

Graduate student tries new math teaching approach

The third "R" has come a long way since the days of hornbooks and ciphering slates.

Six third-grade students at College Hills Elementary School are especially happy about new techniques in teaching mathematics because they are receiving the very newest methods of individualized instruction as a co-operative project between the College Hills school and Texas A&M University.

Ideella Stooob, a graduate education student at TAMU, suggested the project as part of an individualized course in mathematics education which she is taking from Helen Weeks, assistant professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

"I always hated math," Mrs. Stooob said, "and I knew there must be a better way to teach it. I really started learning math for the first time when I took Mrs. Weeks' class in teaching elementary math. I learned so much in the course," she continued, "that I didn't want to stop so I asked for an individualized problems course so that I could apply all

that I had learned.

Mrs. Stooob had worked at College Hills Elementary the previous semester as part of a course in children's creative dramatics; therefore she decided to discuss the possibility of working with a small group of students who would benefit from individualized instruction in mathematics with Mrs. Willie Leighton, principal.

Mrs. Leighton agreed to try the suggestion and provided classroom space as well as arranging for six students to come each day from 9:15 to 10:00 a.m. in lieu

of their regular math program.

Nicknamed "Quiet Pools" by Mrs. Leighton, the math lab arrangement provides learning centers with games, activities, audio-visual aids and motivation devices to give the children complete freedom in learning math. Much of the program is oriented towards improving the children's self-concept and improving their confidence in attacking math problems.

A large poster on the door proclaims that "Can't Never Could!", a slogan contributed by one of the children.

The students involved in the program range in age from eight to ten years and they are all in the third grade but are working on different levels of math.

Most of the equipment in the classroom was designed and made by Mrs. Stooob. A large mat at the front of the classroom invites the children to sit on the floor and relax while they are working on a problem. The bulletin boards are designed to be teaching situations and often the children help to make the decorations on them.

The current display features

self-portraits of the children, each holding a fishing pole made from a drinking straw complete with fishing line and fish that can be attached or removed from the lines with cellophane tape. Each day a new computation problem challenges the children to see how many fish have been caught.

Other math problems are arranged on a large flannel board. An abacus with a blackboard attached and a supply of chalk nearby encourage the children to work out their own math problems. Shelves in the room are filled with other games and activities Mrs. Stooob made to help the children have fun while learning math. She also relies heavily on the tape recorder.

One of the favorite activities using the recorder helped the children learn to tell time. The recording tells a delightful story with frequent references to the time of day amply illustrated with sample clock faces showing the human hand pointing to the numeral. The story moves from the simplest time-telling task to more complex tasks involving both hands on the clock face.

After the story, the children enjoyed drawing hands on a series of time-sheets which had been mounted on cardboard and laminated so that the children could use crayon to show the designated time and, after correcting their errors, erase so that another child could use the same problem.

Another device Mrs. Stooob made for telling time is a set of time flash cards which the children like because they learn the correct answer immediately.

The tape recorder was used to help the children learn the multiplication tables, also. Each child made a multiplication book using pictures which he cut from magazines and pasted into his book to illustrate the multiplication facts.

When a child completes a task, Mrs. Stooob administers an individual test to determine whether the child has mastered the information.

"I avoid group tests," she explained, "because they would cause too much competition among the students and the children might become tense."

A complete sense of freedom pervades the classroom. The children choose which activities they wish to work. However, if they select to do a worksheet, they bring their work to Mrs. Stooob for assistance and they work all the problems correctly before they take it home. Then the next day, they find a follow-up worksheet in their folders.

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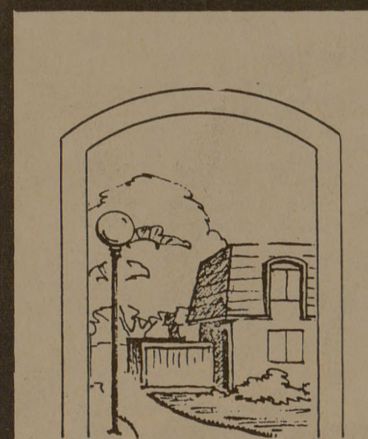
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TAP symbol gets stiffer regulations

AUSTIN — Texas Agriculture Commissioner John C. White was given the duties of regulating the use of the now famous TAP (Texas Agricultural Products) symbol in a bill signed into law last May 17 by Gov. Preston Smith.

The Texas Department of Agriculture initiated the TAP program in 1968 and has energetically promoted Texas agricultural products since; but prior to the new law White could regulate use of the TAP symbol only as it was used on eggs and their containers.

The law signed by Smith directs: "The commissioner of agriculture by rule shall regulate the use of the term 'Texas Agricultural Products' and any symbol connected with that term in the selling, advertising, marketing, and other commercial handling of food and fibers products."

Any person who violates rules governing the use of TAP as promulgated by the commissioner is guilty of a misdemeanor and

upon conviction is punishable by a fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$200, according to the new law.

White said that the TAP program is trying to make all consumers—especially Texas consumers—aware of the fact that Texas agricultural products are "first in quality, economy and availability."

The TAP program promotes Texas foods and fibers throughout the year, using newspapers, television, radio, billboards, direct mailings, in-store placards, displays and banners, and demonstrations.

The new law gives White the authority to prohibit use of the TAP symbol on any products that are not Texas produced and that are not first in quality, economy, and availability. White urged producers to apply for and use the TAP symbol on their packages to take advantage of the promotional assistance his department is giving.

Recreation, Parks head asked to help create pollution rules

Dr. Leslie M. Reid, recreation and parks head, has been invited by a National Academy of Sciences board to participate in establishment of water quality and pollution control guidelines for the United States.

Reid will participate on the recreation and esthetics panel, one of six established by the NAS environmental studies board for evaluation of water quality criteria publication.

The "green book," to be pro-

duced by the Federal Water Pollution Control Administration of the U. S. Department of the Interior, will serve as a guideline for the states in water quality and pollution control.

Reid has been professor and head of the Recreation and Parks Department since coming to Texas as A&M in 1965. His degrees are from Michigan State College of Mining and Technology, Michigan State and the University of Michigan.

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