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Are There Types of Learning and Thinking That Are Functionally Distinct, and If So, What?

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LET'S PSYCHOLOGIZE ON THE CURRICULUM

LYLE K. HENRY

It is generally believed that psychology has made a significant contribution to teaching methods. Can not the psychologist be of service in determining *what* is to be taught as well as in determining *how* teaching methods can be improved?

While there are exceptions, to be sure, the typical public school and college, excellent as they are, continue to follow the time-honored precedent of teaching this year the same material that they taught last year. In many respects our course of study has not kept pace with changing conditions nor has it been adjusted to the findings of respectable experimental research.

The writer contends that factors such as the following should be considered in improving the course of study of the public schools: How to study; More emphasis on developing a technique of reasoning and less emphasis on memorizing data; Build for physical excellence through medical supervision and regular health exercises; Vocational and educational guidance through psychological testing and counseling; Teach the tool subjects as a means instead of an end; Provide opportunity for the development of skill and self-expression through arts or crafts.

OSKALOOSA, IOWA.

ARE THERE TYPES OF LEARNING AND THINKING THAT ARE FUNCTIONALLY DISTINCT, AND IF SO, WHAT?

ROBERT LEEPER

The field covered by the concepts of learning and thinking is so extensive, and includes such a diversity of concrete material, that it would be very surprising if all could be covered by the same explanatory subject matter. If the field is heterogeneous, effective research on learning and thinking is contingent upon the classification of these materials into functionally distinct groups. Relatively little attention has been paid to this problem, however, and much of the discussion that has existed has been patently superficial

(maze learning an example of "motor habits," e.g.). The present paper discusses the basis for such classificatory work, and proposes a tentative classification.

Past discussions of classifications of forms of learning have generally suffered from a failure to distinguish between classifications on the basis of ways of learning and classifications on the basis of kinds of habit formed. The paper suggests tentative classifications for each of these approaches. From the standpoint of kinds of habits formed, it is urged that relatively few examples can be found of pure types of habit, but that most concrete habits involve all three of the different types of habit suggested (namely, perceptual re-organizations, new motor coördinations, and re-intergrations). The differentiation of these three types of habit leads to the definition of a rather longer list of ways of learning than ordinarily is recognized.

Thinking in some of its forms is presented as a means of learning; but other forms of thinking, such as revery and dreaming, fall outside the field of learning. The forms of thinking that fall within the territory of learning can be classified into these forms: (a) controlled association, or search for some specific thing previously learned, (b) creative imaginative thinking, (c) problem-solving thinking on relatively objective problems, (d) problem-solving thinking on problems involving adjustments of personal interests.

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THE ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN AND CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

EARLE E. EMME

1. There were 5,959 adjustment problems discovered from 73 freshmen.
2. There were 19 areas of adjustment within which these adjustment problems were distributed.
3. Each student considers his own problems as being so unique and primarily significant that his perspective of the entire college situation is colored by them.
4. A distinct dissatisfaction with the social relationships of the college.