**Chapter 1: Classroom Activities**

These classroom activities can be used to illustrate several of the themes in the chapter applying the principle that "one in the eye is worth two in the ear." By participating in an activity the otherwise abstract becomes more real. Several ways of using these activities are discussed in the introduction to this book.

**STEREOTYPES**

Objective

To define stereotypes; to become more aware of where we find stereotypes and how they are reinforced; e.g., by the media. Stereotypes are defined by: generalizations, based on some fact, attributes, or categories and label

Procedure

Ask the group to complete the following statements on a separate sheet of paper. Group members can answer according to their own personal opinions or according to what they think "everybody knows" about the particular groups mentioned.

a. "Almost everyone would agree that intelligent, educated, assertive American women today are ."

b. "Some consistent, personal characteristics of people over the age of 65 are ."

c. "It is common knowledge that Blacks raised in the ghetto are ."

d. "Some of the problems with Asian Americans are ."

e. (True or False) "Almost everyone belonging to a minority group would agree that most middle class whites are racist."

2. Have each group member complete statements and hand papers in to facilitator.

3. Have several volunteers read the answers to each question, while group monitors make observations of the answers. Also have one volunteer for each question take notes on the answers and be ready to facilitate a discussion later.

4. Discuss each statement for about 15 minutes beginning with the volunteer who took notes. Focus on key words in each statement and on questions dealing with where we got the answers, how does the media influence the development and maintenance of stereotypes?

1. Assertive women are often confused with being masculine, aggressive, and "women’s libbers."
2. Just what do we mean by consistent, personal characteristics? Do old people begin to act in certain manners because we expect them to?
3. How many people are familiar enough with a Black ghetto to have an idea of what life is like there? Where does the word "ghetto" come from? What do we mean by ghetto? How does the media influence our "expectations" that Blacks and ghettos go hand in hand?
4. How do we define Asian Americans? Really, what are some of the problems that Asians themselves identify as being part of a minority in the U.S.? Who has the problem?
5. What is a middle class white? How do we define the word racist?

**THE CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES OF EDUCATION IN SOCIETY**

Objective

To contrast two divergent and alternative perspectives for viewing education that highlight differences in educational values in a multicultural educational environment.

Procedure

Read the following directions to a group. "In multicultural education generally, it seems to me that we teacher-learners are in the middle of an argument. Our problem is to restate the argument in such a way that we can settle it. What we are ready for is to try to understand what we know about learning wherever it occurs and to see what the implications are for classroom situations. The most simple expression of the argument is through a sampling of the value conflicts it contains in two cultural perspectives."

Perspective A

"I want my child to be treated as an individual by teachers who center their attention of the children and see themselves essentially as guides. Children are capable of planning and discussing their experiences, of being guided from within. The important thing is understanding and insight that leads to growth. I want them through firsthand experience to learn the meaning of freedom, to understand and be committed to a democratic way of life. But, above all, I want them to be adequate people, with a rich and ennobling subjective inner life; only thus can they achieve the creative spontaneity which is man's most precious attribute."

Perspective B

"The teachers are instruments of society and are hired primarily because of their mastery in the sciences and the arts as arranged in school subjects. Their job is to give instruction and to communicate not single interesting facts but rather ideas organized in meaningful relationship to each other, as in a lecture. Teachers know the material to be covered, and it is their responsibility to plan in such a way that it will be covered. Teachers know that getting ahead in this world requires ability to meet the demands of the community, and that only through drill and practice can school achievement become part of one's habit pattern. Many of the important things in life were discovered by others and are learned through vicarious experience dominated by these great authorities. The child is free to think as he wishes, but in the objective world of action he or she must conform to the standard of the community.

Circle the number in the following semantic differential which describes your own commitment to basic aims of education in society.

Individual 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Society

Child-centered 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Subject-centered

Guidance 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Instruction

Discussion 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Lecture

Pupil planning 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Teacher planning

Intrinsic motivation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extrinsic motivation

Insight learning 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Drill and practice

Growth 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Achievement

Firsthand exper. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Vicarious experience

Freedom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Dominance

Democratic 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Authoritarian

Subjective world 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Objective world

Spontaneity 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Conformity

Insight

There is more than one way to look at the ideal educational process.

\*Adapted and modified from Herbert A. Thelen, Dynamics of Groups at Work, University of Chicago, 1956