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A study of needs and interests of seventh grade home economics students of the Vigo County School Corporation to provide a basis for a home economics curriculum

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A STUDY OF NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF SEVENTH GRADE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS OF THE VIGO COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION TO PROVIDE A BASIS FOR A HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM

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If the home economics curriculum is to contribute to the students' success as persons, family members, and citizens, the learning experiences must be planned in the light of the individual's needs and interests. This implies that teachers should be aware of students' needs and interests in order that they may plan an effective home economics curriculum which will contribute to the development of desired competences in their students.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purposes of this study are (1) to determine needs and interests of the seventh grade home economics students of Vigo County School Corporation and (2) to develop a curriculum to meet these needs and interests. In developing this study, the writer (1) reviewed related literature and research concerning the development of curricula in home economics; (2) collected data from the seventh grade home economics students and their parents of the Vigo County School Corporation concerning needs and interests; (3) analyzed these data; and (4) developed a curriculum designed to meet these needs and interests of the junior high school students of the Vigo County School Corporation.

Importance of the study. The personal needs and interests of seventh grade home economics students of Vigo County School Corporation are an important part of the content of the curriculum for them. Determining and meeting these needs and interests is basic to the development of a curriculum that will motivate students with different talents and backgrounds of living so that they become increasingly resourceful and independent in solving their own problems. To develop a curriculum that provides some possibility of accomplishing the purpose set forth, the teacher of home economics must be able to recognize both the needs and the interests of the students as maturing individuals of a society undergoing a change. A curriculum built according to this philosophy will be based upon:

1. A study of the needs and interests of a society to preserve and improve the democratic way of living.

2. A study of home life as it is lived today, and as it may become.

3. A study of the home responsibilities of the specific students for which the curriculum is being planned.

4. A study revealing trends which may be applicable to specific students for which the curriculum is being planned.

5. A study of the means by which students may be led to recognize their own needs and interests.

II. LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is limited by the type of data which may be collected through the questionnaire technique. Although this technique is an indirect approach, it was felt that the response would be valid since much of the data was objective and general in nature.

The writer realizes that the data gathered concerning the needs and interests of the seventh grade home economics students of Vigo County School Corporation apply only to those students. Even so methods of collection and analysis of data may be basic to studies which would be pertinent to similar students in other situations.

III. METHOD USED IN THE STUDY

The library method and survey procedure were used in this study by the writer. A questionnaire which included the family survey and curriculum checklist was developed and was given to the seventh grade home economics students of the Vigo County School Corporation. The questionnaires were checked by the home economics students and their parents. Reference materials were obtained from Indiana State College Library, the office of Dr. Anne M. Lee, Chairman of Home Economics Department of Indiana State College, and the office

of (Mrs.) Bonnie Barrick, Home Economics Supervisor for the Southwest District of Indiana.

IV. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Important terms used in this study are defined as follows:

> Home economics. Home economics is the field of knowledge and service primarily concerned with strengthening family life through: educating the individual for family living, improving the services and goods used by families, conducting research to discover the changing needs of individuals, and furthering community, national, and world conditions favorable to family living.[1]

> Homemaking education. Homemaking education is the program of instruction and organized experiences offered at the junior and senior high school level, designed to help students solve problems of personal and family life and assume homemaking responsibilities.[2]

Curriculum. Curriculum is the sum total of all the experiences that are provided by the school for its students.[3]

Checklist. Checklist is a prepared list of items that may relate to and be used for purposes of observation and/or

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[1]Committee of Philosophy and Objectives of Home Economics, Home Economics New Directions (Washington, D.C.: American Home Economics Association, 1959), p. 4.

[2]Carter V. Good, Editor, Dictionary of Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Co., 1959), p. 271.

[3]Gertrude Noar, The Junior High School Today and Tomorrow (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1953), p. 310.

evaluation, and on which one may show by a check mark the presence, absence, or frequency or occurrence of each item on the list.[4]

Research. Research is the method of seeking truth that goes far beyond the elementary methods of chance, trial-and-error, and generalization from experience and even beyond the more advanced method of logic.[5]

Action research. Action research is the process by which practitioners attempt to study their problems scientifically in order to guide, correct and evaluate their decisions and actions.[6]

Area of home economics. An area of home economics is a group of learning experiences centered around any one aspect of homemaking.[7]

Junior high school. Junior high school is an educational program which is designed particularly to meet the

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[4]Good, op. cit., p. 87.

[5]Tyrus Hillway, Introduction to Research (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1956), p. 5.

[6]Stephen M. Corey, Action Research to Improve School Practices (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953), p. 6.

[7]_____, Florida Homemaking Education (Tallahassee, Florida: Florida State Department of Education, 1959), p. 6.

needs, the interests, and the abilities of boys and girls during early adolescence.[8]

Home economics new directions. The clearest new direction for home economics is to help people identify and develop certain fundamental competences that will be effective in personal and family living regardless of the particular circumstances of the individual or family.

Fundamental to effective living are the competences to:

establish values which give meaning to personal, family, and community living; select goals appropriate to these values.

create a home and community environment conducive to the healthy growth and development of all members of the family at all stages of the family cycle

achieve good interpersonal relationships within the home and within the community

nurture the young and foster their physical, mental, and social growth and development

make and carry out intelligent decisions regarding the use of personal, family, and community resources

establish long-range goals for financial security and work toward their achievement

plan consumption of goods and services--including food, clothing, and housing--in ways that will promote values and goals established by the family

purchase consumer goods and services appropriate to an overall consumption plan and wise use of economic resources

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[8]William T. Gruhn and Harl R. Douglass, The Modern Junior High School (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1956), p. 4.

perform the tasks of maintaining a home in such a way that they will contribute effectively to furthering individual and family goals

enrich personal and family life through the arts and humanities and through refreshing and creative use of leisure

take an intelligent part in legislative and other social programs which directly affect the welfare of individuals and families

develop mutual understanding and appreciation of differing cultures and ways of life, and co-operate with people of other cultures who are striving to raise levels of living[9]

V. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE THESIS

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: Chapter II is devoted to the review of the related literature and curriculum development research; Chapter III sets up the method and procedure of gathering the data and the presentation and analysis of the data; Chapter IV presents home economics curricula for seventh, eighth, and ninth grades; and Chapter V presents the summary and conclusions of the study with recommendations for the junior high school home economics curriculum of the Vigo County School Corporation developed through the needs and interests of its seventh grade home economics students.

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[9]Committee on Philosophy and Objectives of Home Economics, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Changes in our society are affecting the home economics curriculum. It is a well known fact that in our society today, change is a strong characteristic of American life. Society makes a constant effort to seek for tomorrow, something a little better than that which we have today. Many dynamic forces in our society are having a great influence on the family living. Social changes call for a shift of emphasis from development of skills to concern for values, attitudes, and appreciations needed for today's family living. The family, the basic unit of our society, has been directly affected by two complex generations. Its individual members are constantly striving to make personal adjustment to each innovation society offers.

Home economics teachers need to be alert to rapidly shifting conditions in our society. They will need to study what these changes mean to families and how they affect homemaking programs. Awareness of these changes should be of value to the home economics teacher so that she may gear her teaching to her students and their family needs.

The review of related literature and research in the remainder of this chapter will consider the following topics: (1) need for curriculum development, (2) the teacher's role

in improving the home economics curriculum, (3) home economics new directions, (4) action research, and (5) research findings.

I. NEED FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Home economics teachers need to be creative in incorporating changes in family living and their implications for the homemaking education program into a functional curriculum.

In the past fifty years the junior high school has grown significantly as a school to serve the special needs of early adolescents. Many features of the high school home economics curriculum have been transferred into the junior high school home economics curriculum. There is some question as to how advisable a modified senior high school home economics curriculum is for junior high school youth.[1]

Home economics at the junior high school level has sometimes been a stereotyped curriculum which succeeds in killing rather than creating interest in a thorough study of home and family life as it relates to adolescents and adults. Administrators, supervisors, teachers, and parents are aware that not all seventh, eighth, and ninth grade home

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[1]Arleen C. Otto, New Designs in Homemaking Programs in Junior High Schools (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958), p. 15.

economics offerings are adapted to the needs of youth. Sometimes the special needs and interests of these individuals as pre-adolescents are ignored.[2]

The secondary school has come in for a great deal of discussion during the last few years. Responsible educators are looking ahead to new and better ways of serving our growing secondary school population.

One of the strongest influences on the home economics curriculum in the junior high school is the great change that has taken place in our home and family life. The early American family was quite self-sufficient, not only in the production of household goods and services, but also in the education of children for home living. This self-sufficiency has been greatly modified in the last fifty years. Industry has taken from the home much of the production of food and other necessities of life. It has made available many new kinds of food products, fabrics, and household appliances. As a result, a more complex pattern of living makes the problems of selection and consumption increasingly important.[3]

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[2] _____, Home Economics for Boys and Girls, in 7th, 8th, 9th Grades: Some Descriptions of Promising Practices (Washington, D.C.: United States Office of Education, 1952), pp. 2-3.

[3] William T. Gruhn and Harl R. Douglass, The Modern Junior High School (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1956), p. 128.

The relationships among family members have also been modified. Young people today are associated must less with their parents than they were in former days. Increasing numbers of women are combining wage-earning and homemaking, thus placing more responsibility for home activities on other members of the family. The problems of management and human relations are of great importance. These changes in the family situation have caused the school to provide more instruction in personal and family living.

Changes in economic and social conditions resulting from wars and depression have been reflected in the home economics curriculum. Attempts to help families to adjust to these changes have resulted in less emphasis on cooking and sewing skills and increasing emphasis on nutrition, conservation of food and household materials, clothing economics, housing, consumer efficiency, and time and money management.[4]

The growth of science is another factor which has been influential in re-directing the home economics curriculum. Early in the present century, Ellen H. Richards, a sanitary chemist and a homemaker, saw the need and the possibilities for utilizing the resources of the rapidly

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[4] Ibid., p. 129.

developing science dealing with problems of food, clothing, and shelter. She advocated that the school should teach children certain things about family living which they were no longer learning at home. For a time the application of science to home living was one of the major aims of home economics education.

Developmental needs of individuals as a basis upon which to select learning experiences to be included in the curriculum have received much emphasis. This basis is not unrelated to that of personal and social needs, but is rather a focusing of thought upon and a more positive statement of the personal needs of young people who are growing up in the families of today.

The chief aims of the home economics curriculum should be directed toward (1) recognizing social changes as they arise, (2) finding out how each change may affect the curriculum, and (3) helping each student approach and solve the problems arising as a result of a changing society.[5]

In some small and in most larger schools, provision is made for students to have systematic experiences in

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[5] _____, A Guide for Program Planning in Homemaking Education (Phoenix, Arizona: State Department of Vocational Education, 1956), p. 3.

homemaking. The teacher and students plan the units of work cooperatively. Each unit is planned around a need or interest of concern to the students.[6]

Home economics educators throughout the United States are making continuous efforts to improve the home economics curriculum. New resource materials are being prepared and others are being modified through research. It is a widely held conviction that continuous effort must be made to improve the home economics curriculum if it is to serve the needs of home and family living in the dynamic and changing society of today.[7]

The basic beliefs of democratic living necessitate a kind of group association which provides for the growth and development of each individual. This implies that each individual is unique, that each individual is important, and that each has an optimal development that is of major concern. It further implies that the manner in which individuals are associated may determine the extent of their growth and development. In home economics an attempt is made to

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[6]Gertrude M. Lewis, Educating Children in Grades Seven and Eight (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1960), pp. 78-79.

[7]Selma Lippeatt, Adventuring in Research to Improve School Practices in Homemaking Programs (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1956), Leaflet 3512-I.

provide the kind of group association which will promote the optimal development of each individual by encouraging students, teachers, and others concerned cooperatively to plan, execute, and evaluate learning experiences.[8]

Pupil-teacher planning and sharing assumes a kind of group association in which all pupils feel secure in the knowledge that their ideas, needs, interests, and abilities will be considered, and that their contribution to the group will be welcomed and appreciated. This procedure offers opportunities for students to acquire habits and skills of initiative, self-direction, self-discipline, and competence in democratic living.

II. THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN IMPROVING THE HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM

Current literature and comments from teachers indicate a prevalence of junior high school home economics curricula patterned after senior high school home economics offerings with similar goals, organization, facilities, and methods. However, there is an actual necessity for a development of a home economics curriculum to serve the needs and special interests of the junior high school home economics students.

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[8] _____, Florida Homemaking Education (Tallahassee, Florida: Florida State Department of Education, 1959), p. 8.

The teacher's role becomes one of helping students to consider their needs and interests, to formulate goals, to plan learning experiences, and to evaluate the effectiveness of their plans as they proceed toward the predetermined goals. The techniques of cooperative planning and sharing will be acquired gradually. Both teacher and students will become more proficient through practice.

The curriculum in home economics in the schools of the United States is not prescribed by the federal or even the state government although basic guides are suggested. What is taught in home economics classes is decided at the local school level. This responsibility means that the individual home economics teacher with the aid of administrators, students, and parents decides what is to be included in the home economics curriculum.[9]

In the past most people have used the term "curriculum" to denote only the school's formal program of studies. Today, most laymen still use the term in this way. Most educators, however, have adapted a broader definition of the term. The word "curriculum" in this broader sense should include all

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[9] Berenice Mallory and Mary Laxson Buffum, Education for Homemaking in the Secondary Schools of the United States (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1958), p. 4.

the experiences which students have under the auspices of the school.[10] Improving the home economics curriculum means improving any home experience which any student has while under the control of the school.

Students learn most effectively when (1) they see a clear and sensible relationship between what they are asked to do and some purpose or goal which they accept; (2) their needs and interests are taken into account; (3) they share in planning their educational goals; (4) personal satisfaction in their accomplishments is re-inforced by social approval; (5) what they learn serves some purpose; (6) what is taught satisfies their desires for new experiences; (7) they use more than one of their senses; (8) verbal activities are supplemented by other direct experiences; (9) they are given material which is meaningfully structured; and (10) transfer of training is deliberately sought. A teacher who strives to further these conditions is improving the curriculum.[11]

Home economics programs should be rich in opportunities for teacher to learn that (1) cooperative learning

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[10] Harold C. Hand, Principles of Public Secondary Education (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1958), p. 258.

[11] Ibid., p. 260.

situations are natural and home-school cooperation is essential for their success; (2) many different approaches can be made to reach and help motivate students who have different talents and backgrounds; (3) individual responsibility is called for in home experience programs and other community work; (4) essential factors in the home situation are not obvious to a family member because she is so close to the situation; principles, concepts, and meanings should be brought specifically to the attention of the student; (5) individuals can be helped to recall everyday experiences, to examine them, and to seek to interpret them in ways to clarify the meaning of values, and to appreciate them more adequately; and (6) a concern for understanding people in the community and in the world grows naturally in a study of home economics where emphasis is on the importance of the individual and the home.[12]

Home economics teachers need to recognize that the culture sets the pattern which adolescents follow in their family and social relationships, and that there is a wide difference in the type of conduct acceptable in different social groups. Home economics teachers also need to understand how behavior is influenced by attitudes toward self

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[12] Edna P. Amidon, "New Explorations in Home Economics Education," Journal of Home Economics, 52:625, October, 1960.

and toward others, and by the strong loyalties to and acceptance of the standards and values of the social group. When teachers have such understanding, they readily see the need for adapting the curriculum so that it may serve its best purpose.[13]

Home economics teachers should be aware of the personal and family goals of their students so that they will appreciate the importance of refraining from imposing standards of different culture patterns upon the students. Furthermore, they will accept students as they are and guide them to progress toward their goals at a rate suited to their ability, and they will encourage successful accomplishment in terms of the students' own progress.

The home economics teacher must recognize both the needs of the students as maturing individuals who are living in a social world and the needs of a society undergoing change. A curriculum built according to this philosophy will be based upon (1) a study of the needs of a society that is striving to preserve and improve the democratic way of living, (2) a study of home life in its various patterns as it is lived today, and as it is evolving, (3) a study of the home life of the specific community for which the curriculum

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[13] _____, Home Economics Education Junior High School (Cincinnati, Ohio: Cincinnati Public Schools, 1957), p. 17.

is being planned, with its unique customs and traditions, (4) a recognition of the basic needs and characteristic interests of young people of various ages as disclosed by research, (5) a study of developmental needs and interests of individual students in the particular group which plans are being made, (6) a study of students' concepts of their own needs as they see them, and (7) a study of parents' judgments of the needs of their children.[14]

Home economics teachers in today's world must have the ability to re-examine and interpret daily experiences against basic ethical values. Those who work closely with young people express in many different ways the need which boys and girls have to see meaning in their every day experiences and ability to find and apply basic principles and concepts to the solution of their life problems.

III. HOME ECONOMICS NEW DIRECTIONS

Home economics educators are being challenged to use the Home Economics New Directions published in June 1959 by the American Home Economics Association. They are analyzing home economics curricula to see whether these curricula are

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[14] Maude Williamson and Mary Stewart Lyle, Homemaking Education in the High School (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1961), p. 59.

focused on the competences toward which home economics should be directed. They are defining more specifically the twelve competences developed by the Philosophy and Objectives Committee of the American Home Economics Association and are using these competences as guides in curriculum development. Various home economics groups are considering how to adapt and develop home economics curricula to meet such present and future needs of individuals and families as are referred to in Home Economics New Directions.[15]

There is no one procedure for using the fundamental competences in planning a quality home economics curriculum. It has been suggested that home economics educators use the report of the Philosophy and Objectives Committee as a basis for curriculum planning. The basic philosophy of education in America, the principles of learning, the developmental characteristics of the learner, the scope of other educational programs, and the present organization of educational institutions continue to be important factors which also must be considered in curriculum development. The competences can serve as a guide for building a curriculum to fit the needs of today's families in today's world.

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[15] Margaret Alexander and Alberta Hill, "New Directions Guide Program Planning," Journal of Home Economics, 52:83, February, 1960.

Numerous changes have occurred in society in the last fifty years that have affected individuals and families. These changes should affect the emphasis and direction in the home economics program. Though the goals are in general the same, the means of attaining these goals are radically different today. The change from a production to a consumption economy has been striking. In 1910, about one out of every three persons lived on a farm. By 1958, only one of every eight persons or according to some studies, one out of ten, was a farm resident. Once a relatively self-sufficient production unit, the family now purchases most of its products. For example, nine-tenths of all the clothing worn in this country is purchased ready-made. Some figures indicate ninety-three per cent. About twenty-five per cent of the money spent for food is for meals outside the home. Frozen food production has quadrupled since 1947. Practically every family uses a few or many precooked or partially cooked food products, and this has raised new nutritional problems.[16]

Out of a study of these and other changes affecting families, the committee became convinced that there are certain kinds of competences that are particularly important

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[16] Beulah I. Coon, "New Directions for Secondary Education," Journal of Home Economics, 51:839, December, 1959.

today which should be outcomes of our home economics educational programs. As one studies these competences, it is apparent that the management, the relationships, the consumer responsibilities, the health and community aspects in the life of the individual and family are stressed because these are essential in the light of the changes in society and homes in the last fifty years.[17]

In one state, the high school curriculum guide is being checked in terms of the competences stated in Home Economics New Directions. A similar procedure has been reported by a supervisor in a city system. Principals and guidance personnel in this city have been invited to participate with home economics teachers in discussions of the implications of the competences.[18]

Home economics, more than any other subject taught in school, is better integrated in its presentation to the worth of the American home. An interdisciplinary approach in this area is a real need in the years ahead. Home economics should pioneer the way.[19]

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[17] Ibid., p. 841.

[18] Alexander and Hill, op. cit., p. 102.

[19] Jean S. Taylor, "Homemakers' Competences," Journal of Home Economics, 51:688, October, 1959.

The uses of the Home Economics New Directions are many and imaginative. The home economics teachers are able, and willing to assist individuals and families in developing competences in many areas. Each home economics teacher is challenged today to analyze the home economics curriculum to see whether it really is adapted to the needs of individuals and families in this fast-moving space age of ours.

IV. ACTION RESEARCH

There is a recognized need for carrying on some research as a basis for improvement of school practices in home economics. This research approach demands that a systematic procedure be used. Action research is relied upon to bring educational practice into close harmony with educational theory, since for most people "seeing is believing" and the results of one's own experiments make a lasting impression.[20] Modern educational research has established that learning tends to be more efficient and longer lasting when it takes place in a real situation. An effective home economics curriculum provides a wide variety of learning experiences closely related to homemaking problems encountered in the home and community.

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[20]Sara Blackwell, "Action Research, Its Promise and Problems," American Vocational Journal, 36:14, January, 1961.

Jane Franseth in an article written for School Life stated that action research is a systematic examination conducted by individuals or groups studying their own practices in search of sound answers to unsolved problems in their work and aimed at improving their own performance on their jobs. Action research, which is sometimes called on-the-job research, includes the development of a plan to test a guess, a hunch, or a hypothesis or to find answers to a question, a systematic collection of data on what is being done, and an analysis of the data to determine the extent to which a guess or a hypothesis is correct or a curricular practice is effective. The researchers are the teachers or other educators examining the effectiveness of their own performances.[21]

Educators in general have come to recognize the function and importance of action research in improving teaching and the curriculum, as a means of bridging the gap between teacher preparation and classroom practice, and between the findings of research and beneficial changes in the classroom. Many teachers have been stimulated to undertake or support action research by the convincing evidence that systematic study and experimentation on the job by

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[21] Jane Franseth, "Improving the Curriculum and Teaching Through Action Research," School Life, 42:8, December, 1959.

teachers and curriculum workers do increase their knowledge of the educative process and help them improve their practices.[22]

Learning how to do research, how to experiment, or how to carry out an investigative study is not easy. Home economics educators do agree that such learning is possible and that effective training procedures can be developed and utilized to this end. In such a training approach to research new knowledge as well as the development of skills, interests, attitudes, understandings, and abilities is implied. The research approach points to the need for expanding and extending training opportunities for home economics educators. The research process aims at discovering and retesting new ideas. The need is quite evident when one considers the ever-changing world which is increasingly dominated by scientific and technological advances.

An individual home economics teacher who makes a study as a basis for improving her own practices will use the following elements of research process: (1) identifying the problem area; (2) defining the specific problem; (3) formulating the hypothesis; (4) designing the test of

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[22] Ibid., p. 10.

the hypothesis; (5) obtaining evidence; (6) challenging and generalizing the data; and (7) retesting if necessary.[23]

All day and every day, teachers make decisions that affect what and how children learn. It should be assumed that the quality of their decisions improves as they discover for themselves better ways of working and of finding sound answers to their problems about the educative process. The main function of action research in the school is to help educators improve curriculum and teach systematic examination and evaluation of their own work in helping children learn.[24] Action research is assumed to be an instrument for improving educational practice and a more potent instrument than professional research. Common sense supports this assumption. Educational theory supports it. Through action research teachers are becoming better teachers. They are learning to test for themselves and more effectively and wisely use the findings of research. There is an urgent need for improvement of the home economics curriculum. Many recognize that teaching can be researching and the teachers can be researchers.

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[23] Selma Lippeatt, Adventuring in Research to Improve School Practices in Homemaking Programs (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1956), Leaflet 3512-IV.

[24] Franseth, loc. cit.

V. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The core program in home living was developed for the seventh grade at Aberdeen, South Dakota, by teachers of science, art, music, health, industrial arts, and home economics. The major objective of the Aberdeen program was to help boys and girls solve the basic problems which they meet in everyday living. Some of the units dealt with interesting things about home life in Aberdeen, personal and social health, social relationship, better home and family membership, leisure-time activities, and a safer home in which to live.[25]

A study by Sylvia Janes Secrest was designed to find out some of the qualifications considered desirable in a babysitter. A review of the literature led to the preparation of a questionnaire and two checklists. The questionnaire was designed to find out how many of the 162 eighth grade students at Wilson Junior High School, Charlotte, North Carolina, were babysitters. The ninety-three students who were babysitters were then asked to check a list of items dealing with babysitting responsibilities. The second checklist was prepared for parents and was sent to the sixty-two

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[25] Gruhn and Douglass, op. cit., p. 131.

parents who employed eighth grade students as babysitters and fifty checked the list. The study of data showed that the most frequent responsibility expected of a babysitter was putting the child to bed. Approximately eighty per cent of the parents expected the babysitter to assume this responsibility. Over eighty per cent of both parents and girls replied that the sitters got acquainted with the children before taking care of them.[26]

A study of child development has become an accepted part of most high school home economics curricula. However, it is frequently given in the later years of high school. Since there are many students in the junior high school engaged in babysitting, it would seem desirable for a home economics teacher to give serious thought to what should be taught at that level concerning little children. It should be recognized also that there are many problems involved for the young girl who babysits--especially away from home--and for the young children being cared for. Some basic understanding of why children behave as they do would be valuable to young adolescents. The need for immediate help on a job

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[26] Ivol Spafford and Edna P. Amidon, Studies of Home Economics in High School and in Adult Education Programs, 1955-58 (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 23.

might give the impetus for the beginning of a broader understanding of child growth and development.[27]

A study by Imogene Lockett was concerned with developing a course in home and family life to meet the needs of junior high school students at Meridian, Mississippi. Students were guided in arriving at objectives for the course in modern living. The objectives which they finally set for themselves were

1. To understand myself and others.
2. To acquire better manners.
3. To understand more about boy-girl relationships.
4. To be a responsible family member.
5. To make better use of my leisure time.
6. To live more happily with other people.[28]

The main role of the teacher in this experiment was to determine the needs of each individual and each group, to guide status-giving activities and to help students evaluate their growth in relationships. Lockett began the experiment believing that if such a course were developed, it should be a special course in the home economics curriculum. Her recommendations at the end of the two-year experimental program were that such a course should

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[27] Ibid., p. 24.

[28] Ibid., pp. 26-27.

1. Be a core subject with interdisciplinary activities.

2. Be the kind of situation in which students feel free to think and express themselves.

3. Be planned by students, parents and teacher through democratic group processes.

4. Make use of community resources in order to make it family-school-community centered.

5. Be a dynamic experience for students.[29]

If such a class is to be vital and functional, it must be based upon the needs and interests of the students in the class and the needs and interests of the local community.[30]

Erma M. Wilson reported that the teachers in the public schools in Des Moines, Iowa, used a copy of Home Economics New Directions which became the basis of their curriculum revision. From the twelve competences they identified seven which they thought the early junior high school curriculum should include to contribute to effective personal and family living. They selected the following:

1. Establish values which give meaning to personal, family, and community living; select goals appropriate to values.

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid., p. 28.

2. Create a home and community environment conducive to the healthy growth and development of all members of the family at all stages of the family cycle.

3. Nurture the young and foster their physical, mental, and social growth and development.

4. Plan consumption of goods and services--including food, clothing, and housing--in ways that will promote values and goals established by the family.

5. Perform the task of maintaining a home in such a way that they will contribute effectively to furthering individual and family goals.

6. Enrich personal and family life through the arts and humanities and through refreshing and creative use of leisure.

7. Develop mutual understanding and appreciation of differing cultures and ways of life, and cooperate with people of other cultures who are striving to raise levels of living.[31]

Next they selected units of home economics that should be taught which would best meet the needs of their seventh and eighth grade students. Even as they did this, they kept in mind the development of the seven fundamental competences selected. As the home economics teachers developed their units, the competences became their big general objectives. The first competence of establishing values was the first big generalization.[32]

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[31] Erma M. Wilson, "Revising a Homemaking Curriculum," Journal of Home Economics, 53:11, January, 1961.

[32] Ibid.

The individual objectives were planned to be taught within each unit. To achieve these objectives the students were to

1. Recognize that there is much to be learned and set up reasonably attainable limits in all areas of home economics.

2. Gain respect for the individual personality.

3. Enjoy friends. Know how to be friendly.

4. Realize some values of quiet and relaxation.

5. Carry out family leisure activities.

6. Recognize that the way families spend their money depends on their values.[33]

The teachers worked on each objective showing how they could attain it at each grade level. As a result they had a pattern of sequence from seventh and eighth grade through high school.[34]

Home economics educators in Mississippi have been concerned with the question of how well the home economics curriculum meets the needs of the students, of the home, and of society in the light of the rapid social and technical changes now taking place. A survey was conducted in

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[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

176 white schools from all sections of the state with approximately 3,000 students participating. The people conducting the study assumed that students whose mothers are full-time homemakers take more responsibility than those whose mothers are employed outside the home. The results showed that the working status of the mother was not an important factor in determining the responsibility students assumed in the home.[35]

Regardless of the working status of the mother, all students assumed some responsibility of tasks in the home, but they differed in the extent to which they participated in performing the task, the amount of assistance they received, and in the type task they performed. Several outstanding factors in curriculum improvement may be implied from the results of the study. There was a need for better cooperative planning between the home and the school and for new emphases in the present home economics curriculum.[36]

The home economics teacher needs to understand what responsibilities the mother expects the student to assume

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[35] Ruth Wallace, "Home Responsibilities of Homemaking Students," Journal of Home Economics, 53:45, January, 1961.

[36] Ibid.

at home, and the mother needs to understand how the home economics program contributes in learning to assume these responsibilities. The outstanding implication in regard to the planning of the program are

1. The need for better planning of classroom instruction to coincide with home experiences.

2. The need for helping the ninth grade students see the contribution they can make in the family.

3. The need for emphasizing the training of students in the managerial tasks.

4. The need for emphasizing consumer education.

5. The need for developing in students an ability to solve problems.

6. The need for investigating ways of making the activity of watching television more of a family-centered activity.

7. The need for helping students plan ways of entertaining in the home.

8. The need for preparing students to participate in up-to-date recreational activities.

9. The need for planning action research.[37]

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[37] Mary Ellen W. Pope and Marion T. Loftin, Responsibilities in Home and Family Living of First Year Homemaking Students (Jackson, Mississippi: Mississippi State Board for Vocational Education, 1960), pp. 146-50.

Data obtained in the study served as an excellent basis for planning the first year home economics program. It was reported that teachers should be encouraged to use on-the-job research to find out the needs of students at all levels of instruction. Furthermore, they should recognize the function and importance of action research in improving teaching and the curriculum. Home economics can reach its declared objectives only as teachers are willing to use the scientific approach to improve the curriculum and teaching by systematically examining and evaluating their own work in helping students learn.[38]

Significant facts have been difficult to select from the multitude of ideas related to home economics curriculum for seventh and eight graders. School experiences can be found that have been designed to help girls learn some of the skills connected with homemaking. There is evidence that the junior high school can and should provide quite a different program from the senior high school.[39]

As the basis for revising the home economics curriculum in South Dakota, an evaluation study was made by Carol S. Wagner. Approximately 70 per cent of both parents and students placed great value on learning to plan and buy

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[38] Ibid.

[39] Otto, op. cit., p. 12.

wisely in the foods and clothing units. Emphasis placed by both the parents and students upon the value of instruction in marriage and family living, the home, child rearing, and home care of the sick reinforced the importance of a family-centered approach in teaching home economics.[40]

The Research Director of the Pasadena City Schools made a study in which seventh and eighth grade students, their home economics teachers, and their parents evaluated the seventh grade home economics curriculum. As a result of the study, it was decided to keep seventh grade home economics as a required course. An unexpectedly high rating was given the course by accelerated students. They thought the course more valuable than did the students who did not have the additional work load of advanced math and language studies. The approval of working mothers was also significant. Students and parents both rated home economics as "valuable" but the teachers rated the program as "outstanding."[41]

A good home economics curriculum cannot be described in a general way, because what makes a curriculum "good" is the way it meets the needs of girls of a particular community.

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[40] Spafford and Amidon, op. cit., pp. 94-95.

[41] _____, "Pasadena Homemaking Program Faces A Challenge," What's New in Home Economics, 25:80, September, 1961.

A teacher of home economics faces a tremendous challenge as she attempts--with the aid of her school administrators, community members, her supervisors, and her students--to develop the kind of home economics curriculum needed in her community. No standardized description or rating chart for a good curriculum can be supplied to her. Perhaps hers is one of the most rewarding of all vocations as she assists girls with meeting their problems of home and family living today and with making plans for the future.[42] The home economics teacher is challenged to examine and sometimes redirect educational programs which confront her as well as other teachers when they recognize that change characterizes all aspects of home-school-community activities. Simultaneously individuals may discover similar needs for further study, challenge, changes, and new knowledge in a common area of work. This challenge appears to be a very difficult task until one realizes that only one step can be taken experimentally. It has been said that the longest journey begins with the first step.

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[42] Mallory and Buffum, op. cit., p. 30.

CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

No single source of information is adequate to provide a comprehensive basis for building the curriculum in which the student plays an important part in providing essential facts. The needs and interests of home economics students are the concern of every home economics teacher, and an awareness of the needs and interests is vital to the intelligent operation of a home economics curriculum.

Education is a process of changing the behavior pattern of the students. If education is an active process, it involves the active efforts of the students. The home economics students' needs, interests, and problems should be identified so that these will help serve as the focus of educational attention.

In the remainder of this chapter, the questionnaire, which includes the family survey and curriculum checklist, will be developed and presented. This questionnaire was given to the seventh grade home economics students of the Vigo County School Corporation. In this chapter, also, will be the analysis of the data collected from the questionnaires.

I. DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

After reviewing and studying several home economics resource units from different states a questionnaire containing a family survey and curriculum checklist was developed so that the home economics teacher could be alert to the needs and interests of the students she sees daily.

Family survey. The home economics teacher faces problems when she tries to reach all of the parents of the students that she teaches. A common problem is getting a more general acceptance of the basic nature of the home economics curriculum and getting parents to recognize the contributions home economics education has brought and is bringing to family and community living.

The family survey provides a picture of the student's home life in order that the teacher may be able to plan a home economics curriculum to meet the student's needs and interests.

Curriculum checklist. The checklist is one way of obtaining the desired information. It can be used by relatively untrained raters as well as by experts. The checklist is used to gain information which may give evidence pertaining to the curriculum development concerning the needs and interest of the students. A checklist may

be used to gather personal information concerning students, the opinions of parents regarding the learning experiences, included in the curriculum, or the attitudes held by age-mates regarding desirable actions for students in given situations. The checklist should contain specific items intended to get definite and concise answers that are relevant to the subject being studied.

The checklist represents an important contribution to the field of curriculum building. Its use should result in a distinct upgrading in the home economics curriculum as it attempts to provide the background of the students and to reveal their special needs and interests. Students should be encouraged to analyze their individual and group needs and interests and then to set up tentative plans for action. Planning is done more intelligently after students have had an opportunity to record information about what they want to learn. The checklist gives the learner a chance to enter actively into a consideration of her family, home, and personal problems in which she is deeply involved. This involvement helps her to recognize her problems and is basic to effective learning in this area.

The writer developed a questionnaire including a family survey and a curriculum checklist and gave it to 848 seventh grade home economics students of Vigo County School

Corporation during the week of May 15, 1961. A copy of the questionnaire appears in Appendix A. Table I shows the distribution of the questionnaires to the various schools and the number and percentages returned.

TABLE I

THE DISTRIBUTION OF QUESTIONNAIRES TO VARIOUS SCHOOLS OF VIGO COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION AND THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE RETURNED

School	Number given out	Returned	Per cent returned
Blackhawk	10	9	90
Concannon	52	50	96
Deming	77	26	35
Fayette	32	30	94
Fontanet	18	10	56
Glenn	47	37	79
Honey Creek	68	55	81
Laboratory	31	18	58
McLean	100	87	87
North	36	31	86
Otter Creek	57	42	74
Pimento	17	16	94
Prairie Creek	4	4	100
Rankin	44	43	98
Riley	18	16	89
Sarah Scott	75	63	84
Woodrow Wilson	163	131	80
Total	848	668	79

The parents with their daughters were asked to fill in the questionnaires. Seventy-nine per cent, or 668 questionnaires were returned.

II. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

A twenty-five per cent stratified random sampling of questionnaires was taken. All the returned questionnaires were grouped by schools and numbered in these groups. This is the simplest and most frequently used type of stratified sampling. Each individual has an equal chance of being selected in this type of sampling. Questionnaires were selected within each school group by using a table of random numbers. The table of random numbers was obtained from the Statistical Methods for Behavioral Sciences by Allen L. Edwards.[1] The tables consist of numbers arranged at random in columns and rows. The table can be used by entering at any point and by reading in any direction, down or up, right or left.[2]

Table II shows the twenty-five per cent of the stratified random sampling selected from the various schools of the Vigo County School Corporation.

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[1] Allen L. Edwards, Statistical Methods for the Behavioral Sciences (New York: Rinehart and Co. Inc., 1954), pp. 472-76.

[2] Ibid., p. 250.

TABLE II

NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES USED FROM THE VARIOUS SCHOOLS FOR THE STRATIFIED RANDOM SAMPLING

School	Number used
Blackhawk	2
Concannon	12
Deming	6
Fayette	7
Fontanet	3
Glenn	9
Honey Creek	14
Laboratory	5
McLean	22
North	8
Otter Creek	11
Pimento	4
Prairie Creek	1
Rankin	11
Riley	4
Sarah Scott	16
Woodrow Wilson	33
Total	171

The number of questionnaires tabulated in the study was 171, which was approximately one-fourth of the questionnaires returned.

The writer tabulated all the data by dividing the questionnaires into socio-economic groups according to the

father's occupation, using the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, Volume II, as reference.[3] In Figure 1 the groups with the percentages in each socio-economic group of the seventh grade home economics students of the Vigo County School Corporation used in the study are shown.

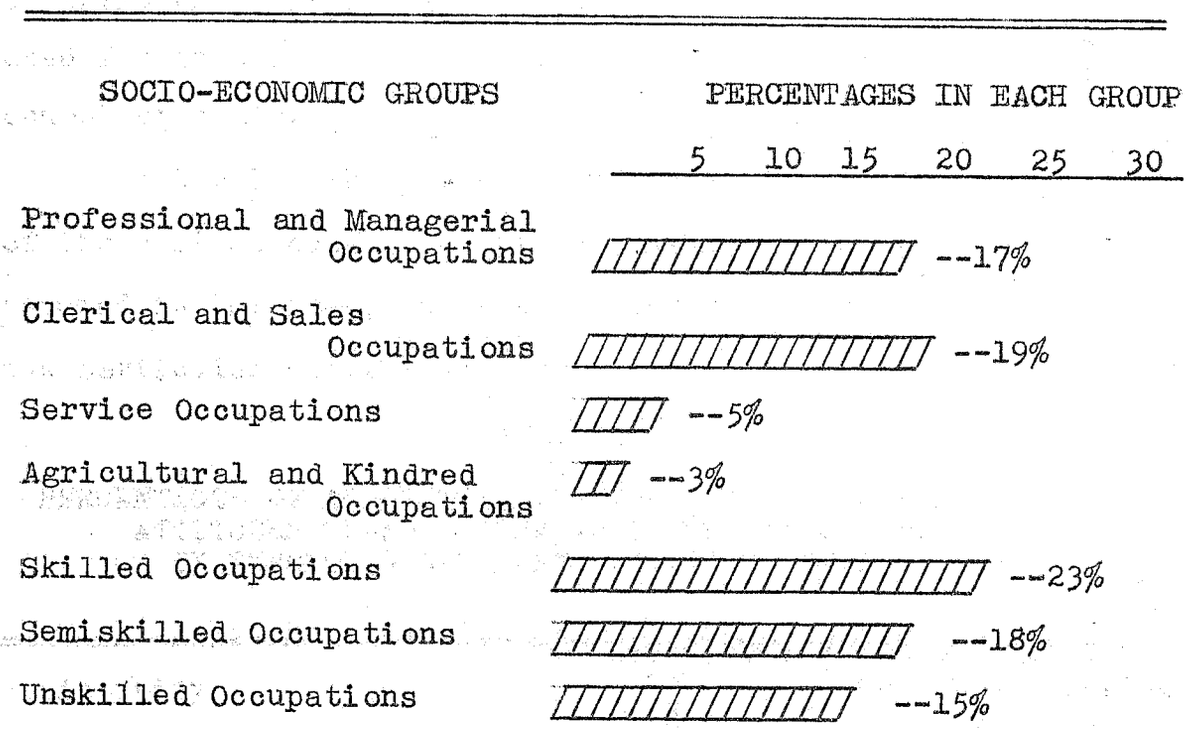

FIGURE 1

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS ACCORDING TO FATHER'S OCCUPATION

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[3]Division of Occupational Analysis, United States Employment Service, Dictionary of Occupational Titles (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1949), Volume II, pp. IX-XVIII.

A summary of information of the random sampling of the seventh grade home economics students of the Vigo County School Corporation according to their ages indicates 62 per cent were twelve years old; 33 per cent were thirteen years old; 4 per cent were fourteen years old; and 1 per cent was fifteen years old. A seventh grader is more apt to be twelve or thirteen years old then eleven or fourteen.[4] The students used for this study are of average age for the junior high school students.

Table III shows the percentages checked by the students of the various activities or responsibilities that they assumed in the home, and also shows the like or dislike for the particular activity.

TABLE III

PERCENTAGES OF ACTIVITIES PERFORMED IN THE HOME AND THE ATTITUDES TOWARD THESE ACTIVITES AS CHECKED BY SEVENTH GRADE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS

Activity	Activity performed		Attitude	
	Yes %	No %	Like %	Dislike %
Cooking meals	86	14	96	4
Shopping for food	65	35	88	12
Dishwashing	92	8	38	62
Tablesetting	93	7	73	27
Laundering	37	63	59	41
Caring for younger brothers and sisters	64	36	80	20
Making some of your own clothes	45	55	80	20
Taking care of your own clothes	80	20	78	22
Cleaning the house	89	11	63	37
Other duties	90	10	82	18

[4]Arleen C. Otto, New Designs in Homemaking Programs in Junior High School (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958), p. 6.

The outstanding percentages which should be pointed out include the facts that 92 per cent washed dishes but 68 per cent disliked doing it and also that 93 per cent did table-setting but only 73 per cent liked to set the table. The seventh grade students showed that 80 per cent enjoyed taking care of children but only 64 per cent actually did care for younger brothers and sisters.

The questionnaires, divided into socio-economic groups according to the father's occupation, revealed that only 45 per cent of the girls in all socio-economic groups made some of their own clothes. The one exception was that of the girls whose fathers were in the Agricultural and Kindred Occupations. Results showed that 80 per cent of those made some of their own clothes, which may indicate that the girls on farms see the value of making some of their own clothes. Furthermore, perhaps this greater interest in clothing construction may have been fostered by the 4-H club programs, and a greater percentage of these girls may have been 4-H club members. The present home economics curriculum does not present any clothing construction in the seventh grade and could be one reason for such a low percentage of the girls that made some of their own clothes. Mothers may think that girls of junior high school age are too young to use an electric sewing machine. Furthermore, data show 80 per cent took care of their own clothes and 80 per cent would like to make some of their own clothes. This would seem to indicate that the curriculum should provide for experiences in these two areas.

A study was made by the Department of Home Economics of the National Education Association during 1959 and 1960, under the direction of Dr. Mary Lee Hurt of the home responsibilities of girls whose mothers work or did not work outside the home.[5] Table IV shows a comparison of the 75 per cent of the girls of the Vigo County School Corporation whose mothers did not work outside the home and the National Education Association's study made of the total United States concerning the home responsibilities of girls whose mothers did not work outside the home.

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF THE HOME RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF THE VIGO COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION AND THE TOTAL UNITED STATES

Home Responsibilities	Vigo County Seventh Grade %	Total United States[6] Seventh Grade %
Caring for children	64	63
Washing dishes	92	88
Buying groceries	65	58
Cleaning house	89	86

These percentages were very, very close and were certainly significant of the fact that seventh grade home

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[5]Mary Lee Hurt, Home Responsibilities of Girls Whose Mothers Work or Do Not Work Outside the Home (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1960), p. 9.

[6]Ibid.

economics students of Vigo County do perform home responsibilities that show a mark of closeness to the total for the United States in Dr. Hurt's study.

The home economics teacher should know the type of household appliances her students have at home. Table V shows the various household appliances the home economics students used in this study had at home.

TABLE V

HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES THE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS HAD AT HOME

Appliance	Yes %	No %
Gas stove	60	40
Electric stove	44	56
Wood stove	2	98
Automatic timer on oven	67	33
Mechanical refrigerator	93	7
Home freezer	37	63
Washing machine	60	40
Automatic washer	49	51
Automatic dryer	48	52
Vacuum sweeper	85	15
Sewing machine	82	18

The majority of the students come from homes which are equipped with modern appliances; therefore curriculum should include a study of effective care and use of these appliances. A real curriculum need is indicated by the fact that 82 per cent had a sewing machine at home but only 45 per cent (see

Table III, page 45) actually did use the sewing machine. The students in the seventh grade had not had any classroom instruction concerning the care or use of the sewing machine. Only students who were enrolled in the 4-H club projects had received instruction as outlined in their summer 4-H projects.

In developing the home economics curriculum, the students should be helped to determine their own needs and interests. The curriculum should provide experiences which would assist the student to solve his every day problems for himself. Table VI shows "The Girl" as an area of home economics with the representative percentages checked by the students and their parents. The items checked indicate this area to be of great value and should be emphasized in the curriculum.

TABLE VI

PERCENTAGES OF ITEMS INDICATING COMPARATIVE VALUES AS CHECKED BY THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS IN THE AREA OF HOME ECONOMICS--THE GIRL

Area of Home Economics--THE GIRL	Great Value %	Some Value %	No Value %
Grooming and personal appearance	84	16	0
Selecting and keeping friends	82	18	0
Sharing home responsibilities	73	26	1
Developing desirable personal characteristics	78	21	1
Understanding myself	69	29	2
Developing interests and hobbies	47	49	4
Developing good study habits	82	18	0

All the items were considered as major since they were checked of great value by fifty per cent or more of the students and their parents, with exception of one item, developing interests and hobbies. This might suggest that most of the students already have interests and hobbies. The writer felt that further investigation should be made into types of interests and hobbies the girls do possess.

Table VII shows "Foods and Nutrition" as an area of home economics which is a vital part of the total home economics curriculum. The items were checked by the students and their parents.

TABLE VII

PERCENTAGES OF ITEMS INDICATING COMPARATIVE VALUES AS CHECKED BY THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS IN THE AREA OF HOME ECONOMICS--FOODS AND NUTRITION

Area of Home Economics--FOODS AND NUTRITION	Great Value %	Some Value %	No Value %
Selecting healthful foods	87	12	1
Planning nutritious meals and snacks	77	22	1
Serving meals	60	38	2
Preparing nutritious meals	84	15	1
Using convenient foods (mixes)	39	54	7
Preparing foods by freezing	41	50	9

Because packages of mixes and the like checked by 39 per cent give clear instruction for preparation and use, the results indicated that the girls and their parents do not feel that school time should be taken in learning how to

prepare them. Another item worthy of attention concerned home freezing of food, since only 37 per cent (see Table V, page 48) had home freezers. If more girls had had freezers in their homes, then more than 47 per cent might have been interested in learning how to use them.

Table VIII shows "Clothing and Textiles" as an area of home economics which gives a variety of activities which are related. The representative percentages checked by the students and their parents range from 64 to 81 per cent.

TABLE VIII

PERCENTAGES OF ITEMS INDICATING COMPARATIVE VALUES AS CHECKED BY THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS IN THE AREA OF HOME ECONOMICS--CLOTHING AND TEXTILES

Area of Home Economics--CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	Great Value %	Some Value %	No Value %
Learning to use sewing machine and equipment	81	17	2
Selecting fabric and pattern	71	28	1
Constructing simple garments	65	32	3
Selecting ready-to-wear garments	70	29	1
Planning a wardrobe	73	24	3
Selecting accessories	64	33	3
Caring for and repairing clothing	81	17	2

An outstanding item which should be noticed concerned the caring for and repairing of clothes. Table III, page 45 showed that of the 81 per cent who checked this item, 80 per cent took care of their own clothes. It must be pointed out that this indicates a definite need for this item to be included in an effective home economics curriculum.

Table IX shows "Child Care" as an area of home economics with the representative percentages checked by the

students and their parents. As shown (in Table III, page 45) 64 per cent cared for younger brothers and sisters. Instruction to develop understanding and some skill in the care of children is indicated by the value checked in each of the items listed. Incidentally, many junior high school girls, if they don't care for younger brothers and sisters are baby sitters in their own neighborhood.

TABLE IX

PERCENTAGES OF ITEMS INDICATING COMPARATIVE VALUES AS CHECKED BY THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS IN THE AREA OF HOME ECONOMICS--CHILD CARE

Area of Home Economics--CHILD CARE	Great Value %	Some Value %	No Value %
Care for infants and children	82	18	0
Being a good baby sitter	73	26	1
Selecting books and play materials	49	47	4
Constructing simple play materials	35	56	9
Understanding the cause of children's behavior	78	21	1

The writer felt that selecting books and play materials and also constructing simple play materials should be included in the high school curriculum because the seventh grade students do not see the value of these two items.

Table X shows "Relationships" as an area of home economics with the representative percentages checked by

the students and their parents. These items were designed to help the students make a healthy growth toward maturity, in all their relationships.

TABLE X

PERCENTAGES OF ITEMS INDICATING COMPARATIVE VALUES AS CHECKED BY THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS IN THE AREA OF HOME ECONOMICS--RELATIONSHIPS

Area of Home Economics--RELATIONSHIPS	Great Value %	Some Value %	No Value %
Living together in the family	91	8	1
Learning manners and social customs	81	19	0
Entertaining in the home	50	48	2
Learning to share and care for family possessions	79	19	2
Learning sex education	64	31	5

All items were checked as of great value, by more than 50 per cent, which gives evidence that the students want to strive to make a healthy growth toward maturity in all their relationships.

Table XI shows "The Home" as an area of home economics with the representative percentages checked by the students and their parents. The way the students felt about their homes was significant in their personal and social adjustment. There is certain information that should be mastered, and there are techniques to be learned in order to improve their homes.

TABLE XI

PERCENTAGES OF ITEMS INDICATING COMPARATIVE VALUES AS CHECKED BY THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS IN THE AREA OF HOME ECONOMICS--THE HOME

Area of Home Economics--THE HOME	Great Value %	Some Value %	No Value %
Learning value of order, convenience, and safety	84	16	0
Selecting home furnishings	56	40	4
Arranging home furnishings	57	41	2
Learning to use and care for equipment	74	26	0
Making the girl's room more livable	77	22	1

All items were checked above 50 per cent which indicates that the home economics curriculum for the junior high school should include all the items presented in this area.

Table XII shows "Family Health" as an area of home economics with the representative percentages checked by the students and their parents. Health is stressed in other subject areas besides home economics, but it should be realized that family health is a valuable area of the home economics curriculum. This is indicated by the high percentage of students and mothers checking items listed.

TABLE XII

PERCENTAGES OF ITEMS INDICATING COMPARATIVE VALUES AS CHECKED BY THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS IN THE AREA OF HOME ECONOMICS--FAMILY HEALTH

Area of Home Economics--FAMILY HEALTH	Great Value %	Some Value %	No Value %
Developing good health habits	91	9	0
Protecting family in civil defense	71	28	1
Understanding the way the body grows	62	36	2
Meeting emergencies in the home	84	15	1
Learning to care for the sick at home	83	17	0

The area of "Family Health" is another area which showed all items checked above fifty per cent as of great value to be included in the junior high school curriculum. The highest ranking item was the item of developing good health habits, an activity significant in curriculum planning.

Table XIII shows "Management" as an area of home economics with the representative percentages checked by the students and their parents. This area is of importance in learning to manage time, money, and energy.

TABLE XIII

PERCENTAGES OF ITEMS INDICATING COMPARATIVE VALUES AS CHECKED BY THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS IN THE AREA OF HOME ECONOMICS--MANAGEMENT

Area of Home Economics--MANAGEMENT	Great Value %	Some Value %	No Value %
Learning wise shopping practices	78	19	3
Managing own money	87	12	1
Understanding of labeling and grading	54	42	4
Buying goods and services	54	43	3
Budgeting family income	73	22	5
Learning to make and follow a work plan	60	36	4

Again all the items were checked above 50 per cent. The outstanding percentage, 87 per cent, checked managing own money as being of great value. Managing money is different from merely spending money, but everyone old enough to spend money is old enough to learn something about managing money.

Table XIV shows "Related Arts" as an area of home economics with the representative percentages checked by the students and their parents. This area was made up of items related to art principles as they are applied to home-making.

TABLE XIV

PERCENTAGES OF ITEMS INDICATING COMPARATIVE VALUES AS CHECKED BY THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS IN THE AREA OF HOME ECONOMICS--RELATED ARTS

Area of Home Economics--RELATED ARTS	Great Value %	Some Value %	No Value %
Wrapping gift packages	57	35	8
Arranging flowers	33	62	5
Selecting colors for the home and clothes	76	23	1
Setting attractive tables	51	48	1
Helping to keep our community beautiful	67	30	3

The fact that most of the items for the area of "Related Arts" were checked some or no value shows distinctly that the students and their parents felt there were other areas listed which were more important than "Related Arts" as an area to be included in the home economics curriculum.

A study was made by the seventh and eighth grade students, their home economics teachers, and their parents to evaluate the seventh grade home economics curriculum of the Pasadena City Schools. The study showed what they wanted to include in the seventh grade home economics

curriculum.[7] In comparing the same kind of a study made of the seventh grade students of the Vigo County School Corporation with the study of Pasadena City Schools, the results showed very high correlation in several areas.

The writer felt that this is evidence that the seventh grade home economics students of Vigo County Schools do see their true home economics curriculum needs and interests as does the study made of the seventh and eighth grade students of Pasadena City Schools. Table XV shows the comparison of these two studies in percentages.

TABLE XV

COMPARISON OF HOME ECONOMICS UNITS OF STUDY OF SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF VIGO COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION TO SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF PASADENA CITY SCHOOLS

Units of Study	Vigo County Students and Parents %	Pasadena Students[8] %	Pasadena Parents[9] %
Cooking	84	86.9	79.5
Sewing	81	84.8	86.3
Selection of clothing	70	66.2	68.6
Care of clothing	81	66.2	68.6
Money Management	87	73.2	72.6

[7] _____, "Pasadena Homemaking Program Faces A Challenge," What's New in Home Economics, 25:81, September, 1961.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid., p. 128.

There is a very close correlation between the interests expressed by students in the present study and those reported in the California study.

The students were asked also to check two of the areas of home economics which they considered the most important and two of the areas they considered least important. Table XVI shows the percentages of the areas of home economics in order from the highest to lowest per cents of the most important and least important areas.

TABLE XVI

PERCENTAGES CHECKED BY SEVENTH GRADE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS INDICATING THE TWO AREAS CONSIDERED MOST IMPORTANT AND TWO AREAS LEAST IMPORTANT

Areas of Home Economics	Most important %	Least important %
The Girl	39	13
Family Health	30	9
Child Care	29	12
Foods and Nutrition	26	7
The Home	20	16
Management	19	24
Relationships	19	21
Clothing and Textiles	16	23
Related Arts	2	75

This study showed that the areas checked as most important by the seventh grade home economics students and their parents were "The Girl" and "Family Health". All items in the area of "The Girl" were checked 73 per cent or

more as of great value. Also, all the items in the area of "Family Health" were checked 62 per cent or more as of great value to the junior high school home economics curriculum for the Vigo County School Corporation.

Studying students' needs and interests is a continuous process that must precede the revision and adaptation of materials to serve best each new group of students. The teachers who have most successfully adapted home economics offerings to meet student needs and interests have developed many ways of working with students, their parents, and the community in learning what the needs and interests are and in planning to meet them.

CHAPTER IV

HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULA FOR THE SEVENTH, EIGHTH, AND NINTH GRADES

Home economics curriculum at the junior high school must be reconstructed to go in new directions. Every home economics teacher must be sensitive and alert to the needs and interests of her students. She must meet these needs and interests of the students in the homes of today and attempt to foresee the trends which indicate future needs. Home economics teachers should go to work at their own school level for curriculum improvement.

From the results of this study a curriculum has been formulated to meet the needs and interests of the seventh grade home economics students of the Vigo County School Corporation. The number of weeks for each area is suggested in the home economics curriculum as follows:

Seventh Grade

Area of home economics	Approximate number of weeks
THE GIRL	
Grooming and personal appearance	2
Selecting and keeping friends	2
Sharing home responsibilities	3
Developing desirable personal characteristics	2

THE GIRL--continued	Approximate number of weeks
Developing good study habits	1
RELATED ARTS	
Setting attractive tables	½
Wrapping gift packages	½
MANAGEMENT	
Learning to make and follow a work plan	1
FOODS AND NUTRITION	
Selecting healthful foods	1
Planning nutritious meals and snacks	2
Preparing and serving nutritious meals	4

The seventh grade curriculum was developed to include areas indicated as important by the seventh grade home economics students and their parents, and appropriate units of work with the approximate number of weeks for each unit were established. The curricula for the eighth and ninth grades were also developed from the indications of the seventh grade students' needs and interests. The eighth and ninth grades curricula are suggested as follows:

Eighth Grade

CHILD CARE	Approximate number of weeks
Being a good baby sitter	2
RELATIONSHIPS	
Learning to share and care for family possessions	1

	Approximate number of weeks
THE HOME	
Learning the value of order, convenience, and safety	1
Making the girl's room more livable	2
FAMILY HEALTH	
Developing good health habits	1
Learning to care for the sick at home	1
MANAGEMENT	
Managing own money	1
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	
Learning to use sewing machine and equipment	1
Caring for and repairing clothing	2
Constructing a simple garment	7

Ninth Grade

THE GIRL	
Understanding myself	1
RELATIONSHIPS	
Living together in the family	2
Entertaining in the home	½
Learning manners and social customs	1
Sex education	½
CHILD CARE	
Caring for infants and children	1

CHILD CARE--continued	Approximate number of weeks
Understanding causes of children's behavior	1
RELATED ARTS	
Helping to keep our community beautiful	½
Selecting colors for the home and clothing	1
THE HOME	
Selecting home furnishings	2
Arranging home furnishings	1
Learning to use and care for equipment	1
FAMILY HEALTH	
Protecting family in civil defense	½
Understanding the way the body grows	½
Meeting emergencies in the home	1½
MANAGEMENT	
Understanding of labeling and grading	1
Buying goods and services	1
FOODS AND NUTRITION	
Selecting health foods	2
Planning nutritious meals	2
Preparing and serving nutritious meals	6
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	
Planning a wardrobe	1
Selecting ready-to-wear garments	1

CLOTHING AND TEXTILES--continued	Approximate number of weeks
Selecting accessories	1
Selecting fabric and pattern	1
Constructing a simple garment (Jumper or simple dress)	6

One of the strengths of a school system in which final decisions about curriculum are made at the local level is that teaching can be and should be closely related to the needs and interests of the students. Planners of the curriculum should take into consideration the kind of homes from which students come and those in which they can expect to live in the future. The home economics teacher should be familiar with the characteristics of the community and the way these affect family life.

Because of the freedom which exists in the development of a curriculum at the local level, the courses taught will vary from one school to another, one teacher to another, and even from one class to another taught by the same teacher. The combination of the basic fundamentals of homemaking used in a particular class is dependent upon the needs, interests, and capacities of the students in that particular class.

CHAPTER V.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

Basic to the home economics curriculum is the first hand knowledge of needs and interests of the students. To gain this knowledge, a home economics teacher needs to take a sharp and long look at the kind of competences that are needed, and then set up ways to acquire them.

A questionnaire which included a family survey and curriculum checklist was developed and given to 848 seventh grade home economics students of the Vigo County Schools. Of these questionnaires 668 or 79% were returned.

A twenty-five per cent stratified random sampling of questionnaires was selected. All the returned questionnaires were grouped by schools and numbered in these groups. Questionnaires were selected with each school group by using a table of random numbers.

The data were tabulated by dividing the questionnaires into socio-economic groups according to the father's occupation.

The students used for this study were of average age for a junior high school student--twelve or thirteen years old.

Only twenty-five per cent of the mothers worked away from home, and the percentages were very close in the seven socio-economic groups. The home responsibilities performed by the seventh grade students, along with their attitude toward the responsibility, were checked. Several percentages of the home responsibilities and attitude of the seventh grade home economics students of the Vigo County School Corporation were compared with the percentages of the total United States seventh grade students which was a study by the Department of Home Economics of the National Education Association.

The majority of the students come from homes which are equipped with modern appliances.

Since the curriculum is to be built upon the needs and interests checked on the questionnaires, the writer felt that any item which had been checked "great value" by fifty per cent or more by the students and their parents should be considered major.

All the items of the area of home economics "The Girl" were checked fifty per cent or more great value. These items included grooming and personal appearance, selecting and keeping friends, sharing home responsibilities, developing desirable personal characteristics, understanding the girl, and developing good study habits. The one item which was checked below 50 per cent was developing interests and hobbies.

Considering "Foods and Nutrition" as an area of home economics all items but two were checked to be of great value by fifty per cent or more. All of the items checked by fifty per cent or more to be of great value included the following areas of home economics: "Clothing and Textiles," "Relationships," "The Home," "Family Health," and "Management."

The area of home economics "Child Care" showed that caring for infants and children, being a good baby sitter, and understanding the causes of children's behavior were the items checked by more than fifty per cent as of great value. The two items checked below fifty per cent were selecting books and play materials and constructing simple play materials.

Under "Related Arts" as an area of home economics most of the items were checked some or no value, perhaps because many of these items are taught as part of other units of home economics and are not pin-pointed as "Related Arts."

A comparison was made of units of study checked by the students and their parents of Vigo County School Corporation with that of a study by the students and parents of Pasadena, California. Many of the percentages were very close.

The students and their parents also checked two of the areas of home economics which they considered the most

important and two of the areas they considered least important. The two most important areas were "The Girl" and "Family Health," and the least important were "Related Arts" and "Management." In view of current changes in home and family living which necessitate a real need for a study of management, perhaps the seventh grade students and their parents did not see the real importance of "Management" as an area of home economics.

II. CONCLUSIONS

If the home economics curriculum is to be effective, students should participate in deciding what they will study. Also the curriculum should be based upon the needs and interests of the students. The study of the seventh grade home economics students of the Vigo County School Corporation concludes:

1. A large per cent of the seventh grade home economics students do perform several home responsibilities, and their attitudes toward these responsibilities are favorable.

2. The homes are well equipped with modern appliances.

3. Fifty per cent or more checked as of great value all the items in the following areas of home economics: "Clothing and Textiles," "Relationships," "The Home," "Family Health," and "Management." This showed a strong conviction

that these areas should be included in a home economics curriculum, while the area "The Girl" only had one item below fifty per cent checked as great value. The areas of "Foods and Nutrition" and "Child Care" had two items below fifty per cent checked as great value. Most of the items for the area of "Related Arts" were checked some or no value.

4. The home economics teacher should be sensitive and alert to social and other changes.

5. An adequate home economics curriculum can be developed when based on the needs and interests of the students.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are general recommendations for the home economics teacher to consider when developing a curriculum:

1. The home economics curriculum should be more general and cover several areas instead of the basic skills included in "cooking and sewing".

2. The home economics teacher has a responsibility for the pupil-teacher planning of the curriculum.

3. The home economics curriculum which contributes to personal and social development of the students should be stressed at the seventh, eighth, and ninth grade levels.

Items which should be included are grooming and personal appearance, selecting and keeping friends, sharing home responsibilities, developing desirable personal characteristics, understanding the girl, and developing good study habits.

4. The home economics teacher should have a knowledge of the type of household appliances her students have at home. The curriculum should include a study of effective care and use of these appliances.

5. The home economics curriculum should be planned cooperatively with students, their parents, and the home economics teachers.

6. The home economics curriculum at the junior high school level should be reconstructed to go in "New Directions" as recommended by the American Home Economics Association.

7. Home economics teachers should meet the needs of students in the homes of today. They should attempt to foresee the trends which indicate future needs.

8. The home economics teacher should improve her part of the home economics image through self-improvement.

9. The suggested home economics curricula for the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades should be used experimentally in the Vigo County School Corporation before final adaption.

10. After the curricula have been tried, an evaluation should be made to see if they meet the needs and interests of the students and the community.

11. Another study could be made as a follow-up of this study.

The action program is filled with challenges; therefore home economics teachers should work cooperatively at their own school level for curriculum improvement.

The writer has discovered that a systematic attack on a practical problem can be interesting, rewarding and appealing.

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APPENDIX A

Please fill in the following items concerning the student:

1. Age of student.....2. Number living in your home .....

3. Father's occupation .....Mother's occupation .....

4. Which of the following activities do you—the student—**help** with in your home. Also indicate whether you like or dislike each activity.

	YES	NO	LIKE	DISLIKE
1. Cooking meals				
2. Shopping for food				
3. Dishwashing				
4. Tablesetting				
5. Laundering				
6. Caring for younger brothers and sisters				
7. Making some of your own clothes				
8 Taking care of your own clothes				
9. Cleaning the house				
10 Other duties				

5. Does your home have:

	YES	NO
1. Gas stove		
2. Electric stove		
3. Wood stove		
4. Automatic timer on oven		
5. Mechanical refrigerator		
6. Home freezer		
7. Washing machine		
8. Automatic washer		
9. Automatic dryer		
10. Vacuum sweeper		
11. Sewing machine		

6. Do you plan to take courses in home economics in high school? .....

7. What type vocation do you think you would like to follow after graduation from high school? .....

.....

Place a check (X) in the column which best expresses your viewpoint concerning the junior high school home economics curriculum for the Vigo County School Corporation:

8. The Girl	GREAT VALUE	SOME VALUE	NO VALUE
1 Grooming and personal appearance			
2. Selecting and keeping friends			
3. Sharing home responsibilities			
4. Developing desirable personal characteristics			
5. Understanding myself			
6. Developing interests and hobbies			
7. Developing good study habits			

9. Foods and Nutrition			
1. Selecting healthful foods			
2. Planning nutritious meals and snacks			
3. Serving meals			
4. Preparing nutritious meals			
5. Using convenient foods (mixes)			
6. Preparing foods by freezing			

10. Clothing and Textiles			
1. Learning to use sewing machine and equipment			
2. Selecting fabric and pattern			
3. Constructing simple garments			
4. Selecting ready-to-wear garments			
5. Planning a wardrobe			
6. Selecting accessories			
7. Caring for and repairing clothing			

11. Child Care	GREAT VALUE	SOME VALUE	NO VALUE
1 Caring for infants and children			
2. Being a good baby sitter			
3. Selecting books and play materials			
4. Constructing simple play materials			
5. Understanding the causes of children's behavior			

12. Relationship			
1. Living together in the family			
2. Learning manners and social customs			
3. Entertaining in the home			
4. Learning to share and care for family possessions			
5. Learning sex education			

13. The Home			
1. Learning the value of order, convenience and safety			
2. Selecting home furnishings			
3. Arranging home furnishings			
4. Learning to use and care for equipment			
5. Making the girl's room more livable			

14. Family Health			
1 Developing good health habits			
2. Protecting family in civil defense			
3. Understanding the way the body grows			
4. Meeting emergencies in the home			
5. Learning to care for the sick at home			

15. Management			
1. Learning wise shopping practices			
2. Managing own money			
3. Understanding of labeling and grading			
4. Buying goods and services			
5. Budgeting family income			
6. Learning to make and follow a work plan			

16. Related Arts			
1. Wrapping gift packages			
2. Arranging flowers			
3. Selecting colors for the home and clothes			
4. Setting attractive tables			
5. Helping to keep our community beautiful			

17. Please indicate your opinion of the following areas. Place a * for two of the areas which you consider most important and √ for two of the areas you consider least important.

.....1. The Girl

.....2 Foods and Nutrition

.....3. Clothing and Textiles

.....4. Child Care

.....5. Relationship

.....6. The Home

.....7. Family Health

.....8. Management

.....9. Related Arts

Comments or additional units of study which you feel are important:

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