generally taught in most methods
courses, the instructional strategies
which are emphasized are those most
appropriate for classroom instruction.
Consequently, very little is done to
stimulate students to develop instruc-
tional strategies or curriculum materi-
als appropriate for the laboratory.

Often the major differences between
laboratory and classroom instruction
are not distinctly called to the attention
of the potential teacher candidate.

A Start

If we accept the rationale that there
is a need to emphasize the development
of instructional materials for the labora-
tory, then the following suggestions
might be considered as first steps in
solving the problem.

The development of state adopted
courses of study for the nontraditional
areas of vocational agriculture.
Through a joint effort by agricultural
education staff members and teachers
from within specialty areas appro-
priate course content and organiz-
ational procedures for nontraditional
areas of agriculture could be identified.
The development of a common course
of study would provide a standard
reference point to which laboratory
curriculum materials could be keyed.
This would allow those curriculum materi-
als which are developed to achieve maximum efficiency and bene-
fit for the greatest number of people
statewide.

The establishment and funding of in-
structional materials laboratories
classed with selecting, procuring,
producing, evaluating, and disseminating curriculum materials to agriculture
teachers in the state. The instructional
materials laboratory, if staffed by pro-
fessional educators with considerable
experience in the field, could develop a
variety of laboratory instructional
templates which support the state
adopted course of study. These instruc-
tional packages could be designed so
that they employ a variety of instruc-
tional strategies appropriate for the
laboratory. Teachers could then con-
veniently modify or adapt these in-
structional packages to their own situ-
ation.

A Question of Commitment

The question to be resolved is not
one of effectiveness. Research has
demonstrated that teachers are more
effective, and that students achieve more when adequate curriculum materials are
available for laboratory instruction.
The major question to be dealt with is
one of commitment. Are we as a pro-
fession willing to commit the time
and resources to the long range goal of
producing quality curriculum materials
which will enhance and optimize the
learning experience of the laboratory
for every student?

Summary

"Learning by doing" is fundamental in
career education. It has set vo-

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Domestic Rabbits: The Living Lesson

The animal science facet of agriculture is frequently viewed as a difficult instructional area to teach with nonfarming students, especially in urban areas. Reproductive physiology, genetics and nutrition areas which seem to be "stumbling blocks" in the teaching of agriculture. A solution to the "stumbling block" in agriculture is the living example which can be kept at nearly any school and show initial startup cost, and shows a return on the investment. This is the domestic rabbit.

For years, rabbits have been thought of as caydu, white, and for use strictly as pets. Their reproductive prowess is legendary and often misunderstood. Once the agriculture teacher has dispelled the "pet" idea from student minds, they may be able to see the educational advantage of such an animal. A short gestation, 31 days, and the fact that they are litter-bearing makes the study of genetics and reproductive physiology very easy. In addition, growing the litters out using different diets can help students with nutrition studies.

What Is Needed?
The difficulties involved with a comprehension of basic animal science concepts often center around the fact that the opportunity for actual observation and application of the principles is lacking. Alleviating this problem can be easily accomplished. The following list illustrates the needs for a beginning program of study with domestic rabbits, assuming a beginning

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**ARTICLE**

Domestic Rabbits: The Living Lesson

The animal science facet of agriculture is frequently viewed as a difficult instructional area to teach with nonfarming students, especially in urban areas. Reproductive physiology, genetics and nutrition areas which seem to be "stumbling blocks" in the teaching of agriculture. A solution to the "stumbling block" in agriculture is the living example which can be kept at nearly any school and show initial startup cost, and shows a return on the investment. This is the domestic rabbit.

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**BOOK REVIEW**

Chapter Two includes detailed information on the types of careers and the required skills in the large agricultural firms and government agencies looking for people with expertise in agriculture. Chapter Three provides a clear understanding of the scope, importance, and interdependence between farming and industries that provide goods and services for farmers. This chapter provides requirements to prepare for college degrees in agriculture.

For the student looking for information about various agriculture industries, food and fiber products, supplies and services and farm production, Chapters Five through Twelve provide excellent detailed descriptions of these aspects. Careers, which also include the relevant facts that emphasize the important role of agricultural programs and the growing need for qualified people to enter careers in the various fields, are described in Chapter Seventeen. Governmental service careers, financial services, farm cooperatives and rural electrification services are described in Chapters Thirteen through Eighteen. A chapter is included on the opportunities for women in agriculture.

Teachers of high school vocational agriculture programs should find this book an excellent reference for students in expiatory and agriscience classes. Community college students should find the test useful, as well as students in the farm planning process. It will also be an asset to the teacher planning programs for students in agriculture. The book is easily read, well organized, and provides an excellent foundation for inclusion in the high school agriculture curriculum.
Developing Good Work and Attendance Patterns

By Deane Krohly and Kerry Barrick

The monthly earnings record enables the students to understand the importance of being on the job. Students learn that a day absent is a day lost, since time in the lab cannot be replaced. The system has cut down on absenteeism. Daily lab grades are also recorded, so the students' grades in the course reflect attendance.

Yearly financial statements are used at the beginning and closing of each school year to show student growth in earnings and investments. At the end of each year, the students who have held employment related to agricultural sciences and technology during the summer or throughout the year show a financial gain over students who did not have a related job. The financial statements have made students more aware of their financial situations and how they relate to employment.

Since adopting this technique, the students have recognized the importance of attendance and work habits, their attitude toward work has improved and the learning situation has improved. Some students, instructors, and employers.

BOOK REVIEW


This is an excellent text for post-secondary use in the horticultural classes and as a reference for the high school vocational agriculture department. It would also be a very good reference book for the garden gardening enthusiast.

A comprehensive text that starts out with the basic understanding of growth, soils, and soil fertility and watering. Other chapters included deals with the subjects of Regulating Plant Growth, Garden Pests, Indoor and Container Gardening, Ornamental, Vegetable, and Fruit Planting.

The last chapter of the book is a complete 160-page handbook with over 100 illustrations covering gardening techniques and information on regional climatic conditions of North America. The Handbook chapter contains information on Soil Preparation, Seed Testing, Planting Dates, Propagation, Mulching, Pruning, Storing of Products, Flower Arranging, Landscaping and other useful information.

The information contained in the last chapter of this text is very informative making this an outstanding horticultural reference.

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FFA versus Alumni: An Aggie Day Attraction

By Charles E. Hogan

FFA tractor driving contests held in many states.

Feed Toting
Contestants are required to move one stack of eight 50-pound sacks of feed 30 yards and load them. The event is timed and is much harder than it sounds.

Post-Hole Digging
Contestants are given thirty seconds to dig a hole as deep as they can. The winner is the one who digs the deepest hole.

Wild Chicken Chasing
This is an alternative to the typical grossed pig contest. The advantage is that it requires no farm. Seven chickens are used. Each is banded with a colored ribbon. Six contestants draw for color. Each must catch the chicken with the appropriate color ribbon. The event is timed for an overall winner.

After all the fun events are over, a fish fry or hamburger supper is held for the two chapters. This is followed by a short program in which the FFA officers explain the program of activities and discuss other events.

Everyone and adults alike — enjoy this activity. Community involvement increases not only in this particular set of activities, but also in other FFA functions in the chapter organization. The goal of informing the community, community involvement, and other aspects of public relations are met through the FFA versus Alumni Aggie Day.

FFA Membership Increases

The Future Farmers of America Organization is growing. FFA membership reached 482,611 for 1980-81, an increase of 9.5 percent from last year. This increase reverses three years of declining membership.

"The increase in FFA membership is probably in part thanks to the 10-PLUS program and 100 percent recognition that was started this year," said Mark Herndon, National FFA President. "High School enrollment has decreased over the past few years, but this program has brought the benefits of being an FFA member to more vocational agriculture students join the organization. Through the 10-PLUS program, 1,585 chapters gained 10 or more members than last year. Nation-wide, 2,605 chapters had an FFA membership equal to or greater than the number of vo-ag students, so they were named 100 percent chapters. Many graduate vo-ag students now have 100 percent membership and are continuing their FFA membership so that their chapters achieve even more than 100 percent membership.

"FFA offers endless opportunities for every vocational agriculture student," Herndon said. "The programs prepare members (or careers in agricultural and business by teaching technical skills as well as communication and leadership abilities. Every vo-ag student should have the extra advantage of FFA membership."

FFA PAGE

The Agriculturist Education Magazine
Laboratory animal handling is an area in the small animal skills contest in Ohio. Students must properly restrain animals, sex animals, answer questions of judges, and demonstrate other appropriate activities.

Dog obedience is a contest area for the small animal care instructional program in Ohio. Here participants are competing in this area which prepares them for work in kennels.

Pet shop operation requires creative and attractively decorated aquariums. Students compete in the Ohio animal care skills contests by setting up aquariums within a short time period. The contest involves both written tests and practical skills.

Dog grooming is taught in small animal care programs in Ohio. Here students compete in a state skills contest. Both speed and quality are considered in selecting the winning teams.