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# Learning Relations

VOLUME 1

DOREEN GRANT

Thesis submitted for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Education  
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... of ... to leave  
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**For Julie**

**who read the signs of the times.**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the twelve years in which this book has been in preparation I have had the good fortune to learn from a wide range of people. I would like to acknowledge first and foremost those people of Govan and Priesthill whose words are the basis of the book and my many and varied co-workers who shared in the toil. Some of their names appear in the text.

Particular thanks are also due to Eric Wilkinson and David Williamson of Glasgow University (1976-79); and to Irene Kay and Stanley Struthers of Strathclyde University, (1983-86) for their evaluation support and helpful, ongoing discussions. Learning Relations wove in and out of both sets of inquiries, since we were all concerned with following the same action. Evaluation reports from these university studies will, hopefully, be made public in their own time and place.

Turning that shared experience into a book has required some special services, for which I am grateful. Over the years generations of typists have worked on the transcripts and early drafts: Sister Bernadette Marie, Beatrice Dougan, May Dunn, Jeanette McGhie, Vi Alexander and eventually the unflagging Susan McMahon who has brought this work to its final conclusion. Acknowledged

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If this book has some small claim to scholarship and is at the same time readable, the credit must go to David Hamilton of Glasgow University who has patiently yet demandingly guided its progress for many years.

To all I render thanks.

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## SUMMARY

This thesis reports a twelve year action-research study (1974-1986). Starting from the fact of inner city underachievement, it sought to harness recent research evidence on three issues: the importance of parents as educators of their own children (eg, Schaefer, Bronfenbrenner, Halsey.); the role of language in intellectual development (eg, Luria, Bruner, Donaldson.); and the effect of dialogue as an educational process (eg, Freire.).

The application of this theory, first in an inner city enclave and later in a peripheral housing estate, was realized through four projects: Stairhead Seminars (1974-76), The Govan Project (1976-79), The Home and School Centre development (1979-82), and phase I of the Partnership in Education Project (1983-86). Prior research evidence was re-interpreted through the insights of parents and professionals, who translated its general concepts into a local reality. This spiral of action, reflection and improved action forms the first eleven chapters of this thesis.

The data used in the study (and included with this thesis) was gathered and analysed according to a Freirian rationale. It comprises 109 transcripts of small group

discussions (1974-79); 16 interview transcripts (1978); 40 'Reflection papers (1974-82); 27 videotapes (1974-86); and 47 'Benchmark' (ie. working) papers (1968-86). A Freirian stance has also been used in the preparation of this thesis; that is, particular attention has been paid to finding a 'voice' which allows the active and critical participation of the reader.

Chapter twelve concludes the thesis. It re-evaluates the initial research evidence and identifies a component commonly omitted from intervention programmes. To succeed, it is vital that the ordinary resources supplied by parents and professionals are positively co-ordinated in the interests of providing children with a unified learning milieu.

#### Publication

A version of this thesis is to be published by Routledge in 1988, under the same title.

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# Prologue

## PROLOGUE

The plan was very simple - simplistic some might have said. I would knock on doors and ask parents if they were willing to discuss their children's education with me. Together we would explore how parents and teachers could become partners in helping children learn. There was no doubt in my mind about the importance of the parents' role in this: for better or worse, the family, and the community from which the family takes its values, are the day-long educators of the children, and the source of their attitudes and responses to many ways of learning. Between them the family and the community create the social reality against which the children weigh all other possible worlds.

A.H. Halsey, National Director of the large scale Educational Priority Area Projects set up at the end of the 60's, had said (1) *'The best predictor of a child's achievement is his name and address.'* Starting from this chilling phrase, I chose to visit families in 'Wine Alley', a small, labelled inner city area of Glasgow on which there was already a sociological study (2). In a variety of Glasgow tenement buildings ranging from irreparable Victorian to recently modernised council homes, I stood in doorways or more often sat in the living rooms of these hospitable parents and asked for

their help. I presented myself frankly as a teacher who had become aware of the failure of the school to educate their children successfully.

At these preliminary visits I spoke only of setting up a little educational partnership which would help me. Unspoken was my belief that a strange kind of agreement between inner city parents and teachers already existed. One which allowed a high degree of school failure to be attributed either to lack of intelligence 'He just doesn't have it' or to lack of effort 'If she tried harder she could do better.' I was knocking on doors in Govan because I saw such sweeping statements as unjust to the children. I wanted to share the research information that children in low income housing right across Europe and the United States were being shown to be more intelligent than they seemed in class, and I also wanted to do something positive to remedy this situation.

This was in the mid seventies, a period of heady educational theories. On one side were the unrealistic cries of the deschoolers (3) who concentrated on the problems of the establishment. On the other were the patronising claims of those who felt they could judge failure in home and family life accurately enough to be able to apply Compensatory Education (4). From my reading of research, a much simpler thought was gently

emerging; the plain fact of mismatch. Home and school in the inner city held such widely different assumptions, attitudes and information that coping with both was, for the children, like jumping from planet to planet twice daily. My interest was not in placing the blame but in seeking ways of bringing those two worlds of childhood together. To do this it would be necessary for me to find out what education looked like when viewed, not only from the school, but from the home of each family as well. So I was approaching these parents to ask if they would help me understand how they saw education. In return, I was willing to share with them some of the teacher's professional know-how. Indeed this sharing was an essential part of the partnership.

The research I had read (5) pointed to a serious, unacknowledged problem of underachievement and in order to be able to share this with people in the local community, I must try to build a bridge between them and the researchers by translating into the Glasgow vernacular the language in which the research findings were written. I had then to build a similar bridge to the teachers in local schools.

There were many issues that had to be tackled all at once. Beliefs, attitudes, practice were all intricately joined in a complex web. But research findings were

usually focussed on single issues, so I was still hazy about which research was relevant (6). It was not enough to learn what was wrong. I had to find which skills and competences a child needed in order to make good use of the school system. There was no agreement among the experts as to how to tackle the under-achievement which they were highlighting. However, in all the writing I consulted there was one element of agreement: language was the key issue. It seemed that the skill with which children learned to use language was a critical factor in the success they achieved at school. It was certainly a start to know that some current language factors could be pinpointed as where things went wrong. But knowing, for me, could not mean joining the chorus of armchair bewailers. I felt impelled to set out to discover the critical features which must be part of their relationships and repertoire if children were to achieve success at school. This turned out to leave me no option but to set up a one-person piece of action research that would lead towards positive change.

In 1974 I went out knocking on doors to see how we, the parents and the classroom professionals, could build the bridges of change for ourselves. Twelve years later in 1986, Strathclyde Regional Council, the largest Local Authority in Britain, is responsible for the maintenance and expansion of that bridge through a small Development

Centre in Glasgow called 'Partnership in Education'. The Centre's purpose is to promote particular forms of parental involvement in education not only in schools but in a variety of community settings. Professionally skilled and qualified development workers make clear the principles and theory which could help to guide efforts to give the inner city child a secure network of educational support all day long. They also work in co-operation with local parents and professionals to pilot and then package for dissemination a range of practical programmes. This has only been possible because over these years parents have gradually helped professionals see what education looks like from where they sit and professional educators have learned how to share with parents some important pieces of information on how a child learns and the role of the adult in supporting success.

My starting point was a groping awareness that the inner city child's potential could only be unlocked if parents and professionals got together. I then made a rather simplistic effort to make that happen. From that point this book traces the unfolding of a shared awakening over the following twelve years. It is a very personal record of that developing vision and inevitably it leaves out stories others would have chosen to include. Many people have taken part since that day in 1974 when I

walked into an inner city Council estate with the unpromising nickname of 'Wine Alley' and knocked on doors until, 1986 when the harvest of that first seed has become part of Strathclyde's educational provision. This story strives to honour their trust and co-operation.

... Baker, Wine Alley, The Scottish ...  
... power of the ...  
... 19-20, 1972. ...  
... year in a flat in Wine Alley. ...  
... for the Local Housing ...  
... a ten million pound ...  
... the Local Authority ...  
... programmes and built ...  
... lessons they learned from all ...  
... applied to other Council Housing

## PROLOGUE

### NOTES

1 A.H. Halsey is Director of Department of Social and Administrative Studies, University of Oxford. In a recent letter (29.9.86) Dr. Halsey, recalled the phrase 'the best predictor of a child's achievement is his name and address' used in a newspaper article at the time. He noted that he still believes it to be true today.

2 S. Damer, 'Wine Alley: The Sociology of a Reputation', paper given at Aspects of Urban Sociology Conference, Leeds, September 18-20, 1972. Sean Damer lived for a year in a flat in Wine Alley. His findings were instrumental in the Local Housing Authority's decision in 1973 to set up a two million pounds programme to modernise and upgrade the whole little estate. As part of this improvement the Local Authority also began a community involvement programme and built a Tenants' Hall. The lessons they learned from all this were subsequently applied to other Council Housing areas of Glasgow.

3 I.D. Illich, Deschooling Society, London, 1971.

It may seem rather off-hand to dismiss the work of this insightful thinker and his followers with the word 'unrealistic'. My comment does not express a negative attitude to the idea, especially as it might apply to the many millions of learners who live in societies without as yet our highly developed school structure. It might indeed be best if they did not copy us. But, in Britain at the present day, I think it would be unrealistic to behave as if this school system was likely to crumble and disappear in the foreseeable future. For the present generation of children the schools will be there and in my view they should be used to the best advantage of the inner city child.

4           The term Compensatory Education comes from the United States and was commonly applied especially in the 60's and 70's to a wide range of programmes aimed at tackling the underachievement in schools of children from low income homes. Although work bearing this label may have sprung from a sincere desire to make life more equal and may in fact have achieved that in part, the patronising and judgemental overtone of the term gradually became more obvious and unacceptable to many people in this field of work by the 80's.

5           There is an abundance of research pointing to underachievement, not lack of ability. A summary of studies in this field can be found in W. Donachy, 'Parent Participation in Preschool Education' in British Journal of Educational Psychology Vol 46, 31-39, 1976.

6           Research findings which might be connected with the problem of underachievement were easy to find in the 70's, but I was hazy about which research was most relevant because the variety was bewildering. There were four main lines of research: (1) Studies of a single piece of key behaviour such as the effect of a mother's particular way of addressing a two year old child (e.g. Catherine Snow 'Mothers' Speech to Children Learning Language' in Child Development, McGill University, 1972, Vol 43, 549-565). (2) The debate about the educational effect of Social Class choices and patterns of interaction e.g. Basil Bernstein Class Codes and Control, London, 1973-75. (3) Issues such as poverty, unemployment, and poor housing gave underachievement another focus exemplified in the National Children's Bureau Study: P. Wedge and H. Prosser, Born to Fail?, London, 1973. Even within studies which concentrated on direct educational input there was no agreement. The School Board of Philadelphia had set up testing areas for

six very different programmes. A neat, clear booklet was produced laying out all this and the results. Early Childhood Education in Philadelphia and its impact, 1979.

Then I visited the man who had prepared the text, Dr. Thomas McNamara, Evaluation manager. His story changed the whole meaning of the booklet by adding dimensions outside the scope of the study. One example was about personalities. Those who ran the behaviourist model, which on the surface looked so cold and mechanical, turned out to be such charming, warm, infectious enthusiasts that people co-operated with them on that basis alone. On the other hand, Ira Gordon's parent involvement model, working successfully in rural Florida, had foundered on two external problems: Teacher union policy and the personal security risks for home visitors in Philadelphia's high rise flats.

# Mismatch



The "Ordinary Failures" of the system?

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# Mismatch



The "Ordinary Failures" of the system?

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## CHAPTER 1

### THE PROBLEM OF MISMATCH

It was a beautiful sunny autumn morning in 1974 and everything looked peaceful and possible as I approached the first address on my list. I had been introduced to a number of parents the previous week by the leader of a College of Education project for young children and I was now about to visit their homes by myself. The leader's rapport with the parents had been wonderful and I did not envisage any problems.

My planned starting point was a discussion on the parents' role as their children's first educator. I had thought out the work very thoroughly and prepared a little handout (1) which I hoped would lead the parents to consider how much their children had changed since they were born, how much of this change was more than natural growth and how the home had been the centre of early learning. Despite all the preparation I felt a little uncertain. I knew there must still be a lot for me to learn about working with parents, though, clutching my list of addresses and my attractive handout I could not imagine what it could be.

I was not left long in doubt. When I eventually found

the right door, the first family was not at home. My proposed visit was unimportant in their lives and they had forgotten all about me! I was not too successful even with those I did manage to contact that first day. One problem was my prized handout. It carried two photographs, one of Julie, a newborn baby in her mother's arms, the other of Eddie, a young boy of school age. It seemed simple and direct enough and I saw no problems, initially, in the few printed words which directed attention to the discussion theme. "What can Julie do?" was the top line and lower down, "Eddie has changed since he was a baby. He grew. He also learned. How much does learning matter?" Over the years since that first attempt I have been a participant in many meetings which have repeated the failure of this approach by simultaneously presenting new written material and demanding instant response. I learned that morning that a handout at the start of a session is a guaranteed conversation stopper.

There was a further problem in this attractive looking piece of paper. Some of the parents receiving my handout would feel unsure about their reading skills. Of course I had taken this possibility into consideration and made the language as simple and short as possible. Before I presented the paper I knew there was no educational threat in it. I knew that, but the receiving parents

could not be so sure. They would have to read it first, while I was talking to them, before they could feel secure. On top of these pressures was the fact that I had compressed into these simple words a hard block of theory summed up in the page title "Learning is Change". I might as well have tried to open conversation with a Chinese proverb!

Problems created by materials were matched by my naivety about local cultural expectations. I knew that the close proximity of tenement homes in Glasgow had generated a convenient form of communication across streets or between adjoining homes. People simply leaned out of their windows, often propped up on a cushion and, while participating in a communal running commentary, watched the world go by beneath them. Those who lived in ground floor flats could have the added enjoyment of gathering their friends round them for a chat without even opening the door. I was now going to learn a first lesson on how this process might apply to me. Intent on my discussion experiment I looked neither to right nor left as I checked the number of the close (the communal entry to Scottish tenements) and proceeded to knock on a ground floor door. A young boy passing to an upstairs flat looked at me in amazement and said in the voice of one pointing out a ridiculous social gaffe, "The window's open!" I leapt away from the door again and hurried out

of the close. The kitchen window had been pushed up high and the couple I had planned to visit were sitting on chairs pulled up to it while a young man sat on the outside window sill talking to them. Awkwardly I introduced myself and received a vague nod of remembrance from the lady inside. What was I to do now? The other 'outsider' thoughtfully moved over a little indicating a space for me to perch beside him on the ledge. From this position I handed out my little leaflets, "Learning is change" and tried to begin the discussion. The conversation went surprisingly well, considering the handicaps, each trying to find some point of entry into a discussion on education. I looked for words to express my headful of educational theory. The parents called their little girl into the room to demonstrate that she could recite all the numbers up to twenty. My window sill partner recalled his school days in the area. From these starting positions we all tried to reach some common ground. But while we talked, half of my mind was occupied by an argument with myself. "This really is getting nowhere! Should I just go away?" "But then, how will I learn if I don't persevere now?" Eventually my companion on the ledge resolved my problem. "I really came to see if Johnny was coming to the pub", he said. "If you don't mind we'll get on with our education down there."

My notes that night recorded these and many more incidents like them, but without as yet any real insight.

It would take much more experience and reflection before issues which are now quite obvious to me began to emerge clearly. Eventually, after many false starts and ill-judged attempts I began to find an appropriate expression for my vision and the first Stairhead Seminars (2) began in September 1974.

Four mothers in a run-down pre-war housing estate known as "Wine Alley" met to help me. There was no doubt about who was expected to benefit. As I discovered later, these women were acutely aware of the ineffectiveness of their own educational experience and would be glad if teachers could improve their ability to facilitate the learning process before their children suffered the same fate.

Maisie, the hostess, had heard me out almost in silence when I first proposed my plan. Then she responded thoughtfully: "I could gie ye an hour a week, if that would help you." She could see little immediate benefit for herself - except perhaps a little gentle entertainment at my expense. It was the pain of her own schooldays, expressed in detail later, which prompted her co-operation. I was to meet this humbling response many times in the years to come.

Thanks to this kind of support, two small groups of mothers (fathers, though invited, were not to join till much later) met to work with me. They used their own homes as the base, Maisie's group meeting in "Wine Alley", Hettie's in a now demolished Victorian tenement. At the centre of each group was a housewife in her early 30's, who had made a commitment to work with me for ten weekly two-hour sessions. Each had agreed to bring friends and neighbours to join us.

Small groups of mothers, who already influence one another and unconsciously affect common norms, form a fragile yet powerful network of easy communication. If I could introduce my ideas into Maisie's and Hettie's groups and hear them discussed, re-expressed or changed through conversation and a little shared experience, we would all be able to learn.

First Maisie, Maureen, Cathie and Peggy met me in "Wine Alley" on Monday afternoons in the time between the end of the dinner dishes and their five year olds coming home from school. The second group was formed soon after this and met round Hettie's kitchen fireplace in a dilapidated but occupied Victorian building. From the very beginning we had a sense of partnership in a shared exploration as the Stairhead Seminars began.

This 1974 attempt to find a new way to tackle under achievement in inner city education was written up and video-taped at the time. It taught me a number of lessons. First of all, I had the opportunity to witness small everyday examples of how families tackled the mismatch between home and school. One such incident occurred as I sat in Maisie's living room with some of her friends waiting to begin a discussion on education. Maisie could be heard talking to her small son in the hallway of her home. "I'll gie you five pence, Ted". "Well, I'll gie you ten pence - if you'll go to school." "Oh Maisie he's only five!" her friends remonstrated when she joined us, "What will you have to pay to get him to the Secondary School?"

The infant school at the root of this conversation in Maisie's home that day in 1974 was a bright, colourful, interesting establishment. Why did Ted not want to go? Why were Maisie and her friends even discussing the possibility of bribing a child to go to school, never mind the appropriate level of external reward? Learning should have held an intrinsic reward for Ted and school should have been a place where he found the knowledge he was eagerly seeking. Why was this not so? Maisie and her friends who were gathered in that living room were not being paid or bribed to be there. We wanted to learn and we were all enjoying the whole activity of searching

for solutions. Why was it different for Ted? The question was not a new one for me. It was merely a new angle on the problem which had brought me out of school after more than twenty years of teaching and into Maisie's home in Govan. Those long years in the classroom had already shown me many sides of the issue, for mismatch had recurred as a problem or at least a puzzle, on a number of occasions throughout my varied school experience.

I had begun my teaching career just after the war in the then notorious Gorbals area of Glasgow. My twentieth birthday was spent trying to make some meaningful impact on a class of fifty-two squirming six year olds there. By Christmas of that year I was visiting the homes of all the pupils who had not come to school for the class Christmas party. With small ribboned serviettes of festive food I trudged up and down tenement buildings on that dark winter's evening after school was over. I was so intent on making sure no child missed out on the buns that I thought nothing of my surroundings, until one mother exclaimed on opening the door, "Oh Miss, you shouldn't be here!" Then to my dismay, she turned to an unkempt looking man who was watching me warily from the kitchen doorway, "See the teacher down to the main road, Wullie!" What new world had I strayed into? What was so unsuitable about this environment that I had to be

escorted quickly out of it? Certainly the building was like something out of Dickens with its worn stone stairs lit only by tiny gas lamps. Many of the two-roomed flats, served by communal toilets on the landings of the public stairs, were subdivided into "single ends" in which entire families ate, slept and lived their whole lives. Was it the building and its lack of amenities that was the source of distress, or were there other ways in which a teacher did not match this home setting? When the post-war housing estates were built around the city would the problems be over - or would they just become clearer?

This incident occurred nearly thirty years before the National Children's Bureau document "Born to Fail?" (3) showed us just how seriously such environmental deprivation affects schooling and life chances. But even at twenty I could feel vaguely that there were other differences between home and school to do with the meaning of life and expectations of learning which somehow affected the children even more than the physical environment. That was at the end of the nineteen forties, before I became a Sister of Notre Dame.

Twenty years later, as Head of a Secondary Modern School in the Liverpool post-war housing estate of Speke, I began to appreciate the question, if not the answer in

this puzzle of home/school mismatch. This Liverpool school had been set up to cater for pupils with I.Q.'s between 80 and 110. From many points of view it was a progressive, exciting place. School work was made relevant through programmes of study which cut across subject barriers and included work experience. (4) Children grew in self-esteem through many partnership situations with staff while they discovered their creative ability through craft, music and drama opportunities. By every means we could find we encouraged a caring "one world" approach which led many to explore career prospects like nursing, which offered a service to others. A few extended their third world interest into giving that service as far afield as Africa.

But despite the obvious progress in curriculum development and in school organisation and policy which made our school "successful" to officials and inspectors in Liverpool, I became increasingly aware that I was failing by not achieving a real match between staff efforts and pupil learning. Many pupils gained a great deal, but too many left us without any noticeable success. I was particularly troubled by those pupils who did not want what we had to offer, no matter how hard we tried. The few wild destructive pupils were less problematic to me than some of the pleasant co-operative

ones; the kind of pupils found in every school who will tidy cupboards or run endless errands with bright eagerness but who rarely tackle school work - and then only to please the teacher, never because they have discovered any pleasure in it for themselves.

Ted's problem in Wine Alley of finding no reward in school learning was really my problem too. The educationalist's side of the puzzle might be expressed like this: Since every baby begins life trying to learn about the world, why does learning cease to have an intrinsic reward for so many children in school? It seems to me now, so many years of effort later, that school failure is a corollary of that first question and truancy or disruptive behaviour an obvious response. But at that point these connections were not so clear. All I could see by the end of the Sixties was that everything that seemed to have been thought of as appropriate for a school was being done in ours and we still had the problem of disinterest in learning. I was forced to concede that school alone could not contain the answer.

At that time the term "Compensatory Education" was becoming fashionable, at least in the literature of education. Fortunately a chance encounter with a Community Worker saved me from that blind alley with all its implied criticism of the home. In the middle of all

our highly inventive but completely school-linked work in Liverpool this Community Worker began coming to see me in school. She kept suggesting various ways in which I could, in her view should, disrupt my precious timetable to involve the school in local events in the community. I looked at her in astonishment and kept giving answers like, "How could I take part in things I haven't planned, or to which I have not even been asked to contribute my ideas?" I puzzled over what she was trying to say about this grim housing estate and the people who lived in it. She said she wanted to challenge me to let the life of the neighbourhood really effect the school. I could make no sense of this. What could it mean? I was quite sure that the school was the centre of the local universe and that I was in complete charge of the school. Had my work been evaluated then my unstated assumptions would probably have been recorded by a researcher as "The Headteacher considers that the neighbourhood is made up of the families whose children she has in school. They are her catchment and she is the expert, that is why she has been appointed as Head. The parents, whom she feels she does her best to help in every way possible, cannot be allowed to pester her staff or tell her how to run the school." I might not have expressed it so sharply, but that was the general tenor of my thoughts.

"My" school was not closed to the neighbourhood, oh no!

Involvement of parents seemed important and I invited them in, but of course the school chose the timing, the topic and the organisation. It was all done with parents in mind, so that Careers Night rivalled 'Coronation Street' for entertainment and attracted a 90% attendance.

But it never crossed my mind to ask parents what they wanted or to share the planning with them. Yet when the Community Worker had put the proposition the other way round and expected the school to fit into a neighbourhood programme, I could not begin to comprehend how anyone could plan in this way without involving the ideas of the other participants - in this case me and "my" school!

Our problem was that in school, except when parents came for help in some personal need, we had no idea of what the local people thought about anything, outside the narrow confines of the particular piece of school work in which we wanted co-operation. They had no identity except as "First Year Parents" or "School Leavers' parents". Conversation was confined to "new maths" or career guidance or whatever else we, the specialists, had chosen. The only other way in which I communicated with parents, apart from calling them in because of discipline problems, was when I acted as a willing, if completely unqualified, counsellor in their domestic problems. So I was always the donor, the parents were always the recipients and I could not begin to imagine a different

relationship.

Yet the Community Worker bothered me with her challenge. What had the parents to offer? Of course they knew the children better than we did. But we tried to affect them at a deep level by running residential courses and sharing our lives with the children in every way we could. But when I said this she countered "What about sharing their life?" "What was this 'life' she was talking about? Even if I was missing something, I had no time to stop and listen to what it was. My mind was full of all the good plans I had for these children and when these were completed I had more in the pipeline.

But still some pupils remained outside the circle of my enthusiasm. Wilful or biddable, truants or attenders, I could not reach them. So I left my school headship, returned to fulltime study and began to understand what she meant. It changed the whole focus of my efforts. I am sorry I have forgotten the name of that Community Worker who visited me so briefly, yet caused me eventually to down tools and listen. I would like to tell her that she won.

I was fortunate that over the next ten years I was able to alternate between serious educational study at London, Glasgow and finally Liverpool Universities and successive

attempts at implementing what I was learning. At the culmination of this action/reflection period the Liverpool M.Ed. course led to my presence in Maisie's home that day in 1974 when she was bribing Ted to go to school.

By that time it was obvious to me that I was in that household to learn. It was not so obvious exactly what I was to learn, though little incidents like Ted's unwillingness to go to school gave me practical proof that the theoreticians were right in pointing to a major problem of mismatch between home and school.

Gradually I became aware of a related point, that of readiness. Before I had time to explore this idea in terms of Ted and his learning situation, I became acutely aware of the issue by experiencing a whole range of starting points among the adults concerned. It was becoming painfully clear to me that there was little in my background to prepare me to tackle the problem of mismatch, but at least I was alerted to the presence of the problem and was ready to stretch out towards a solution. This was not equally true of the other adults I was now encountering. Though the two groups of parents I met each week seemed on the surface to be rather similar, they were at very different stages of readiness for educational exploration.

The most obvious difference was in their home situations.

"Wine Alley" was not an alley, but a small stigmatised housing estate, broken in both appearance and spirit. Totally accepting its dismissive nickname, the children in school would give their address as "the Winey". But a new opportunity was coming. Two million pounds were being spent on upgrading the homes and the surroundings. Change had become a reality instead of an impossible dream. The parents were now ready to contemplate other changes which might extend into new ways of interacting with their children.

The situation was very different in the crumbling Victorian tenement. Hettie's group received constant police and Social Work intervention. In such circumstances, punctuated by court appearances for rent arrears and total darkness because of unpaid electricity bills, education could not be a priority. I tried to do the same work with both groups but found myself with different results.

This was my first hint that change could not be simple. To begin with I was gradually realising that there was more than one problem of mismatch.

## CHAPTER 1

### NOTES

1 BM02, (September 1974).

2 BM03. This page of details from the original Stairhead Seminars is reproduced from Sister Doreen Grant, A Preliminary Exploration of the Contribution of certain psychopedagogical techniques to the prevention of a cycle of educational disadvantage, University of Liverpool, 1975, unpublished M.Ed. thesis.

3 P. Wedge and H. Prosser, Born to Fail?, London, 1973.

4 I was headteacher of All Hallows Secondary Modern School, Liverpool, from its opening in 1958-1969. The school has since been swallowed up in reorganization in the 80's! For a profile of the school prepared in 1968 see BM01.

## Stairhead Seminars



"Hettie" (video still)

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## CHAPTER 2

### STAIRHEAD SEMINARS

'Could you describe a black pudding?' (1)

The four mothers sitting with me on that September afternoon in Maisie's newly decorated living room in 'Wine Alley', giggled and settled expectantly in their chairs. 'Describe a black pudding!' Maisie said, in the tone of one being asked to name the obvious. 'Supposing we were on one of those tele programmes' I continued, 'and someone was going to give you money if you could describe a black pudding to someone who had never seen one?'

I was intent on rousing awareness in this little group of housewives of the power of the word, their own word, sharpened and well-handled as a tool with which they could shape their own and their children's future. But, to an onlooker this goal might have seemed a long way off as we pursued our quaint word game. 'It's black!' 'It's long.' 'And it's round!' External key features of the black pudding were now exhausted and there was a puzzled pause. 'It's kind of spicy, isn't it?' 'It's like a sausage only it's black.'

The conversation went on to look at the fact that only

towards the end had they begun indicating that they were describing something to eat. From this we talked of children's problems in understanding the world about them if adults did not speak accurately and make sure their descriptions were clear.

These mothers were 'humouring me' - as they were to tell me later and could see no sense whatever in my sessions. - So why did they continue to meet me? I believe it was because of the sense of partnership we were building, as well as their growing trust that something meaningful might come out of the process which was so respectful of themselves and their opinions, however bizarre these first steps might seem.

By the time this game was taking place, I had, for a period, been meeting this group weekly in Maisie's house.

They were used to the idea of the first twenty minutes being spent in some 'fun' activity which would later be discussed for its educational content. We all understood that I was trying to learn something from them about how to match school education more appropriately to their children's starting point. They were very aware of the teacher's need to change if their children were to be successful. The idea that they might increase their own skills as informal educators and find new ways of helping their children become active learners had not as yet

entered their thoughts.

These women had no background of remembered school success on which to build. Memories of schooldays in this little group of four ranged through enjoyment, fear and boredom to school refusal. For some there had been small successes, but abysmal failure for others. All had left school at the minimum leaving age without any acquaintance with 'academic classes'. Their schools had labelled them pejoratively as 'non-certificate' so classifying them by what they were not. They were not the external examination candidates but that second half of the educational normal curve which is necessary to give the first half its status. The 1963 Newsom Report (2) of their school days had called them, and the millions like them, 'Half Our Future', but they were the unprivileged half, the 'ordinary failures' about which the other half puzzled or complained.

Now they sat with me, caring about their homes and their children and capable and confident enough within that setting, but they were still wary of this new experience of building up a partnership with a teacher. A wrong word from me would quickly re-open old wounds, so I too was cautious, finding it difficult sometimes to pick up positive cues. Today I had pitched my opening activity correctly and we were all enjoying the session and

gradually moving forward to some first thoughts on the importance of helping children build up and break down ideas in much the same way in which we were laughingly analysing the concept of a black pudding.

This was 1974. The verbal battles between Bernstein (3) and his critics on both sides of the Atlantic were still popular items in university courses and educational journals. These indicated that there must be something in what Bernstein was saying or people would not go to such trouble to argue with him. What seemed to be emerging from this debate was an important connection between the way people used words to express their thoughts on the one hand, and on the other their power to effect both society and their own individual lives. In contrast to this generally accepted finding there were good arguments to show that Bernstein had tied up this connection quite unrealistically in watertight social class compartments.

As a Glaswegian this flaw was particularly clear to me. Everyone in Glasgow claimed to be working class! Prominent citizens, university lecturers, business tycoons and T.V. personalities all made such an issue of beginning life in a room-and-kitchen home in a Glasgow tenement that they made such a start almost a condition of success. But, on reflection, none of those who loudly

hymned the glories of Springburn or Gorbals in the past were bringing up their own children in Glasgow's inner city or its sprawling Council estates where large numbers of the unskilled and unemployed had to live.

In the Glasgow of the seventies inequality was becoming increasingly obvious as we slid towards recession. People everywhere had troubles about money, employment, housing and health, but what seemed true, in my own experience, was that some people were in a better position to deal with these problems than others. I was one of these fortunate people. When I took up an issue like medical care or housing allocation for anyone, I had more hope of success than the four other women with whom I shared tea and biscuits in Maisie's living room. I had no personal expertise or contacts in the housing or medical worlds, but I did have some experience of wielding words like a powerful tool which could be used to nail an issue in debate or to lay it out clearly enough on paper to affect the decision makers. If life was to become more equal in Glasgow my contribution would be through sharing this skill. This use of language and literacy seemed to me central to empowering people to deal with all the other issues in society for themselves.

At first glance this might seem like the ordinary work of the school. But I had taught for twenty years, eleven of

these as a headteacher, and I was now in Maisie's home because I had not been able to share that skill with everyone in the classroom. Nor, it seemed had most otherschools. A whole range of educational research writers and thinkers had confirmed my personal experience of failure to bring out the best in every pupil by school work alone. I had to find out what more was needed than the current efforts of hardworking, dedicated teachers.

Jerome Bruner's (4) writings particularly 'Relevance of Education' influenced my thinking very much at this stage. I became convinced then that the central language skill necessary for progress was the ability to analyse a concept into its component parts and regroup these pieces into practical climbing steps towards a desired goal. During the next ten years I was to refine and rephrase that idea many times. I was to find that it could not be made a goal in isolation from the many practical, social and organizational realities in which thought and language are embedded. But I was never to find any evidence which led me away from the conviction that this language skill was central to freedom and progress in education.

In 1974 my immediate task was to find a way of translating Bruner's profound thoughts into the Glasgow vernacular so that I might share them with Maisie and her

friends. It seemed important to me to share the principles in order that everyone in the group could participate in deciding future practice. So I sat on Maisie's couch introducing my mock T.V. game and hoping we would all end up eventually with an awareness of analysis as a powerful tool and so move on to planning how to use this knowledge.

The mothers had taken up their part in the black pudding game quickly and unselfconsciously. Previous sessions had been reassuring experiences in which positive use had been made of their contributions. They knew now that when the game ended and I began trying to bring out its meaning, they would hear their own words quoted back to them as illustrations of the educational idea under discussion. They were eager to speak, to put forward tentative suggestions and perhaps have them picked up as key points during the discussion that would follow. We all felt successful as the game proceeded.

My experience had been very different the day before when I had tried the same activity while sitting at Hettie's kitchen fire in the old condemned tenement in which her group lived. The small circle of adults - two mothers, a granny and an unemployed teenager - had been lively enough as the game started, though nearby a two-year old boy and a handicapped three-year old girl sat without

interest or activity, strapped into their pram and cot. But though the adults tackled the activity readily, they soon sat back in some bewilderment as they became aware of being off-target.

What's a black pudding? they mused again, like students re-reading the essay title for the tenth time. 'Well, you can fry it or you can boil it.' (5) 'There's quite a lot of people don't like black pudding.' They looked at me doubtfully, unable to capture the concept in words because they could not find how to analyse it into its key components. It took all the skill I could find to steer them round to the process of analysis. Yet, once found, they were delighted with their improved skill. One of the group reported some weeks later (6), how she had repeated this whole process on her own. Her husband had come in for his evening meal and had been asked to analyse the concept before she would serve him with the black pudding's succulent reality!

Looking back, I wonder now how I ever dared to pin so much importance on a 'nonsense' game which had no practical value. It would not put food on the table for them. All it offered immediately was a certain social reward of being part of an experimental group whose words were solemnly taped and transcribed. But for me, and for my learning of how to tackle the issue of

underachievement these sessions brought a tiny, but quite certain forward step.

It was becoming clear to me that these two groups were different from each other. One obvious difference was Hettie's immediate need for a whole range of external support. She was acutely aware that her three-year old needed help and at her request I had already contacted the appropriate health agency. But this was only the tip of the iceberg. There was a track beaten to her door by every other supporting agency.

Families under so much pressure should not be asked to cope with still another professional presence in the home. They could not make education a priority before their basic needs were met. Now, as the series of meetings ended the members of this group were indicating clearly that they could not sustain a further set of regular meetings. (7) 'I wanted to go on because it wisnae that long we had to go 'till it was finished and that was it all done' was how Hettie put it to me. The way forward for the group in the condemned property, was therefore not going to be by direct contact. So, for their sakes, I started on the road of interdisciplinary co-operation.

I had no idea then how long that road would turn out to

be. It all seemed so obvious to me. Health Visitors would be glad to have contact with research information on the ways in which mothers can influence their child's intellectual development from birth onwards. Social Workers would be delighted to know about the language and thought skills connected with problem-solving, since this held such relevance for families struggling to get a grip on everyday problems of household management.

But I was falling into a common trap for educators. I was seeing my contribution in a vacuum, forgetting all the other professionals had already heavy work loads, expertise specially geared to that work as well as constant pressure to update theory and practice in their specialised fields. As time went on I saw that they had very little time, mental space or professional support to take in and implement what I was offering, even had I been able to offer it clearly. As it was, my contribution was enthusiastic but unclear. Consequently, the response of professionals outside my own field though it was supportively assenting, was at a very general notional level.

Even in 1974 I realised sadly that I must give up working with Hettie's group. I could not immediately find an indirect route through other professionals to offer educational help to them, equally, I could not bring it

to Hettie and her friends myself. Not only did I worry about being a burden to them, but I also lacked the skills, especially in these first attempts, to tailor the work correctly to their needs and accustomed patterns of talk. Yet if I correctly understood the power of analytical language as a tool for dealing with problems, Hettie's grasp of this word power would have reduced her need for so much outside help.

This last point was becoming very clear. As I grew in awareness of important variations between my two 'stairhead' groups, despite their demographic equivalence, I became increasingly convinced of the relationship between their preferred language styles and their different grasp of the complex world with which the city dweller is forced to contend. These two groups used different language processes and these in turn matched their different levels of ability to cope with their social reality. I had no proof of cause and effect, but quite clear indications at least of a relationship between language skill and social and economic competence.

Both groups had agreed to our discussions being tape-recorded; a process which quickly became a background normality. But conscious that I hoped to share my findings with others interested in education,

there was often a special effort by both hostesses to help me put my work in context by well-told background stories with the tape-recorder specially in mind. These pieces, when brought together, show a remarkable difference between the groups. Hettie, who was least in control of her reality was also least in control of her tale. The events dominated, as she reported various facets of a current pressure without seeming to be able to bring the parts together verbally into a pattern. A spiced description of her neighbours' social problems could be graphically told, but she needed many non-verbal cues as well as a sanctimonious voice and a righteous facial expression to convey her message that her neighbours were involved in stairhead brawls while she held the role of innocent - but maligned - observer concerned with drawing the neighbours' attention to the effect of the fight on the children's safety.

Helped by all the body language I picked up the message she wished to give me but the tape recording of the verbal description offers merely:-

"Chairs and everything. (8) You were terrified to come in that door in case you got something over the head. Well, quite the thing, I opened the door and asked, 'I'll take the young children in' " and she told me a mouthful and said 'Oh no!' She said, 'It's none of your

business!' I knew that, but I was thinking of the children."

The relationship of this incident to the non-appearance of these neighbours at our sessions, was not indicated in any way, though that visible fact was presumably the result of the event which she was reporting. The ability to keep even two elements on the same thread of thought until a coherent tale was told seemed beyond Hettie's communication skill.

The 'Wine Alley' situation was markedly different. A knife-gang fight, a neighbour's suicide, the constant problem of attempted break-ins, were all elements of their environment over which they had no control, but the racy, well-constructed descriptions of these realities showed the speakers to be in command of the reports, if not of the events. They also showed the speakers' awareness of the need to fill in details for me which would be already known to the rest of the audience. The following tiny transcript extract is from the incidental conversation carried on over the end-of-session tea.

MAUREEN: That man did hang himself. (9)

MAISIE: His daughter said it was a heart attack.

MAUREEN: Well, you know how it is. She'd want to cover up for him. But we have the same insurance man

and he told me that he did hang himself.

MAISIE: (to me): This is the man in the next house to  
Maureen - through the wall.

MAUREEN: It happened last week. His daughter ran out  
into the street saying her father had hanged  
himself. Then, later, she said it wasn't true.  
He had had a heart attack. But that was just  
to cover up. Well, naturally, she wouldn't  
want people to know, would she?

MAISIE: What had happened?

MAUREEN: He'd just heard the result of the X-Ray at the  
hospital. They told him he had cancer. His  
wife died of cancer, so he .....

The story was clearly told. Details, inferred reasons,  
interpretations for the outsider were all completely and  
coherently present.

This skill went far beyond the level of conversation I  
was used to receiving from Hettie. These differences in  
adult conversation between the two groups showed up  
continuously over ten sessions of taped discussions.

Discussion, explanation, efforts to provoke thinking and  
problem-solving skills were clearly present in the Wine  
Alley adult conversations on a number of occasions. Yet  
these processes were less common between adults and

# 'Wine Alley' in the 70's



children. For example, the gruesome suicide story recorded above, was told in the presence of children, yet they were never addressed directly during it. No special explanations were added for children as had been done for me; they might as well have been out of the room. This was not an isolated incident. On other occasions I heard such subjects classified as 'not for children'. If the close proximity necessitated by a small family house caused children to hear such stories, their presence was ignored and treated like absence. This was clearly an accepted attitude, so that the occasional question from a child was hushed by responses like, 'I was not speaking to you'. Though some topic might well have been talked out on other occasions - no situation is absolutely black and white - I never in the ten weeks heard either an explanation or a comment like 'We'll talk about it later' addressed to a child. This seemed to me to have implications for school.

The best of school education is dependent on children being able to explore an idea in helpful relationship with an adult. But children spend a very small proportion of their waking lives in school. They cannot switch on this interaction with the teacher if they are not used to discussing cause and effect at home or if negotiating and re-negotiating a conclusion is not a normal part of everyday living. Here in 'Wine Alley'

these loved and well cared for children did not seem to experience a great deal of this kind of language despite its existence in adult conversation. This seemed an important point to pursue.

In the mid-seventies there was a growing awareness that the process of schooling was not totally successful. To the dismay of parents and professionals alike, inner city schools did not seem to facilitate the lives of most of their clients. Professionals seemed to see the problem in terms of apathetic non-participation by the children while parents saw it in terms of control and division by the teachers. My view was not so black and white. For me the school was currently a one-way system of information because the partners - the teachers and the learners - did not possess a matching communication network which would allow knowledge to be built up jointly.

If both parents and teachers became interested in how the other saw the children's needs and potential, if each began to understand the other's skills, expectations and educative strengths, the resulting partnership would make a secure foundation on which to build the children's education. I wanted to explore these ideas with both parents and teachers and so facilitate co-operation between home and school.

At this time I was beginning to see how the home could help to close the home/school gap a little. Accustomed language patterns could be extended as parents shared small skills with their children at home. It was also possible to interest parents in discussions on the school's expectations and processes. But this has to be a two way street and it was not until 1975 that I could even begin to plan ways of listening and talking to teachers in the neighbouring schools and eventually build up a network of links between class teachers and parents.

I was particularly interested in facilitating this co-operation at the point when a child was about to start school.

Competence in simple forms of analytical language is necessary, even at five years of age, to be able to deal with the school system and the classroom process. (10) For example, the young child who hears:- 'I wonder if there is a clever boy or girl in this classroom who could bring me the red plant pot from the window sill?' has to be able to analyse that sentence, organise all the component parts and translate it into - 'That means me, Jimmy, getting her that box.'

He then has to have the social poise to respond in action while appreciating that there might be a similar response from another class member and adjust his behaviour

accordingly. This is a highly skilled piece of thinking which includes interpretation of information, drawing out the implications and ordering personal behaviour in response. All this does not come naturally. It requires constant adult/child interaction of a problem solving nature to build up the requisite competence.

Children who have spent the first five years of their lives learning that good behaviour is equated with unresponsiveness to adult speech unless this is quite directly addressed to them, cannot suddenly respond competently to language addressed in school to a group.

Yet there is disturbing research (11) to show that the initial impression children make in school during their first eight days is the basis for a mutually accepted stratification into potentially successful and unsuccessful pupils.

How was I to share all this with Maisie and her friends? How could I convince them that they already had the skills their children needed, though perhaps they did not use them much? I was even further from helping them see themselves in the role of important informal educators.

The only place to begin was from what was already happening in the home. As in any family, these children were often consciously taught by demonstration. I wanted

to show how the speed and scope of learning could be increased by accompanying the example with exact verbal directions to replace unspecific commands like, 'Put that there'. I hoped that this would also help to bring a heightened awareness of the power of words in a wider context.

Starting from the safe ground of children's games, I used a little paper tearing exercise (12) as example. Each of Maisie's daughters happily accepted a brightly coloured square of paper and followed my verbal directions to make a particular series of simple folds. They listened attentively to the next step, which consisted of tearing out some of the corners, then triumphantly unfolded the whole piece to display the paper lace doilies they had made. After the demonstration I discussed with the mothers how to match their own explanation with exact verbal cues. The women then tried out the process themselves, each practising with one of her five or six year olds just returned from school.

Peggy and Cathie worked competently, directing their children's action by accurate words, but after the first few steps, Maisie quickly reverted to her normal procedure, taking the task over and doing it for her daughter as words failed her and she could no longer direct the process verbally. The other mothers

remonstrated but their criticism was feeble. They were too engrossed with their own tasks to be over-concerned with Maisie. The following week they were to recall this and Maisie's abashed comment was then 'and I was keeping on doing it!' (13)

Maureen's son found the pressure a little too much. He was very keen to help his mother succeed and saw the production of the little paper doily as the important issue. 'Do it for me' he said, preparing to relinquish the brightly coloured paper to his mother. Her answer must have puzzled him: 'I'm not allowed to do it!' (14)

The paper remained in his hands while Maureen, with beads of perspiration standing out on her forehead, struggled to find appropriate verbal directions.

The language extension from global generalities into exact verbal cues was demanding categorizing and sequencing skills which it might take a student teacher many sessions of teaching practice to master. There was great effort in that little room and with it the suppressed excitement which comes with finding, however vaguely at this point, a hidden depth of power in oneself; a power which I should have taken the next few weeks to explain and expand. We were at the beginning of a useful process which now needed to be developed. But with no awareness of my unrealistic timescale I thought

that the task was done. Already I was looking for an opportunity to jump ahead.

I was very aware that at this point I was concentrating on the language parents most frequently used with their children - direct command. Everything I had read pointed to the importance of a different language use - the language of imagination and reflection, so I was keen to find how the parents could develop in their children the skills of weighing different solutions against each other, of considering various interpretations and creating new possibilities. I was not conscious at this point that language is the close companion of experience and expectation. Parents who had little scope for choice, negotiation or options in their own lives would need new opportunities before they could share such language with their children. But I was still seeing language as an independent skill and so was anxious to move on to its other and more creative versions.

My first stumbling introduction to the use of sequenced cues was hardly over before I was trying unwisely to seize an opportunity to introduce the reflective language of imagination and interpretation. Maisie's daughter, Betty, provided the occasion.

Having succeeded in making a first doily under their

mothers' direction, the children began to repeat the paper-tearing activity using newspaper when the coloured paper gave out, while Maisie became involved in serving tea and biscuits to the adults. Betty, Maisie's four year old daughter, who was constantly in trouble in and out of the house, tore her newspaper rather unevenly and initially looked on this as a failure. But happy to have such a creative possibility, I encouraged Betty to improvise and improve on the initial task. She soon became enthusiastic about her design, which she saw now as a fish.(15)

The exact words were not recorded, but my notes recall that it went something like this. 'Look mammy,' Betty called across the adult group. The mother paid no heed. I gently steered the child round to her mother's side. 'Look mammy!' 'A fish.' The mother continued her conversation. I tried to direct the mother's attention. 'Betty has turned her's into a fish', I said hopefully. Maisie could hear that I was asking her to respond to the child and broke off to glance briefly in the general direction of Betty and say, 'Oh aye hen, that's lovely', resuming the adult conversation immediately, as if there had been no break.

Betty, who had been built up by my wrongly gauged intervention to expect an interested response, crushed

the paper in her hand and ran out of the room. Minutes later her strident voice was to be heard arguing in the street.

I felt abashed that I had handled this opportunity so badly, even though I could see that to Betty and her mother there had been no incident, everything was normal.

I was acutely aware that my idea of 'normal' was different. Mine was based on expectations of creative interaction between adults and children. I had no awareness at this point of how many widely separate practical steps would have to be taken in the home, the community and the local schools before expectations of this kind of talk would seem 'normal' to everyone.

Looking back I can see that I should have expected change to be slow. Change theory points out that change does not come about merely by exposing people to useful information. Complex elements in individuals, groups, expectations and needs must all be considered. Warren Bennis in a study of the many factors involved in bringing about change has the phrase 'Human behaviour is like a centipede, standing on many legs.' (16) Slowly I set my face towards facilitating the movement of that centipede in ways which research was clearly showing would benefit the child.

As four year old Betty shouted that afternoon in 1974 in her only play space - the street - I could not imagine even in my wildest dreams where that movement would lead.

I could not foresee Betty, ten years later, taking part in the local community's annual pantomime - an event to be invented in 1977 and by the 80's involving hundreds of participants. Yet by December 1983 Maisie and the rest of the family would be part of the audience in the hall of a beautifully renovated 1890 school which groups of parents and other local people had helped to redesign and take over as a Neighbourhood Centre. There the four year olds of the 80's could sit with bright interested faces at the edge of the central stage and watch their own brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, parents and even grandparents share the stage with Betty to entertain a large audience, under professional direction. These four year olds could also expect to join in a variety of activities in playrooms, library, craft or dining room within their own Centre. The street was no longer the only play space nor were their expectations of parent/child shared experience and talk confined to 'aye hen, that's lovely'. But that was all hidden in the future on that autumn afternoon in 1974 when I felt nothing but failure and the chill of fear that my vision was an impossible dream and I would never find the uncharted road between theory and reality. The next week's session in October 1974, brought a measure of

encouragement.

My little doily making exercise was not meant to affect one session only for I had high hopes of demonstrating a tiny but significant change in the children by this way of teaching. The combination of clear verbal directions and matching experience should have given the children quite noticeable control over the activity. This exalted view of my simple paper-tearing activity was drawn from reading the Russian Psychologist, Luria. (17) His work had suggested many important aspects of the power of language in the growth of learning and thinking skills. I felt that I could unravel some of the jargon in which these exciting findings were wrapped and hand on his lessons quite simply in Maisie's living room.

Walking along 'Wine Alley' to Maisie's home the next Monday I was rehearsing to myself how I would show the group of mothers that the children now had control over this little paper tearing exercise and could produce it at will, because they had stored the verbal information and carried it as a plan in their heads. Like many a teacher in class, I had unthinkingly expected everyone to wait for a week until I introduced this next step. Instead, because Luria's point is true and the verbal directions had dramatically changed the children's power over the paper tearing activity, the whole process had

already been completed.

The parents were full of tales of their children demonstrating and directing other children in the family in the great art of paper doily making. Maisie told of her two girls trying to teach their brother. (18) 'And here, he couldnae dae it! So it ended in a fight. Then he seemed to do it in the end.' I offered a few questions at this point to focus the discussion on the issue of language as a powerful tool. 'Can you remember any of these steps? Were they telling him how to do it?'

Immediately Maisie began to reflect that the change in her son's skill could indeed be attributed to the use of clearly expressed words. 'Aye' she said. 'Jean was telling Paul how to dae it.' I became quite excited at this illustration of Luria's point and pursued the subject 'Putting it into words?' I queried. Maisie's answer confirmed my hopes that she could show in her family's behaviour the relationship in the learning process of words and actions. "She was saying 'You watch me. This is how to dae it.' Just the way you were telling the kids, she was just following your words, more or less, you know."

In Peggy's tale, even her husband's football paper had been surrendered to the three year old's insatiable thirst for repeating the directions to herself and to her

friends. 'See papers (19)!' ended Peggy, leaving her facial expression to convey the image of a home gradually subsiding under a sea of newspaper doilies. The parents had never seen such concentration in their children. If initially they had viewed me as strange but harmless, this extended effect on their families added a note of caution.

I had now opened doors and glimpsed educational possibilities, but could not yet offer parents a means of entering these new worlds. Many of the ideas which were exciting me as I saw theory translated into action were still at a very naive level in my mind, I needed to go away now and think. The mothers too, needed a break. They were to tell me later that their expressed interest had frequently been no more than a piece of conversational courtesy. After my departure each Monday they often shook their heads at me and wondered what it was all about. In later years, Peggy, who had a three year old with her during these sessions, often recalled those days to visiting educationalists by saying, "We couldnae see what she was on about until later when our weans went to school. Then we could say, 'That's what Doreen used to talk about. Right enough, there is something in it!' But at the time we really thought it was a bit daft."

Ten weeks of carefully recorded action, reaction and discussion were now replaced by a period of writing and reflection. What had I learned? I had begun this work quite sure that the focus of education must be the family. My appreciation of the school and the work of dedicated teachers was undiminished. But theirs was a specialist function dependant for its efficacy on the day long educational environment of the home and the local community.

This was a time when the research climate was beginning to move away from professional intervention as the solution to all problems. Earl Schaefer (20), for example, was acknowledging at a major conference that the evidence now made it impossible to hold his previous stance of 'more professional intervention is the answer'. He said he now had to admit gracefully that parental involvement in education was clearly the most effective way to bring about lasting improvement.

'The greater long term effectiveness of parent-centred programmes as contrasted to child-centred programmes has major implications for the future of the education profession.'

This response was a straightforward 'about turn' - refreshing but not surprising in the light of

Bronfenbrenner's 1974 review (21) of the major American intervention programmes which showed clearly the educational effect of which he called 'human ecology' - the whole interactive network of people and place within which the child lived and learned. In particular he could demonstrate the relationships between maternal involvement and the child's educational competence.

But what kind of parental involvement was most educationally effective? I had spent an engrossing year in Liverpool learning from Edgar Stones some very complex arguments about language, learning and thinking. The application of these very convincing theories to the classroom was Stones' main preoccupation. But the American intervention programme results and particularly Bronfenbrenner's synthesis, were nudging me to try to apply these ideas to the homes as well as the schools. Successful involvement was connected in some way with the language of analysis and synthesis and with problem solving skills. 'In some way.....' But how was I to find the way to share these theories with the children's first educators, their parents?

To turn research information into palatable living-room chat is difficult in any company. To try it where the scales are tipped against success, had seemed a rather daunting task, until I received such a rewarding response

in 'Wine Alley' to my ten-week 'curtain raiser'. Encouraged by these four mothers, I asked the Local Education Authority for the addresses of all the families in the area with children between three and eight and prepared to take my ideas out of Maisie's home and into the wider community.

I was very reluctant to limit the work to one age range, since I was convinced of the effect of all the members of a family on one another. But common sense advised beginning where it was easiest to obtain parental interest and research literature backed this up with evidence of best success at this early stage.

In the rain and sleet of Glasgow in February and March 1976, I knocked at the doors of one hundred and twenty tenement homes and asked the surprised residents if they would like to share some ideas with me on the education of their young children. With Chris, my community education student partner at my side, we must have seemed like a pair of misguided sales representatives. In many ways we were attempting to use the door to door sales technique of bringing to the home a commodity the householder was unlikely to go out and seek unaided.

At the same time as these first individual contacts were being made I was trying out a group approach. The

Housing Department had built a Tenants' Hall for the modernised estate. Mothers met here once a week to talk while their children occupied themselves with toys at the other end of the room. Into this setting I introduced 'Auntie Meta', a retired infant teacher who had volunteered her help. Each week Meta brought pre-reading books which she scattered among the playthings. She read stories to the small children who crowded round her, and as the five and six year olds returned from school, she talked with them about the day's events and heard them read their homework page from the school reader. The mothers watched from a distance or shyly stood about to catch a little of the conversation, for the first time having the chance to see someone else handle the home side of the early school years. This was my cue to offer to work through these ideas with the parents. At least one mother who was later to work hard in many home/school activities, constantly attributed her initial interest to the model Auntie Meta offered of adult/child talk.

But 'Wine Alley's' encouraging responses were so tiny that I was forced to concede that something more would be necessary to revolutionise the educational system than my little home made parent/professional programmes within a local community. The most glaring flaw was that a major element was missing. If I was trying to find ways to remedy the mismatch between home and school I could not



## CHAPTER 2

### NOTES

- 1 T016, 1ff (27 October 1974).
- 2 The Newsom Report Half Our Future, London, 1963.
- 3 B. Bernstein, Class Codes and Control, Vol. 1, London, 1973. This book is a collection of many papers and essays previously published. The critics who added particular zest to this controversy about language and learning were, in England, Harold Rosen, Language and Class, London, 1972; and, in the United States, W. Labov, 'The Logic of Non-standard English' reprinted in Language in Education, London, 1972.
- 4 J.S. Bruner, Relevance of Education, London, 1974, 159-169.
- 5 T029, 5 (29 October 1974).
- 6 V2 (November 1974).
- 7 T027, 1 (14 October 1974).

8 T007, 2 (14 October 1974).

9 T002, 1 (n.d.).

10 A.R. Luria and F.I. Yudovich, Speech and the development of mental processes in the child, London, 1971, 55ff. Throughout this section of the book Luria shows the difference between simple speech within the bounds of the visual situation and the kind of speech normally found in the classroom. He says 'Understanding of developed narrative speech often remained inaccessible to our children. In these cases they often snatched at an element of the sentence, failing to relate this to the general context, which obviously led to misunderstanding of the content of the instructions', (57).

11 R.C. Rist, 'Student social class and teacher expectations: the self-fulfilling prophecy'. Harvard Educational Review Reprint Series No. 5, 1971, 70-110. Rist's study is used by L.J. Schweinhart and D.P. Weikart who point out that children quickly receive and accept a relationship with formal education which is very rarely altered in later schooling ( Young Children Grow Up, Ypsilanti, U.S.A., 1980, 10).

12 T014, 2 (30 September 1974). For a subsequent reflection on this event see also T015, 2 and passim.

- 13 T015, 3 (7 October 1974).
- 14 T014, 2 (30 September 1974).
- 15 T014, 2 (30 September 1974).
- 16 W.G. Bennis, Benne and Chin, The Planning of Change, London, 1970, 6.
- 17 Luria, op. cit., 86 and passim. Both the doily making activity and the handing on of this skill bear some resemblance to the growth in control through language shown by Luria's twins. The paper construction in Maisie's house, in his words, 'took place according to the clear phrases of a verbally formulated project, preparation of activity and its realisation, now the product of activity already existed in the imagination at the commencement', (87).
- 18 T015, 2 (7 October 1974).
- 19 T015, 5 (7 October 1974).

20 E.S. Schaefer, 'Summary of Research on Parent-focussed Child Development programmes' 54th National Report on Home-Based Child Development Programmes, St. Louis, 1975, Appendix B, 53ff.

21 U. Bronfenbrenner, 'Is Early Intervention Effective?' in Handbook of Evaluation Research, Vol. 2. Beverly Hills, 1975, 546-572. This article has been reprinted and quoted in a variety of publications as much for Bronfenbrenner's reflections on the findings from various intervention studies as for the findings themselves. A summative analysis of these major intervention programmes can be found in the U.S. Government Human Development Services publication Lasting Effects After Preschool Washington, 1980.

# To See Ourselves as Others See Us



Do you have a dog or a cat?

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## CHAPTER 3

### TO SEE OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US

By 1975 I was aware that the mismatch between home and school in the inner city had to be tackled from both sides. They each had to be willing to move and I had taken on, uninvited, the task of helping both sides to move together. While the community and home side of this work began gradually to take shape in Maisie's living room and progressed into tiny programmes of work in the Tenants' Hall, the school side was harder to start. Remembering my own isolationist policy in school I was very sympathetic to the headteachers' viewpoint and only tried to introduce partnership ideas very gently. At least, it seemed very gentle to me. The schools however saw it differently!

There were two Primary Schools designated by the Local Authority to be at the educational service of the people of Wine Alley and its neighbouring communities. Both had headteachers who were nearing retirement when I first met them in 1975. They already had the huge task of moving their schools out of traditional Victorian premises into open plan buildings. To them I represented an added and seemingly quite unnecessary burden.

I was unaware of their feelings as they received me politely, and arranged to have the 5, 6 and 7 year old children on my lists filmed as they participated in reading activities with their class teachers. I had been alerted by Paulo Freire's work in Brazil, (1) to the new insights which could be gained by looking at a current reality in the detached way made possible through photography. This school video was to be part of an attempt to help the parents see their children as learners with strengths and needs which perhaps did not show up in the same way at home.

Intent on this objective, I did not stop to explore the schools' position, instead I was naive enough to mistake courtesy for commitment. Having persuaded a College of Education Audio Visual Department to make the recording (2), I rushed on to the next step, the showing of the video in the Tenants' Hall to the families concerned. This was the launching exercise for the Urban Aid, 'Govan Project' (3) stage of the work. The schools received only a casually arranged preview for the teachers who had so bravely brought their teaching skills out of the security of a closed classroom and recorded them for all to see.

Looking back I find it incredible that I had not appreciated how these teachers would feel, for I knew the

insecurity video work produces, especially at the beginning when we first see ourselves in action 'warts and all'. It is no use reminding ourselves at that point that all we are viewing is the reality everyone else has been able to see all the time. Tiny trivial aspects can still produce a great blow to one's self-esteem. Only months before this school production we had made a recording of a local interprofessional meeting (4). One school Social Worker had spoken particularly well and I showed her the video tape with pride. As it finished I asked with satisfaction 'Margaret, what did you think of your contribution?' 'Oh those shoes!' she moaned. 'I should never have worn white shoes!' I was taken aback. 'But what about what you said?' I persisted. 'Said?' she questioned blankly. 'I never heard it. Those shoes looked awful.'

Now here I was putting teachers into the same personal position and asking even more of them by filming their most valued professional skills. Yet I never stopped to prepare them or reflect on the outcomes with them. That the work was also very new to me and that I was carrying it out while teaching history part-time in a nearby Secondary School may go some way towards an explanation. Another ingredient was my total absorption in the children and the realisation of their potential. I just presumed everyone else was with me. Perhaps too, I was

responding unconsciously to my feeling of being an outsider in the schools. Rather like the local parents, I felt ill at ease in them and though I went through the china-tea-cup-ritual smilingly I was uncomfortable and did not seek to prolong the contact. It never crossed my mind that the heads and staff might be feeling much the same thing with me and that the whole situation would have been better if it had been discussed openly. Instead, I was to repeat this mistake stubbornly in a variety of settings before I had the courage to confront the issue.

This video of children reading with their teachers showed some excellent working relationships between teachers and taught. But it also allowed us to see some further opportunities which were easily missed unless the school could find ways of being in closer touch with the neighbourhood. For example (5), the reading book used in one school carried the story of 'Dolly's wash day'. The video shows Ann, a child whose family I knew quite well, reading aloud about the doll's clothes which the little girl in the story hung up to dry on a rope by the trees. On the surface we seemed to be viewing an apathetic child reading in a faraway hesitant voice. But this interpretation did not take Ann's perspective into account. The use of trees might simply have been meaningless at another time in the concrete jungle of

inner city Govan, but the situation was even worse in Moorpark where environmental improvements had brought the very first trees into the estate. These thin propped-up specimens were guarded by the modernization officials. Families had been sternly warned that parents would be held responsible if at this stage any child touched a tree. What was Ann to make of this story? Was it possible that some of her distraction was caused by confusion that the child in the book was not the expected heroine of the story but a very disobedient girl who was touching the precious trees? The most cursory knowledge of Moorpark at that point could have led to a few words of explanation and so of understanding. Instead, Ann's seeming disengagement from the lesson was commented on in terms of the family background which was rather unorthodox and this was seen in the school as the sole explanation for Ann's lack of interest. There was no thought that the home/school mismatch could be a problem which the school should be tackling by moving a little nearer to the concerns of the home. Instead, the home background was seen as containing all the problems and the school all the possibilities.

Often in this kind of situation there is no criticism of the parents as people, the problem is seen globally and comprehensively so that one teacher could respond spontaneously with a comment on a bright eager child,

# The local schools in the 70's



'He is quite good, considering he is from Wine Alley.'  
In a different setting his ability might have been noted on its own merits. One would not expect to hear the opposite addition, 'considering he is from the West End.'

There was a pre-judgement that living in Moorpark was in itself a source of failure. There was no consideration of the viewpoint that the Moorpark children's expected failure might stem from the fact that school learning began from the curriculum and from text books which were designed for middle class interests and not from the pupils and their starting point. I recognised from my own experience that at least some people were teaching subjects rather than teaching children. I also knew that this was a difficult issue to grasp. This lack of awareness in the schools of the impact of local events on their pupils' thoughts and feelings meant that the teacher's job was made unnecessarily hard, since she lacked the key to arouse substantial interest.

This gap between home and school showed up in another of these filmed reading sessions (6) but this time the teacher was given a momentary glimpse of the educational potential in the children's home setting. Environmental studies have a secure place today in the school curriculum. But the use of the locality as a starting point for school work was less common in the seventies, though some excellent opportunities were available. As

these videos were being made, two million pounds were being spent on upgrading Wine Alley, bringing hope and self-esteem to the people, a fact symbolized by the name change to Moorpark Estate. I was privileged to participate in the preparation and presentation of Moorpark's first festival which celebrated the completion of these improvements. This included the selection of a ten year old Gala Princess. The Gala Day had been quite spectacular, with the little princess in a horse drawn carriage driving round the estate escorted by every local child in one role or another.

The week after the Gala I was working with a teacher who was preparing to use the class reading book to stimulate oral language with a group of children. While the camera crew set up their equipment I chatted with the pupils concerned to put them at their ease. I noticed in the group the sister of the recent local celebrity - the Gala Princess. I had begun commenting on the crowning ceremony when the cameramen announced that they were ready. As I changed places with the teacher, I said 'Mary's sister was the Moorpark Princess - that should give her something to say in your discussions.' - 'Moorpark Princess?' the teacher murmured uncomprehendingly as she moved forward to join the group.

One after another the children read round the table. No one turned a head or even moved a muscle while the next

child read. They were very confident of the classroom rubrics which give one child the teacher's attention at a time and so necessitate the others staying out of the situation, as if they cannot hear what is going on, yet remaining very aware of events so that they are ready to respond without a moment's hesitation when the teacher begins to move to the next pupil.

The story was about a dog called Spot. 'Do you have a dog or a cat at home, Mary?' the teacher asked. Mary smiled like a fellow actor in a play and agreed that she had a pet at home. I have shown this section of the video many times to audiences. If people are not specifically asked to watch for this response a good proportion of the audience, when asked later, cannot tell whether Mary said she had a cat or a dog. Everyone, teacher, pupil, audience, is aware in this kind of contrived conversation that the teacher is not really interested in the answer. It is only a means to some other end which she already has in mind. The question is really part of a game of 'guess what's in the teacher's head', rather than a serious enquiry.

However difficult this teacher usually found these 'inarticulate' children in the privacy of her own classroom, it was agony in front of a camera. Grasping at my 'Moorpark Princess' aside, she asked Mary, 'What's

this about your sister being the Moorpark Princess?' The effect on the whole group was immediate! Mary's face lit up and her hands came into action as she struggled to find words to describe the event. 'She was wearing this purple cloak as she came out of the Tenants' Hall and she had this diamond thing on her head.'

The video does not catch the teacher's startled pleasure at having set off this flow of language so simply. But it is obvious by her voice as she turns to the next child, 'Who else was there?' A little boy in the group immediately called out that someone from Primary Five was there. Then just as quickly retired in confusion, as if a fire had been lit and gone out. It seemed as if he had been leaning forward eagerly to explain it all, then suddenly looked round at the classroom arrangement of the group and resumed his 'classroom manners' - which, since he was not next in line, meant silence and stillness.

Why had the children never mentioned the Gala before? There was a regular opportunity in class to extend oral language by describing some incident in the home background which was considered worth explaining to the teacher and the class. If the Gala had not been spoken about at this news time, what did that say about the expectations roused by the teacher on what constituted suitable news? Why, as I found out later, did no teacher

in the school know anything about the whole princess affair? Were home and school on such different planets that the life in one could not transfer successfully to the other? What had happened at news time then? I had the impression that the Moorpark children seemed either difficult or unresponsive in class, with nothing to communicate. 'The six hour retarded' is a common American term for this phenomenon by which children seem dull during the six hours they attend school each day, but behave quite differently at home.

Why was there this gap between home and school and what could be done to bridge it? In some measure I understood the children's communication problem from my own experience. I had often noticed that a course or lecture could fill me with enthusiasm or offer me profound insights, yet when friends totally unconnected with the course subject matter asked 'How did the course go?' I found myself telling anecdotes about the lecturer who went to the wrong room, the egg that fell off the breakfast plate or some other piece of trivia which amused but did not inform. I did this because I saw no sense in putting energy into explaining the inexplicable to people who lacked the necessary background information and who were, anyway, only expressing a passing interest in my welfare and did not want to be troubled with the details. Was there something of this in the Moorpark

children's lack of communication? Did they feel that events in Moorpark, though exciting to them, were neither expected nor acceptable in class? What would the class teacher need to do to draw on this rich local learning possibility?

Other ingredients in the problem were also emerging. What of the inhibiting effects of school rubrics like those in the 'reading turn' process and the equally uncreative assumption from home that good behaviour was equated with a 'seen and not heard' response? Somehow a way had to be found to bring home and school closer together to allow children to make the best use of their education opportunities in both worlds.

We had made a partner video (7) of the same children taking part in a community activity, a family robot-making competition. This showed the Tenant's Hall crowded with busy family groups. Parents and children worked well together making strange and wonderful robots from boxes. Some parents became so engrossed that they continued long after their children had lost interest!

Side by side these two videos showed the children behaving quite differently with different adults in two contrasting environments. These records showed that all these children understood how a different set of

responses was required in each of these situations. It highlighted that none of this behaviour was 'natural', it had all been learned and could be brought out or inhibited as required. It could therefore also be changed and adult/child talk of a more problem solving type could be introduced to both settings - if desired.

The first use for these pictures was to let the parents see their children in the detached though entertaining way which video makes possible. September 16th 1976 was the date set for this show in the Tenant's Hall. (8)

There was no attempt to point any educational message. The picture of their children absorbed in displaying their reading skills to the teacher, or looking up for help with a difficult word, communicated more to the parents than any commentary. The fact that each child in the class responded differently to basically similar situations aroused a sea of questions. In contrast the same child could be seen in the family group in the Tenant's Hall competition expressing unselfconscious expectations of adult/child interaction within the home and community as they concentrated on creating their family's robot.

Four T.V. sets had been hired, or rather loaned free by a sympathetic, if slightly bemused T.V. rental firm. This

was the first of many occasions throughout the years of innovation when well wishers became so interested that they shared their equipment and expertise without charge.

The four audiences in the room gave undivided, if noisy, attention to the different school groups and the robot competition in which their family featured. It was a busy, exciting scene in which 51 women, a few men and hundreds of children enjoyed their own world on T.V.

Standing up on a chair, as viewing ended and tea was about to begin, it was easy for me to ask this now enthusiastic and attentive audience for commitment to such unheard of activity as discussion groups about education - and in that euphoria it was also easy to promise to attend. The following week was to bring a more realistic response.

## CHAPTER 3

### NOTES

1 P. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, London, 1972, 85ff. Freire makes great use of photographs and other verbal or symbolic images. He calls this 'codifications' of reality. The process gives participants a chance to look with new eyes at some quite ordinary but very significant part of their lives. This detached image avoids the distractions associated with an ongoing situation. The picture evokes first the current surface perception of how life is. Discussion 'decodifies' this, allowing new perceptions to emerge which could lead to an interest in pursuing change through education. Freire shows that this allows 'unperceived practicable solutions' to replace current limiting practice.

2 V6, 7, 8 (1976).

3 This Urban Aid development of the work was officially titled 'Strathclyde Experiment in Education'. But since it was operational entirely within a small housing estate in Govan, it became known colloquially as 'The Govan Project'.

4 V3 (1975). This video, labelled 'Join the Professionals' records early attempts to join together from various disciplines people who worked separately with parents and with children. Their comments show a general acceptance of this way of working with parents - but a rejection of personal involvement.

5 V6 (1976).

6 V7 (1976).

7 V5 (1976). The first project video in colour!

8 R1, 2 (1.11.76). This 'Reflection' incorporates a preparatory document (15.9.76) for the project's first public event in the Tenants' Hall. It gives step by step directions to the new team of Urban Aid workers and University personnel on how they are to be involved.

# Learning to Listen

THE PRESS, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1976



## Kids keep mum on grand tour of Govan

DOZENS OF MOORPARK KIDS went on a grand tour of Govan on Saturday, with running commentary given by . . . their mums!

Moorpark mums and kids prepare to set off on their grand tour of Govan.

— Photo by  
Press Stall Photographer

## CHAPTER 4

### LEARNING TO LISTEN

We had arranged to meet the parents in small groups of five or six so that everyone could talk freely. The meeting place was a tenement flat. After some initial hesitation the Housing Department had agreed to rent the flat to the Project so that discussions could be held in small familiar surroundings instead of the large impersonal setting of the Tenants Hall or formal and rather intimidating school premises.

At the end of the video programme featuring their own children, 48 mothers promised to attend one of these small group meetings the following week. (1) Nineteen women in all actually turned up and fourteen of these came regularly throughout the ten week series.

I now know that nineteen was a good response to such an unprecedented invitation. It showed the combined effect of a presence in the area for two years, the long careful sequence of doorstep invitations and the final group presentation of very personal video material. But at the time I was disappointed. I was a teacher expecting the attendance of everyone on the register. It took me a very long time to accept that real life is not like

school.

There were to be more lessons for me almost immediately. I had to come to terms with the fact that putting theory into practice meant the presence of real people who do not sit quietly like the theorists' words, waiting for neat conclusions. Instead the mothers interacted in dynamic complexities of thought, feeling, word and action which defied separation into the neat blocks of theory on conceptual language and group practice with which I had begun. Finding ways of recording and evaluating progress was not going to be a simple task.

Up till this point I had been working alone, my only support in the field coming from volunteers or students. Now as the work expanded so did the help and a team of five Urban Aid workers joined me in Govan. Their presence was thanks to two fortunate opportunities. Throughout the first two years of my practical efforts in this small housing estate and its local Primary Schools I had looked for ways of incorporating the work into the Educational System. I was fortunate that the Glasgow Education Officer who first took an interest and recommended the work to the local schools later moved to a Strathclyde post as Regional reorganization began and was able to explain the work to the committee which allocated the first Urban Aid Grants. Alongside this

dialogue with the Local Authority I took my little Stairhead Seminars video (2) to Glasgow University. There I again showed the little video programme of work in Hettie's kitchen and in Maisie's living room in Wine Alley. Eventually the working party chairman asked 'Supposing you could have the money you needed, how would you make these ideas work on a larger scale?' My response was a paper called 'Total Education' (3) which mapped out how children could have a unified educational environment if the home and the local community were supported in particular ways by the organizations which have any kind of education remit: the newly formed community education service, the local libraries, preschool and schools. The working party applied for Urban Aid to implement this document and after various cliff-hanging near failures, five field workers and an administrator were appointed to work with me.

So it was that in Autumn 1976 I had a whole Urban Aid

team to share my tasks including a community work partner, Kathy, to help with these newly formed parents' groups. Five small groups were set up that winter, each one having at its centre a little set of two or three friends who held it together. A ten week programme was gradually worked out, using my experience in Maisie's home as a basis. Careful reflection after each session helped us to adapt and extend ideas as we went along.

All discussions were taped and transcribed (4), giving us accurate material for our reflection and planning sessions. Sometimes these records caught first reactions and insights which pointed the way for us. Other times our own mistakes and failures were held before us in the mirror so that we could not miss how much we had to learn. About this time I began to build up a series of papers for myself called 'Reflections' (5). These records of my reactions as things happened were sifted and annotated regularly in the following years as the cumulative effect of the work changed my perception of earlier events. As I let my fingers slip through all these notes and transcripts they revive a kaleidoscope of memories.

The new step made possible by Urban Aid shows clearly in these pages. Any first step is a momentous occasion, whether by a baby, a moonwalker, or an inner-city

innovator. Something of our excitement lingers in this formidable pile of records. A tiny parent/professional partnership in a back street in Govan was taking its first steps in co-ordinating the educational environment of the inner-city child and we all knew it mattered, though we had no way of seeing how far it would lead us within a few years. Nor did we try to look ahead like this. The present was all absorbing.

Stories jostle for first place to serve as examples of growth and change in this period. Among the many recorded, the tale of the Wednesday afternoon group stands out.

There were five of us. Agnes, intense and very short-sighted lived with her highly intelligent seven year old daughter. Donna, whose family was now grown-up except for her last son who was eight, could have run the army, but in fact divided her time between an office cleaning job in the mornings and the care of a household for the rest of the day. Anna also had a grown up family and an eight year old son, but had in addition a 12 year old deaf mute and an aged bed ridden father. Always wrapped in her dark coat and head scarf, Anna seemed to follow Donna like a shadow. Kathy and I made up the final members of the group.

The transcript of October 13th 1976, gives an amusing glimpse of this group in action. Kathy and I were trying to extend interest in holding thought provoking conversations with their children. Falling back on an earlier ruse of pretending to be on a T.V. show, we asked the group to act out the two extremes in their range of verbal relationships with their children. Both scenes were to take place on top of a bus. In the first comedy sketch they were to try to show how a Glasgow comedian might have 'taken off' a local housewife behaving unresponsively to her child. Donna seemed the ideal demanding child. Agnes agreed to be the mother. The non committal Anna would be the mother's friend with whom she was engrossed in conversation to the neglect of the child.

I expected to hear questions about the environment, the shops, the passing vehicles, and pleasant if unrelated responses to indicate a lack of attention. Instead the transcript gives:- (6)

DONNA: Mammy - Mammy!

AGNES: You shut up!

DONNA: Whit's that?

AGNES: Look. Shut up. I havenae even paid your  
fare yet! (laughter)

AGNES: That's what I often say!

Agnes momentarily turned aside from the game to express her surprise at the effect role playing was having on her. Though faced with the boisterous personality of Donna rather than her own quiet child she was finding herself responding as she naturally did with her own daughter. Now the roleplay situation was causing her to begin to reflect on her way of responding. Donna's rather forceful nudging brought the players back into action.

AGNES: Shh! See when I get you off this bus - I'll choke you.

DONNA: Oh, Mammy. Look at that man. He's drunk like my daddy. (Laughter)

AGNES: Shut up. I'm goin' to put you to bed when we get home.

(To neighbour:) What was that you were saying?

But Anna had no opportunity to say anything, even if she had wished, for Donna was continuing:

DONNA: Mammy. Mammy! Whit's the man daeing?  
Mammy, whit's that man daeing that for?

AGNES: You be quiet. I'll get you lifted. (taken away by the police). I'm no taking you out with me again.

DONNA: Mammy. Whit's he hitting the woman for?  
Whit's he hitting the woman for Mammy?

AGNES: (To neighbour) I don't know how to explain it (laughing).

DONNA: Mammy. Whit's the man hitting the woman  
for? Whit did you say?

AGNES: It's just that the pubs are coming out.  
(Laughs) You see many an argy-bargy -  
you know, when the pubs are out.

Amid the laughter that this response caused, Agnes pulled  
right out of her role:

AGNES: I've got no patience with this! Donna asks  
too many questions!

Using the little role playing experience Agnes  
immediately began to analyse her own behaviour with her  
daughter and consider whether a different way of  
interacting with the child would be better. From  
considering that she might have been better to go on  
trying to answer Donna's questions, she began to reflect  
on her interaction with her own child. 'My wean doesn't  
ask questions, she just sits. Maybe I restrict her. I'm  
too strict.' Later we were to find that this daughter  
who 'just sits' could reach a score of 149 on a Stanford  
Binet IQ test (7). But the school found her 'alright'  
and 'middle of the road'. No-one expected her to be the  
'high flier' her score suggested.

The second piece of roleplay was now introduced as I  
asked the mothers to consider the other extreme. Donna  
gave an impersonation of a mother with a falsetto 'posh'

voice and expressed her own opinion that such a way of speaking to a child was to be firmly rejected. I was reminded of a conversation in Maisie's home where there had been conscious rejection of other life styles or at least of the external trappings. Did a deliberate decision not to 'talk posh' mean a rejection also of the problem solving kind of conversations I was trying to promote?

Donna's next contribution clarified that issue and demonstrated a point Barbara Tizard was to make in her 1984 book Young Children Learning. Much though provoking discussion goes on naturally in many - though by no means in all - family groups. Donna had just played the part of the questioning child to a parent who had responded mainly with threats. (8) Now she talked of her real conversation on the bus with her eight year old son about the major changes container transport was bringing to the Victorian docking basins of the Clyde.. 'If we go upstairs in the bus, you know how they're filling in the docks just now? He's twenty questions! "What do they want to dae that for? That means my daddy's boat cannae come right up to that bit. When the motors go over there will they no' sink in all that water?"'

Donna was already caught up in this process, at least within the area of interest where she had a wealth of

knowledge. We began the role play again, this time with Donna as the mother and Agnes as the enquiring child. She had no difficulty in finding questions to ask (10), since she was genuinely interested in learning from Donna. Anna remained in the role of the passive neighbour and I wondered if I would ever find how to communicate with her. The session continued with a great deal of personal sharing of insight on children's questions and then moved, towards the end, to a discussion of the feelings of inadequacy which we all felt at times where faced with children's demands. I could see that the parents were not sure if Kathy and I were being honest when we too admitted to often finding it difficult to give the best response. But there was no doubting our ignorance of the river details which Donna was displaying. The dock changes at this stage were going on behind a high wall and only those who travelled on the top of a bus knew anything at all about it.

We now had an excellent partnership possibility. Donna possessed interesting information and we had some suggestions about how it might be handed on to children. Reflecting on the transcript, Kathy and I could see we had found ideal material for part two of this little group's course. Together the group could plan a bus tour round Govan for a number of families, with Donna giving the explanation when we reached the docks.

The video of this event called 'Upstairs Only' (11) was made in November 1976 and shows a very competent Donna acting as courier on a bus carrying eleven family groups.

Among the most exciting surprises in this very moving record, is the sight of the previously silent Anna giving a section of the commentary, microphone in hand. This change began from the resolution of a problem situation which brought a new lesson for me.

Donna worked at a heavy cleaning job in the mornings. When she returned home she was apt to sit down in front of the fire and fall asleep. Two weeks after the role-play sessions the sleep was prolonged and Donna did not appear at the meeting. We were disturbed. We had arranged with the group that this session would be the first preparation for the dock visit. Now we had no expert! Agnes praised Donna's knowledge loudly and made her absence seem like a total disaster. Anna listened for a while and then said diffidently, 'I've actually seen - er - the start of them filling in (the docks).' Never did a speaker receive such instant attention!

Anna soon warmed to her new role. For the initial twelve pages the transcript shows her contributions only as single lines, at most. As soon as she was accepted as a source of information she talked fluently, beginning with

her own childhood memories of wandering freely round the docks and learning incidentally about ships and cargo. In the absence of her efficient friend, Donna, she could take her time and savour the experience of being the group's information expert, encouraged and appreciated for her clear, colourful descriptions.

The video record of that conducted tour of the Govan Docks continued with follow up school work and a family quiz before Donna and Anna rounded off the whole proceedings with a little 'commercial' direct to camera in which they invited more parents to join the parents' discussion groups. One effect they had was to stimulate others to take the lead in recording the next planned outing. But before beginning that tale, this might be the place to complete Anna's story.

I had wondered if I would ever be able to communicate with this silent, self-effacing 'follower'. Within a month of the dock tour success the situation began to show signs of change. The City Library Department had generously cooperated with us in the setting up of a small well stocked library in the flat. An Urban Aid fieldworker was in charge of the whole enterprise which was to open its doors in January 1977. The first volunteer helper was Anna! Gradually her contribution expanded from working for an hour with the children who

crowded the library straight from school to full time voluntary work including both book processing and record keeping. In 1979 when Urban Aid ended Anna became a permanent paid assistant and by 1982 she was in complete charge of book issuing in the library which had been moved to the heart of Summertown (13), a new neighbourhood centre housed in a former school. Later that same year Anna helped to tell the story of Summertown and the library in a video entitled 'Four Voices of Change' (14) and also answered the audience's questions when the home-made video was shown at a National Children's Bureau conference in Glasgow. By 1983 the little show was in Holland as part of a presentation to the Bernard van Leer Foundation requesting funding for the current Partnership in Education Project in Glasgow.

Left to my own efforts I would probably never have found how to involve Anna in education, no matter what information I offered. It was Anna's own little treasure house of knowledge which became the key. My contribution was to produce both the opportunity for display and the supportive help to express that knowledge well. Anna gradually found how to use her own shy unassuming personality in the service of education. Now she can be found every day among the encyclopedias, paperbacks and pre-readers as she presents to all who cross the

# Anna's story

The end of the tale

Now she can be found every day among the encyclopedias, paperbacks and pre readers as she presents the library service's reassuring friendly local face.



The middle -  
a long slow  
process.

Anna gradually found how to use her own shy unassuming personality in the service of education.



Not quite the beginning!

"January 1977:  
The first  
volunteer  
helper was  
Anna!"



threshold of Summertown Centre, the library service's reassuring, friendly, local face.

As this movement started in 1977 I was beginning to learn that the professional educator's task was first of all that of skilfully facilitating learning and only secondarily of producing information. One useful learning medium we had discovered was the planned outing.

The bus tour of Govan docks and the fluent explanations by Donna and Anna had helped us explore a possible pattern of work in which we could make good use of the relationship between language and experience. We had learned that a good starting point was the discussion of an experience which was meaningful to the parents. The next step had been the preparation with them of commentaries which broke down that experience into a sequence of important features about the docks. There was some attempt at giving information in such a way that it cued the children to pick out the salient points unaided. A way had then to be found for the children to organize the information into a meaningful whole for themselves. Agnes constructed a quiz to help with this task and ran it - with a little help - on the homeward journey.

There was still one important step to take. We wanted the children to be able to talk to their teachers about their experience in such a way that they conveyed the event logically and vividly. This is the kind of language teachers use a great deal in class, but much of it, especially in the early school years may be outside the children's normal scope. Fortunately we had home/school link teachers in each of the two local Primary schools. They took part in the outing, helped the children record their part in it at school and talked about it in the staff room so that class teachers asked the children concerned to describe the event to the class.

The dock visit was only the first of a series of family group outings. Gradually we built up a successful pattern. First we held an open discussion in which various ideas were considered. I doubt if these early meetings were really very democratic. There were so many great possibilities on the doorstep and I was apt to propose my pet project so enthusiastically that the discussion was really about the details, not the venue! However, because no participant had ever been to the local activity museum or met a forest ranger and few had had any responsibility for visits to the zoo or the seaside, the parents seemed happy enough to accept the initial suggestion and put their energies into planning

how to introduce these new experiences to their children.

A few weekly meetings were spent in discovering the possibilities and limitations of the chosen place. Then there was the construction of quizzes and activities to help the children enjoy and learn at the same moment. This part of the programme was usually combined with a visit by the parents alone to the outing venue so that they were prepared to lead their children when the actual outing took place. One final reflection session was held after the event was completed. The insights gained were sometimes captured on video. In this way we built up a series of visual records to help us all learn how to progress.

The first seaside outing based on this plan/act/reflect cycle offers some good examples of this process. Clydecoast resorts like Saltcoats are filled in summer with children on day trips to the fairground where a great deal of money is spent and then to the sands where families remain on one spot enjoying the sun or huddling from the wind. These trips will eventually be replaced in early adult years, for those who become more affluent, by flights to warmer European versions of these amenities.

I wondered if this was a conscious choice and therefore an informed rejection of other holiday possibilities, or

the result of a lack of alternatives. Tentatively I suggested a visit to a picturesque peninsula called Portencross only a few miles farther along the Clyde Coast where they could enjoy an old castle, sandy beaches, rocky pools and each other's company and discoveries - but no fairground or shops! Perhaps the parents were only humouring me again, since transport was to be free of charge and the place at least included opportunities for swimming. For whatever reason there was general acceptance that it was worth trying though some mothers were openly sceptical about the outing wondering how the weans could enjoy themselves if they couldn't spend money!

The next week as Kathy and I struggled alongside the parents to learn what shells and small sea creatures we might expect to find on Ayrshire beaches our efforts were greeted with amazement. How could we display ignorance so happily they seemed to be asking. This was an unexpected response and I read the transcripts of this meeting very carefully, trying to learn what exactly was causing the parents' surprise.

Gradually I pieced together what seemed to be a generally held assumption which our search for information was challenging. In summary it was something like: 'All information is obtainable in school and so all learning

belongs to childhood. The adult who displays ignorance on a common subject admits to school failure.' Over the next few weeks parents began to reflect on the way this assumption had curtailed their own growth and that of their children.

For these adults the discovery of lifelong learning as a 'respectable' goal was like finding the door to freedom. But the array of possible information was daunting and the next step had to be a heightened awareness of how information is classified and, since no one knows it all, how the salient features of a particular topic can be picked up quickly.

A great display of books on the seaside ranging from the very simple to the specialist was set up in the little project library. One well illustrated book for five year olds on bivalve and univalve shells became the centre of a discussion with a young couple, Tom and Sheila Ford. The essence of that long conversation was:-

'You mean that really a' these different looking shells could just be put in two heaps - those where the thing that lives in them needs a pair of shells and those where it just wants one shell? Is that it? Here! That's easy!'

From there the discussions moved smoothly into guiding children further along the path of their interest. Sheila became very interested in the possible use of identification books about the seashore. (15) 'With a book they could find more about it, make it more interesting. You could ask "Where did it (the shell) come from? How did it get there? - kind of thing. I wonder if it's always been that size or if it's been bigger or smaller."' Interest and bewilderment tussled with each other as more and more possibilities came into view. Eventually the discussion focussed on how to draw the children's attention to the most important features of shore life without boring them with too much information at once. Sheila said 'you've got to tell them how many different kinds of... "thingmies" you'd be wanting, you know, because maybe they'd just pick up all the different kinds of shells and shove them into the bag and say "that's me got all my shells".' Kathy returned to an earlier point of having display cards with univalve and bivalve shells on them. 'Yes but they've got to identify them - got to go back to the big card that we'll have and identify them.' Tom then came up with a solution which would encourage everyone to work at putting things in categories. 'You could run a wee competition you know.'

So it came about some weeks later as the afternoon at

Portencross ended that I found myself looking hopefully round that quiet, genteel and self-contained seaside hamlet for someone to judge which of the dozen Govan families gathered with their treasures under the lee of the old castle had the widest collection of seashells, the best variety of rock, the smallest feather or longest piece of seaweed. Fortunately for me a young couple and an older lady were talking together near one of the large secluded houses. When I approached them with my rather odd request the young man said at once, 'Mother, you could do that!' and so the little group immediately came with me to meet the parents while I hurriedly tried to explain the Project's aims.

The lady in question seemed to have spent a good deal of her life opening bazaars or adjudicating at flower shows, judging by her skill with the family collections. She had quickly picked up that we were not in the business of competition but of cooperation and interaction within each family as well as of heightened awareness of the seashore. When she spoke to families or individuals they discovered that here was someone who seemed really interested in the reasons for their choices. The mother who could not concentrate on her family's shell collection found the conversation quickly switched to her wonderfully tiny feather specimen and every group found some part of their collection worthy of commendation.

# Extending parent/child leisure experiences



The finds were indeed worthy of notice. While some of the attention they aroused was not quite what we had planned there was no doubt that a number of problem-solving skills had been called into play by this outing. At the reflection session the following week Tom, one of the dads, gave a graphic description of the crab that got away - inside the library! A mother told of her seashore pebble collection being left in the bath to be scrubbed but being thrown out by her teenage son preparing for his 'date' (17). One of their comments provided the title for the resulting video recording. The event had clearly been 'More than an Outing'.

To parents used to the financial and discipline problems connected with Saltcoats outings, this wonderful day had offered many new insights.

We could see that this event had been a great success. Our little parents' groups quickly and enthusiastically began a new series of meetings in preparation for family outings to the zoo, the park and a castle museum. As usual I failed to see that the gap between these events and a regular widening of practice would take a long time to fill. Everything seemed plain sailing as we moved to this next easy step.

After each event there were reflection and recording sessions often involving video or slides. These were much more than some kind of 'holiday snapshots. The slides were used to distance people from their action so that, freed from the pressure of coping with the events themselves, they could recollect the events in tranquility or in new feelings evoked by this detached image of reality. In this way some important ideas encapsulated in quite small events could be seized on and discussed.

Some thoughtful appreciation was aroused in parents about the new levels of interest and interaction they had enjoyed with their children. These reflection sessions also roused a great reappraisal of their own past and present learning opportunities (18). On October 12th 1977 Liz, the mother of 6 children voiced how she felt about her own limited information on trees, coupled with her deep emotional appreciation of them now that a few little cherry trees were being planted in the neighbourhood.

'The only thing I know about a tree is that it changes its leaves. You know, maybe every month or something like that. I mean, I'm only going back to when I was at school in fact. I've never actually looked at a tree.' I had not, till then, thought about the lack of trees in

the inner city and I found this a bit startling. 'You mean you've never actually watched a tree through its seasons?' I asked. 'No', Liz said. 'I've never actually seen a tree getting planted and then growing up - like the ones in the back court now. They take your mind! You've got a feeling - you get up every morning and you see the colours changing. But I've never actually seen - where I came from, it was all tenement buildings. And when we got education on trees in school it was maybe the teacher herself who brought them in. She brought maybe three or four leaves. We werenae taken, like on these outings that youse are doing now. We never had these opportunities!

There was no stopping Liz once she had started to think aloud and thoughts and feelings tumbled out together. She returned to the consideration of the new local cherry trees. 'There's some lovely colours in they trees. There's one on the edge of the flat there in the summer, it comes up pure pink, I mean they're shocking pink! It's not just pink, it's shocking pink! It's away on the other side of the street, but I can see it from my window and it just catches your eye as soon as you get up.'

This whole discussion went on and on with Liz talking with feeling on the difference between learning from stuffed birds in class and being taken to the zoo and

offering a quite surprising insight into why children might pull up the few precious flowers which now grew in the small housing estate.

I was reminded often in these sessions of T.S. Elliot's lines:-

*'We had the experience but missed the meaning  
and approach to the meaning renewed the experience  
in a different form.'*

*The past experience revived in the meaning  
is not the experience of one life only  
but of many generations.'*

By 1978 I thought the task was completed. It seemed to me that we had only to offer this experience of planned outings followed by reflection for such events to become part of the neighbourhood's normal practice. But I was to find that I had barely begun to climb the foothills. To begin with there were many practical problems I had not considered. How do families without cars reach these quiet stretches of shore? Even if they chose a point on a bus route, how often could they afford the fares - including those into town to pick up the seaside bus? Other hidden problems were to emerge during interviews, like the home preparation of a whole family group for an organized event - especially if the mother never had the

experience herself. In contrast, the local club's annual outing to Saltcoats promised the security of a traditional and well understood pattern and for the majority of people an absence of responsibility for organization. It also brought all the fun of the fair - though at a considerable cost. Bringing our planned outings into this realm of normality was going to be a slow process, especially when any kind of holiday was a rare event and most of the summer was spent in the home streets.

I had at least learned the answer to one of my questions.

The annual repetition of the club outing was not a considered rejection of a widened leisure experience. Though not prepared yet to carry the whole burden of preparation, the parents were enthusiastic about the extension our outings had made to their summer horizons. When school was about to start that autumn one mother summed it all up in a comment I remember as: 'This was the best year yet! I'm sure we must have been away (for a day) four times this summer!'

## CHAPTER 4

### NOTES

1 T035, 1ff (21.9.76). This transcript records my partner Kathy's reflections on the first seven parents to join us in a small group. The flat was not yet ready and this group had to meet in the Tenants' Hall.

2 V1 (1974). 'Stairhead Seminars' is one of the videos of the original work made by David Butts of Jordanhill College in 1974. A chance meeting at Glasgow University in 1975 brought an opportunity to show this video to Eric Wilkinson, a young lecturer there. His interest led to a widening of both staff and support in the following year.

3 BM05 (December 1975).

4 Discussions and interviews over the period 1974-1982 filled 125 audio tapes. Some proved too difficult to transcribe so the final number of transcripts is 109.

5 These 40 Reflection papers of uneven depth and importance span a period of six years 1976-1982. They record moments of heightened awareness and usually

articulate a new beginning. Some of these papers acted as touchstones to which I returned again and again, refining and sometimes changing the ideas as further experience affected earlier conclusions.

6 T039, 5ff (13 October 1976).

7 BM13, 1 (July 1977). These Stanford Binet I.Q.s and Edinburgh Reading test scores come from the work of the Notre Dame Research Worker for the Project, David Williamson, who was helped by psychologists from Notre Dame Child Guidance Clinic.

8 T039, 7 (13 October 1976).

9 B. Tizard and M. Hughes, Young Children Learning, London, 1984, 37 and passim.

10 T039, 14ff (13 October 1976).

11 V4 (1976). This video not only records the outing to the docks described in this chapter but goes on to look at further adult/child environmental learning, including follow-up work in school done by the two link teachers.

12 T041, 13ff (27 October 1976).

- 13 For an account of the establishment of Summertown Centre and of the library within it, see Chapter 10.
- 14 V22 (1982). 'Four Voices of Change' a slide/tape show transferred to video.
- 15 T068, 4 (25 May 1977).
- 16 T068, 7 (25 May 1977).
- 17 V9, (1977). This video records a series of reflections and activities after the Portencross outing.
- 18 T077, 13 (12 October 1977).
- 19 T.S. Elliot 'The Dry Salvages' Part II in Collected Poems, London, 1969, 184.

# The Other Foot Forward



"It really helps your own wean"

THE OTHER FOOT FORWARD

Progress within the community often seemed unconnected with the small shifts and movements happening in the two schools. Eventually I learned to look at the work in the community and that done in school like two feet which between them propelled the body of educational change forward smoothly enough though they never got together themselves! From 1974-76 the main thrust had been in the community. Now the schools were to be invited to take an unprecedented step forward. To begin with, action in the schools had its own distinctive starting point. In 1976 when the solo 'stairhead seminar' phase of work in the community ended and the Urban Aid 'Govan Project' was scheduled to provide five fieldworkers to take on different aspects of the task, the headteachers were each invited to help to choose a fieldworker with teacher qualification who would work specially with their school.

The title and role of this worker changed rapidly over the project's first few months but gradually Alan and Teresa settled down as home/school link teachers, though no one knew exactly what that meant.

By 1986 the idea of home/school/community links is considered 'a good thing' in Strathclyde Regional

documents and a working party has been set up to look at the practical implications of such co-operation. The small Partnership in Education Resource and Development Centre (1) has begun to produce materials and plan inservice so that class teachers will have access to a series of well planned, curricular programmes focussed on central issues for parents of 5-8 year olds. Similar parent/professional work, though at an earlier stage of preparation, is being designed for Community Workers and Underfives personnel. Some schools have a whole range of parental involvement processes and at least in a number of schools parents and teachers feel and act as partners.

In 1976 many schools still looked pretty grim and one we tried to work with in Govan was described in an early video (2) as an 'alien fortress in enemy land'. Every school had a prominent notice discouraging parents from entering the building. The old Victorian school in our video went further and forbade parents to enter the playground!

About a third of the children in two schools which concerned us came from the Moorpark Estate. The link teachers participated with the rest of the Project team in as many community activities as possible to help them understand the children's home setting. But how were we to link this with the schools? The parents were not

encouraged to visit the school and one class teacher spoke for many when she said that nothing would make her set foot in 'that dangerous housing area'. So how were we to bring them together?

We decided to begin in the community and try a programme of home visits, taking some of the children's class work into the family home. I have a vivid picture of Teresa's first attempt. We had gone together to a number of houses which I knew well, so that she could begin to feel at ease and learn a little of what to say and how to build a sense of partnership rather than arriving like a visiting do-gooder. Now I was to be the companion and Teresa was to plan the visit. We talked about the twins in the chosen family. Teresa had examples of their class work and rehearsed how she would begin by pointing out their successes, then lead on to areas where the parents could support new growth. Another child in the same class lived in the flat above. "Take his work too" I suggested casually, "We might have time to visit a second house." Without any real preparation the extra folio was collected.

The twins' parents were out. We had not thought of that! Within minutes of arrival in Moorpark Teresa found herself knocking the door of the upstairs flat, completely unaware of the background. A ten year old

girl who should have been at school opened the door. Before we had managed to explain who we were and why we had come, a man's voice called from kitchen 'Tell them to come in!' I knew this response well enough. Our voices indicated that we were from some sort of 'establishment' and the householder wanted to know our business before the neighbours overheard too much. The man who had summoned us sat at the table near the window. He eyed us sullenly and then said harshly, 'I'm just out of Barlinnie (Glasgow jail) this morning!' I was nonplussed, but Teresa moved across the room confidently 'Then you won't know how Paul has been getting on at school. I've brought some of his work to show you' and she laid out before him his son's best efforts in class. I knew then that Teresa could handle home visits without any more guidance from me!

I have often heard teachers suggest that there are insurmountable obstacles to home visiting. I would agree that there are educational pros and cons for this method of linking home and school and I would never see it as the principle task, but it makes an excellent starting point. Further discussion of the educational issues involved in home visiting should lead to clarification and a better work focus. I have less patience with those whose isolation in schools allows them to invent an unreal level of social and moral hazards in home visiting

without discovering the hard facts from the many professionals already engaged in such work. Doctors, district nurses, health visitors, social workers, school board officials and a host of others earn their living visiting these same homes without coming to any harm, so there are many qualified to teach us, if we wish to learn.

The links we were trying to strengthen between home and school had at their centre a 'one world' concept for children. We wanted them to be able to bring together the daylong education which their home environment offered and the specialist education provided in class. Within this we focussed particularly on the power of the word, whether spoken or written. Language and especially the teaching of reading may seem to many teachers to be their special area of expertise. But I was aware of research which showed that inner city children had reading scores clearly below their ability level even as measured by I.Q. tests which were themselves biased against such children. Alerted by such knowledge I was keen to find out how home/school links could help the process of learning to read. (3)

There is an assumption in Glasgow that parents and teachers will work together on the reading task at the early stages. With varying degrees of regularity the parent's help is enlisted to support the school's work. A common method of communication is by a slip of paper in the reading book at the appropriate place, together with a request - often carried orally by the 5 year old - for the reinforcement of a specific piece of work. Homework might consist of a page to be read or a few look-and-say words on cards or a piece of phonic drill to be learned. It is an observable fact that this process meets with uneven success. The Urban Aid Project had been running about two months when a small boy taught us an important lesson about this problem.

I was paying a formal visit to one of the schools with Alan, the recently appointed Project link teacher. A rather heated assistant head teacher stopped Alan and myself in a corridor. 'You're supposed to do something about parents aren't you? Well I wish you would do something about Mrs. McTavish. She has done nothing to help Irvine - and then dares to come in here causing a fuss!' The mother in question bore a striking resemblance to that powerful woman every school

cartoonist has stereotyped as she makes her point forcefully to the contrastingly diminutive teacher. So I was dismayed by this demand 'Do something about Mrs. McTavish!' It was proving hard enough to establish our credibility within the school without this level of challenge!

'What exactly is the problem?' I asked. A copy of Book One from a rather out of date reading scheme was produced. "Irvine has been on page 42 for a week. Every day I say 'Get your mother to help you with your reading tonight.' Every day he comes back without having learned it!" It seemed straight forward enough and Alan promised to visit.

We had hardly left the school before coming across Mrs. McTavish, the angry centre of a group of listening mothers. As we approached she detached herself from the gathering and made straight for us. 'Here, aren't you supposed to do something about that school? Well my Irvine's been at the same place in his reading book, page 42, for a week and they're doing nothing about it!' As Alan promised to visit her home that afternoon the problem was already looking less straight forward!

Alan went along to the home, reading book in hand. We had learned the need for concrete material in all

discussions with parents, since a more abstract approach not only put them at a disadvantage, but often meant that without a shared experience, we were unsure if we meant the same things.

'Do you want a cup of tea, son?' Mrs. McTavish, on her own ground now turned out to be a pleasant hostess, interested in Alan's welfare. 'Irvine is on page 42' began Alan turning to the correct page in the book, after the initial pleasantries were over and his cup of tea was beside him. 'Aye, but that doesn't really matter' said Mrs. McTavish. 'What he has to do are the words at the back.' Alan turned to the back where there were lists of all the new words in the book. These were divided into small groups, each set of words being numbered according to where it first occurred in the book. Four words were printed above a small '42'. Alan handed her the book open at that page. 'Every night' began Mrs. McTavish taking the book, but going back to the first page on which the title 'Words to be learned' headed the list of new words within the whole book. 'Every night I go over all these words with him', her hands flicked through the pages and her fingers ran over the one hundred or so words in the entire collection. 'He hates it! It's far too much for him. They shouldn't ask him to do all that. I don't see how the others have all learned it. I lose my temper with him every night and he shouts and says he

is never going back to school.'

Alan could picture the teacher giving her seemingly simple message: 'Tell your mother you are on page 42 and you have to do the words at the back.' To the initiate the message seems so direct! But it is 'in' language, jargon, without precision to people who do not spend their lives with books.

Most schools have moved on from that particular reading scheme now, but the problem of communication remains, not merely the clarification of verbal messages, but the whole communication of attitudes, feelings, principles, explanations. That day we took our first tiny step on that long road of unravelling how to improve home/school links on one specific piece of curriculum, the beginning of reading.

I was aware that a much deeper understanding than any of us yet had of language and literacy was essential to our task. So all the fieldworkers, including myself, began the Open University Reading Development Course. We worked as a group discussing the ideas together but carrying out separate practical assignments which allowed us to put theory into practice in a variety of small ways. We soon found that there was information of practical value locked up in this theoretical course,

information which was extremely important to any parent whose child was learning to read or was developing higher reading skills. We felt sure that we could express this knowledge quite simply and turn it into practical skills if we took time to find the right way. So from an analysis of problems and from Reading Development studies the first Reading Workshops for parents were invented.

Convinced that understanding grows out of experience, every new piece of work with parents began with some little activity which we could share with them and enjoy together. This was followed by a reflection session to pull out the special significance in that experience for their children's education. Alan and Teresa designed their own 'alphabet' incorporating the main problems children face in the real alphabet. Because the symbols being presented were figments of Alan and Teresa's imagination, they were able to give parents an experience equivalent to that of a child beginning to read without making them feel anxious or 'threatened'. Teaching the parents to read sentences like 'Alan is in the library. The library is here' written in this made-up alphabet turned out to be a hilarious experience for everyone as well as a useful way of helping parents understand their children's problems. A video (4) made at this time called 'Link Up' captures some of this fun-filled learning.

# Bringing school into community



The Link teachers were learning as much as the parents in this first session. It had been one thing to recognise the ideas in an Open University Course. It was a whole new exciting experience to see the 'truth' of the work and the relevance of it to the group of interested inner city parents. The Link teachers' report (5) from May 11th 1977 reads:

'None of the parents managed to get all the words right first time, but there was no tension at all in the group; everyone was really enjoying it, and realising as they went along just what was expected of children learning to read. Their greatest difficulty was in recognising two-letter words. They confused the two-letter symbols representing "is" and "in". A discussion followed about the difficulties that young children would find in trying to read these words written in ordinary script.'

The success of this first attempt encouraged Alan and Teresa to base further sessions on the O.U. course. Their next invention was a kind of bingo with "pin" people differing very slightly from each other. This helped parents see that children have to be able to make fine visual discriminations before they can be successful with letters. A Footsteps Game, in which newspaper cut-outs of the family's foot prints inscribed with

phonic sounds followed. This was to be laid along the floor as a 'pretend' tight-rope. The adults and children in the family were then invited to walk along the tightrope - but they could only put each foot down when they could name the letter on the next 'footstep'. This game demonstrated a simple way of causing repetition without tears.

In everything they did Alan and Teresa were trying to show by example and by what they said, that learning can and should be fun. Many of the parents had unhappy memories of school themselves and they presented learning to their children as a dull but necessary evil. Gradually some of these adults began to talk about the way they had until then reinforced the reading lesson each evening. 'Maybe I've been doing it the wrong way! I say, "I'm fed up listening to a' this. Now get it right this time or I'll smack you!" I never thought they were supposed to enjoy it!' Parents reflected on the effect of this uncompromising 'get it right or there will be trouble' attitude in which this underlying message of criticism and annoyance had a stronger effect than any sense of achievement which might come from the small progress made in skill. They began to consider the resulting unwillingness of the child to go to school which was then tackled by bribery as Maisie had illustrated for me in 1974. 'I'll gie you five pence.

Well I'll gie you ten pence...!'

While this Reading Workshop was being refined and repeated with different groups of parents, Teresa was beginning to find ways of introducing meaningful parental co-operation for children a few years older who were learning to use reading as a tool in the pursuit of both pleasure and knowledge.

The class teacher who had these 7 and 8 year olds, though sympathetic with Teresa's concern, was sure that nothing could be done at this stage. To her this was the reality of the inner city where children could read but did not make much use of the skill. That was to be expected in 'this type of child' so it was alright. Teresa was not satisfied. 'What of the higher reading skills? What about information seeking, skimming, scanning and the like?' 'That comes if they are interested and these children are not, so you can't do much about it.' She looked at Teresa's unconvinced face - 'Try if you want to. Any improvement is worth having.'

Eight of the children in that class came from Moorpark, as we had learned to call 'Wine Alley' by then. They were all at different stages. Elizabeth's reading was no more than 'barking at print'. She made little sense of what she read. David could enjoy a story, but could not

follow directions from print. Patiently Teresa went round each one finding the exact level of skill and seeking out material required for the next step.

Then there were home visits to secure co-operation from the mothers. She had a variety of tactics for this. 'It will be good fun. Come and help me out!' 'You wouldn't let me get it all ready and have no one there would you?'

'It is only for an hour on Tuesday afternoons during November.' At each door she found a way of ensuring that the parents would appreciate that the invitation was to come as a real partner, as necessary as the teacher for the success of this enterprise. Everyone agreed to come - and half of them did come to the initial session. Four parents were quite enough at a time for this first attempt at such individual work. At a later stage there would be another opportunity for the others to join in when the word was out that it was enjoyable and 'really helps your own wean.'

Mrs. Gray came for Elizabeth. Teresa had planned a piece of work which could only be done if Elizabeth worked at understanding what she read. The story was about a witch and her cat but some of the sentences were incomplete. 'Elizabeth has to think up endings for these sentences which make sense in the story. Read the first one, Elizabeth.' 'The witch's cat had climbed up the tree

and..... What do you suggest now for an ending?' Faced with her mother's complete attention, Elizabeth struggled to grasp the meaning and stretch towards a conclusion. One more example and the mother could take on the discussion, so causing her child to read for meaning by this simple interaction.

David was next, sitting between Teresa and his mother and sharing a photograph of the neighbourhood with them. 'How would you get from your home to the Tenants Hall?' David used his finger first, accompanied by the minimum of verbal direction, 'Along that way and down there.' 'Where else could he go, Mrs. Brown?' 'What about to your auntie's? Aye, that's right and how do you get to your granny's house from there?' When David had begun to include more terms of direction such as 'I'd just have to go upstairs', it was time to turn parent and child's attention to the book about a visit to a village and find how the author said one could reach the sweet shop from the farm. David and Mrs. Brown were soon busy with the language of direction and Teresa moved on to Mary whose mother was trying to help her make a finger puppet by following the instructions printed in a book.

Each adult/child pair was busy about a specific task well within the grasp of their combined skills, yet accurately geared to the child's immediate advancement in reading.



MISS KAREN GRIFFIN,  
16 KELLAS ST,  
GOVAN,  
GLASGOW  
G51 2HY

30<sup>th</sup> Nov 1978.

Dear Sister Doreen,  
Today we are Learning  
To write Letters and next Thursday we  
are getting our photos Taken with  
Our Mum's.

I like when My Mum is in  
School. when she is Working with me  
we have been doing the gingerbread man  
And other things to.

we are Working in  
room 28 Today because the room that we  
~~usually~~ usually is Jammed and we  
cant get in.

HAVE TO CLOSE NOW.  
Time is running out.

best regards  
KAREN.

Parents in such a class are neither being used as unpaid auxiliaries nor usurping the professional role. They are doing their own support task in harmony with their highly skilled professional partner - and the child can only benefit from this joint effort. This kind of work demands much of a teacher. She has to understand the reading task herself and be prepared to analyse each child's needs and build up a store of suitable material. The question quickly arises, how is the teacher to be freed to work with a handful of parents and children even for four half days like this? Will the teacher need inservice support to develop her own appreciation of the reading task? Who is going to amass all the material which would be required? Our efforts raised all these questions but we never reached any answers to them during this Urban Aid phase.

Apart from such small exciting discoveries, work in these two schools was a slow painful affair beset with doubts, wrong turnings and downright failure. We were at the very beginning of home-school link work which would demythologize the classroom and allow the parents to work meaningfully with their own children in curricular matters. The possibility of educational partnership between parents and teachers which would allow their human equality and their different strengths to come

together for the benefit of the child was not even on the horizon at this point.

As if our own unsureness was not a sufficient burden, we had to work within a school atmosphere which ranged from downright hostility at our inept intrusion, through disapproval at our inability to know immediately how best to share the curriculum with parents, to amazement that we were trying to devise new tasks for teachers when they had more than enough old tasks!

I worked in the background to support Alan and Teresa as they grappled with this difficult pioneering role, and apart from occasional formal meetings with the headteachers and some of their staff, I had very little personal involvement in the schools. I could see no likelihood of bringing them with us during this period of their existence. Any real progress would have to await different leadership and less trying conditions. Despite the problems, Alan and Teresa turned out to have taken the first small steps on a long road which was to lead, by the Eighties, to a clear, meaningful and acceptable pattern of curriculum sharing in the early stages of school. But this was not at all obvious as we fretted about our lack of progress in facilitating parent/professional partnership in these schools. Meanwhile the parents in their own community were

striding forward to extend their informal educational role with their children.

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## CHAPTER 5

### NOTES

1           BM46 (July 1986). 'Partnership in Education' was set up in 1983 as a joint Strathclyde Region/van Leer Foundation Project. In 1986 the Foundation agreed to a second three year phase of funding to develop and disseminate the work.

2           V3 (1975).

3           The schools included in the study at this point followed the general research trend. A page in the appendix (BM13 July 1977) shows I.Q. scores ranging from below average to well above the norm. There is also an indication from the accompanying Edinburgh Reading Test scores that attainment did not match I.Q.

I am grateful to Eric Wilkinson, part-time director of the Govan Project and David Williamson, the Notre Dame research assistant, whose evaluation studies provided this information.

4 V11 (1977).

5 T031 (11 May 1977). See also BM09.

6 BM09 (n.d.). A first attempt was made in 1977 to begin to share with parents in a lighthearted way some appreciation of the many small steps a child has to take before arriving at sufficient visual discrimination to be able to differentiate automatically between the different letters of the alphabet. The development of this work has remained an important focus of attention over the years.

# Experience Based Learning



Harry shows how it is done

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EXPERIENCE BASED LEARNING

The little parents' discussion groups continued to flourish in Moorpark's library flat. Gradually parents who had never considered leading anything became interested in sharing responsibility. By 1978 some had learned how to act as guides at 'Haggs Castle' (1) the local action museum. One dad who was helping to set up a local playscheme saw how the lessons learned in planning the castle outing could 'give you another bit into the programme, put a bit extra in.' (2) As parents became confident in leading events, we began to look further afield for opportunities.

Central to all the activities we planned with the parents was the creation of opportunities for children to use negotiating and problem solving skills in a to-and-fro situation with adults. The most significant adults in their lives, the parents, were the children's best partners in this intellect-stimulating activity. We had already managed to convince a small group of women that the way they talked with their children was important to the child's intellectual growth. But we had not been successful so far in involving more than one or two of the local 'dads'. The women were now enjoying the

process of learning new skills and ideas alongside their children without losing dignity or authority. Some were happy to go further and see that the children's learning was often improved if they could 'teach' their parents or search for knowledge on equal terms. Many of the mothers had become enthusiastic about this learning process, at least as an idea, though it was all too easy to revert to a 'telling' process in routine situations.

In 1979 we began to look for some specific type of outing that would be easy for the men to join. The working class norm that bringing up children was women's work was still very alive. Alongside this there seemed to be a great fear of 'losing face'. The crippling assumption discussed earlier with the women which had made them feel that adults should have nothing more to learn once they left school was even more strongly held by the men. Only two men came regularly to discussion groups. The attitude of the others was most clearly put by one man who said 'I'll send "her" along and if she says it is alright, I might come.' Against that background new things had to be very attractive indeed to cause them to risk failure. When two Community Education students offered to set up a family skiing outing we recognised that we had found a winning event.

With great help from the Education Department's Adviser

in Outdoor Education, we put on demonstrations and a kind of Generation Game to introduce the basic skills. The task seemed simple enough as it was demonstrated; put on boots and skis, walk the length of the room and return. But as the 'judge' started his stop watch and the parent/child pairs picked up their equipment, fathers were quick to look for help from their sons as, amid much laughter, they tried to lace boots correctly, turn round on skis without tripping and return to base at the best speed. The chance to try out their new skills on a dry ski slope was another occasion in which adults and children could give and take without the fathers feeling they had to be in a position of authority. Eventually we borrowed all the clothes and ski equipment we needed for the families, added a few home made sledges for children too young to ski and set off on a three hour coach journey for the nearest Scottish ski slope, Glenshee.

The family skiing day, and its success-laden preparatory sessions, turned out so well that in the next few winters it became an annual family event.

For the reflection meeting after that first successful day at Glenshee one dad wrote the following poem:

We were gathered at the Centre  
A' the weans and me  
Waitin' for the bus tae come  
Tae take us tae Glenshee.

We were goin' to these mountains  
A' the weans and me  
We were goin' to these mountains  
For us tae learn tae ski.

Noo Jim and Kal (and a few of their pals)  
And a' the weans and me  
Were prayin fur the snow tae come  
So they could teach us how to ski.

Noo mums and dads and other lads  
And a' the weans and me  
Wur soon scootin' aboot on ski and foot  
On the mountains o' Glenshee.

On the bus that night  
O' whit a sight  
Aw the folk yi see  
Wur fair tired oot wi skiing aboot  
Shh!!! they're aw asleep yi see.

# .....for us to learn to ski

We were gathered  
at the Centre  
A' the weans  
and me waiting  
for the bus tae  
come tae take  
us tae Glenshee



We were goin'  
to these  
mountains  
A' the weans  
and me we  
were goin' to  
these mountains  
for us tae learn  
to ski.



Noo Jim and Kal  
( and a few of  
their pals) and  
a' the weans  
and me were  
prayin fur the  
snow tae come  
so they could  
teach us how  
to ski.



Noo mums and  
dads and other  
lads and a' the  
weans and me  
wur soon  
scootin' about  
on ski and  
foot on the  
mountains o'  
Glenshee.



On the bus  
that night  
O' whit a  
sight aw the  
folk yi see  
wur fair  
tired oot wi  
skiing about  
shh!!!  
they're aw  
asleep yi  
see.



While the whole process of planned outings grew and took on a regular pattern, other events were happening with indoor groups. Learning was a two-way process as usual, with Kathy and myself learning about our jobs as much as the parents learned about things to do with their children. In 1977 when Kathy was new to the ideas we worked as a pair to help her understand the task. We soon found this paired leadership had an important educational value, as it allowed one of us to take the part of a learner and articulate some of the problems which mothers might be encountering, but feel too shy to say. In particular, we tried to bring feelings to the surface and show how much these reactions affected our choices and our freedom to learn. While I tried to explore educational principles with the mothers Kathy would question my ideas until I expressed them more clearly. On the other hand, since I am very lacking in craft skills, I found it easy to express doubts and to declare defeat when that activity became difficult. On 17th February 1977 Kathy was teaching us how to make dice, as part of a session on the power of the word to help us control and direct our action. It had the same message as the doily making activity I had tried out in Maisie's house three years previously. But this time the activity was much more skilled and I began articulating the problems.

The transcript reads: (3)

DOREEN: (trying to follow directions) Oh wait a minute  
... far too quick for me. I've put 'five' in  
the wrong place.

KATHY: We'll let you off that's because you were  
late.

Almost immediately this willingness to show lack of skill  
helped someone else to allow her mistake to surface.

MEG: A've put the cross in the wrong place.

KATHY: Doesn't matter (laughter).

Sometimes we had the craft session before we switched on  
the tape recorder, since conversation during the activity  
was often only about scissors and paste. We therefore  
have no written record of a moment from another occasion  
which I remember because of the feelings it evoked. I  
found it easy to express failure, now I was to learn that  
it is not so easy to accept the resulting offer of help.  
We were being taught to make a paper kite and I said 'I'm  
lost Kathy.' Immediately a young single parent, only  
beginning to feel secure herself said triumphantly,  
almost patronisingly, 'I'll dae it for you, Doreen.' To  
my amazement I could feel a sharp sense of resentment  
rising in me, I really felt like saying 'I only made it  
sound so bad to help you!' Instead, I smiled as sweetly  
as I could and meekly handed over my kite. But to  
quieten my heart I had to reflect ruefully that my help

must often have been as clumsily offered to her!

Another effect of these craft sessions was shown one afternoon when we were all trying to make simple puppets with coathangers, paper plates and oddments of clothing.

(4) The room was totally silent as each became absorbed in her creation. A little anxious about the silence, I tried asking 'How are you feeling at this moment?' In the stillness one mother raised her head a little, while keeping her eyes on her little rag puppet and said with satisfaction 'I feel like a genius!'

Mothers were supposed to go home and teach their children what they had learned, carrying the planning and problem solving techniques into their homes by this means. But at least one mother, Sheila, was aware that we were really expecting too much by asking for such immediate results in the home. On 2nd March she suggested that the first step should be a shared and supported experience of this parent/child interaction through craft. She said

(5) 'Say there were only four or five of us, could we bring the family along and let them make it and you help them? That way we're not having to go home and show them - and sometimes not doing it because you can't be bothered. But if you got one night a week when you could take them with you....' Kathy was delighted with the suggestion. 'Would you be interested in that? I'd love

it!' So 'Family Nights' were born.

At first the small groups of mothers who met us during the day returned at night with their children and we advanced from simple puppet making to the creation of more complex figures and the building up of a story which we could act out in the streets. But the numbers grew and the weather worsened so we moved Family Nights out of the little flat in the housing estate to the old school building across the road in which we had offices. The numbers continued to grow. By the end of October we needed the nursery school dining hall to house the Halloween Party.

There was already a flaw creeping in because many of those now joining us had only the sketchiest notion of what we were about. Far from understanding that we were trying to promote shared learning by adults and children within the family setting, the evening events were seen as some strange kind of youth club. The message had become 'Your weans can't get into it unless you go too and look after them yourself.' While we searched unsuccessfully for some way of explaining our approach to everyone by extending the small daytime planning and discussion groups to include all these new adults, a further stage was reached.

The groups were usually made up solely of women, except for the occasional presence of one young father, Tom. One night a small domestic crisis in a home meant that a group of children would miss the Halloween Party unless Harry, their father was willing to bring them. 'You only need to stand at the door, you don't have to do anything', his wife had insisted 'and I'll be back by half past eight and you can go away then.' So, cloth cap on his head, muffler almost hiding his face, shoulders hunched and hands in his pocket, Harry came to the party.

It happened that Kathy, when searching for a pianist to play for the games, had introduced another man into the scene that night, a senior local Government official whose interest, though genuine, had till then been from behind a desk in Strathclyde House. Now he stood securely barricaded into the corner of the room by the piano surveying the scene from this safe vantage point. Halfway up the room Harry stood in the doorway. Between party games and judging Halloween costumes, Kathy and I worked to bring these two men together first for mutual support and then as rather uneasy partners looking after baths of water where apples swirled for the traditional ducking game. Harry disappeared at half past eight when his wife arrived - but he was to return again and again, becoming the backbone of much of the work in years to come. The official remained a staunch and now better informed ally - but from the safe distance of his office

desk.

A pattern soon emerged for Family Nights. Six weeks was the longest we could expect to sustain interest in a particular project. Even with this, each step had to have its own success as we moved forward toward some peak event. At the Halloween Party we proposed producing a pantomime. Starting from scratch at the beginning of November we had our public performance before Christmas. Not quite the 'City Spectacular' but an exciting event in which adults and children shared the creation of the story, the acting and such little pieces of costumes as we managed at that point. (6) We were fortunate in having the leadership of Jim, an expert drama teacher, who thoroughly understood his role.

Under his guidance the group of forty adults and children gradually built up the story of Aladdin without a written script. The opening scene was modelled on a popular Glasgow weekend market 'The Barras'. The participants had been invited to feel at home in it, so with heads draped in colourful scarves as a concession to the story's eastern setting, the mothers exchanged 'Coronation Street' type repartee as they presided at tables in 'The Barras of Old Baghdad'. Parts were

# Pantomime progress

1977: Aladdin  
A modest  
beginning in  
a dilapidated  
hall.



1979: Cinderella  
The king presides  
at the ball -  
and everyone is  
quite at home!



1982: Beauty  
and the Beast.  
Beauty's  
"sisters" pose  
with a T.V.  
personality  
against a  
background of  
the community  
run library.



invented for everyone in the family. A shy teenage boy emerged as a dramatically wicked uncle, Harry shone as a comedian and eventually a small group of adults and children together created the pantomime song. The drama teacher, whose skill carried us all along, called the final very unfinished performance a Pantomime Workshop and included the audience of sixty in the action. It was certainly a learning experience for all of us, Project team, volunteer support staff and local families alike.

In later years the annual pantomime would grow in sophistication and skill until eventually another drama teacher, without knowledge of the starting point, would be able to take a youth drama group from the area to perform at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. But I wonder if that first awe at the growing awareness of unsuspected talent and undreamt of opportunity was ever surpassed. At Christmas 1977 in a dilapidated, unwanted school building, 100 people created for an hour or two something magically worthwhile where nothing - and the expectation of nothing - had reigned for so long. That brief experience lit a candle of hope that helped us move forward confidently.

But it would be irresponsible of me to paint an idyllic scene without problems. Life was very real! When we were at full stretch trying to bring to fruition every

creative possibility, the problem arose of a mother coming drunk to rehearsals! As usual, I asked my parent partners who had all been present, to reflect on the issue.

Molly raised the point obliquely through an organizational problem, allowing me to say directly (7) 'It was the drink problem that was really a worry to me.' Elsie's answer was equally direct 'You can't tell her - I mean, you'd need to wait until she's kind of reasonably sober and tell her. Imagine coming to the pantomime at night like that!' 'Well, what shall we do?' I wanted to know 'What should we do about someone who is drunk?' The conversation wandered away into details about the local opportunities for drinking. But I wanted an answer. 'What do I say to her? Or do I wait and see if next week she comes drunk?' 'I'd give her another chance' said Elsie, with some authority. 'Another chance, and then if she is drunk next Tuesday night...' She tailed off but Molly took over the task of directing me. 'Don't say anything to her on the Tuesday night. Maybe go round in the morning.' I was listening intently, honestly trying to learn how to cope with a situation in which I was really out of my depth. 'Don't say it at the time?' I queried. 'No' both mothers answered in chorus. Elsie backed up Molly's point 'Go round the next morning', while Molly began to give the reasoning behind this

advice. 'I think she'd only kind of....youse would get kind of abused.'

This incident raised again the whole issue of how much we should concern ourselves with local matters beyond the scope of both our remit and our expertise. I had considered this point frequently over the three years I had been in the district and was reasonably clear in my own mind about what was appropriate, though always willing to think again in the light of new experience. The only recorded discussion on the issue comes from a meeting on February 20th, three months after the pantomime incident. On that occasion a journalist was present to whom the parents were describing their activities. 'We done Aladdin' (8) Nessie said excitedly, 'I was a ghost.' This led to a brief description of how all the families in the flats immediately beside Nessie had joined in one pantomime song scene inside 'the cave'. 'The whole close was a ghost!'

Within this context I began explaining how we had worked out with the local people the limits of our involvements (9). 'Various people said to us "Why are you bothering about our homes and our families? Is there something in this that we're not going to like, in the end." We felt that it was terribly important that, even accidentally, we didn't pick up this kind of information - a police

problem, for example. We don't know anything of that kind of background unless somebody has said, "I'm awfully worried, can I tell you this?" A little further on in the discussion I gave my reasons for this attitude. We were working very closely with people and were always in danger of two quite different wrong moves. One was of trying to 'push' people at our pace - the pace of the outsider - instead of walking alongside them as they come to conclusions at their own pace. That February transcript goes on to give some detailed examples of this problem.

The other danger was the one we had faced in November when one mother came drunk to rehearsal. That had raised the issue of intruding in people's lives as if the poor did not have the same rights as the middle class to keep outsiders out of their domestic problems. I had re-appraised this principle at the time in the light of group norms which might conflict with our suggested activities. 'We're aware that any area of life has problems, but it is none of our business what else goes on. At the same time, if there are more problems than we understand, we are maybe being a wee bit too innocent. If we understood it, we'd be in a better position to cope with the children, or to try to suggest things.' This very general invitation to the two mothers to educate me on local customs as they saw fit, produced the following

picture of 'Wine Alley' with Molly and Elsie taking up the story from each other. 'They all drink in their house. It's just the odd time you get an outburst. The battle in the streets.' Then, with a twinkle in her eye but still a rueful tone of voice Elsie shrugged off this problem. 'I mean, it livens things up a wee bit, a wee battle in the streets now and then!' I had been working in the district for years and never seen any sign of such problems, though they were around in the folklore as reported in Sean Damer's study of the area (10). 'Would it happen at the weekend?' I asked. 'Mostly at the weekend' Elsie confirmed. 'You seldom see anybody drunk during the week. Really last night I was surprised'. From this it began to look as if any alcohol problems in the area - already the subject of other people's concern - were unlikely to affect the work we were trying to set up jointly with the parents. But I had to have a final check on this answer. 'You're saying, Elsie, that you don't think there's a drink problem during the week?' 'No' she said firmly. Molly, though more cautious, still left me with my conclusion. 'Only one or two families have got it every day.' 'Aye' said Elsie 'But it's no'.....' She left her hands to express that the major point remained; it was reasonable for us to go on trying to set up parent/child shared activities on week nights. Weekends were something else; 'Maybe on a Saturday night, well you expect that wi' men no' working - a wee

drink.' Reassured, I continued with the work. Incidentally, the lady concerned returned the following week - sober!

In January 1978 we began looking for ways to extend our scope. A small band of fourteen committed people met us regularly and with them we had started to explore two different needs. On the one hand we were still trying to invent some form of local training to allow participants to discuss the principles behind the work, on the other we were anxious not to build up a small elite and so we wanted to reach more people on a regular basis. Our indecision about which of these to pursue first was ended by an outside event.

Early in 1978 Notre Dame College of Education (later renamed St. Andrew's) had asked if one of their Summertime 3rd Year Options could be based on the project. I was delighted to have this opportunity to affect teacher training. Had I not promised this to Maisie in 1974 as an important goal of the Stairhead Seminars? I was willing to take any students who wished to come, I said, totally underestimating the interest that had been roused and quite unprepared for the phone message I found on my desk one February morning some weeks later:

'Thank you for agreeing to arrange parent/teacher partnership experience for any 3rd Year students interested. Thirty-seven have volunteered already. Would you like us to close the list now?'

What could we possibly do with that number of uninitiated students one day per week in May and June? As the panic subsided we began to see that this influx of relatively skilled helpers could open up possibilities. But it remained a major activity to organize and some of the stress it generated shows in my repetitious message. 'The students will be here, I mean all of the students, all 37 of them.' (11)

We had started to plan a 'Preparing Four Year Olds for School' programme. Students who were specialising in nursery and infant work could meet families on a one-to-one basis in their own homes helping them see what skills the child already possessed and how the home could build on these to support the child's first attempts in school. Other students could help with art and drama activities out in the street and so we could build up new networks throughout the area.

Preparation for these students brought out some interesting facts. One was about the changes in norms which had already taken place. During my 1974 sessions

in Maisie's home I had asked one of the mothers if she was going to take her three year old to the nursery school. She had looked at me sharply and said in a hurt tone, 'I look after my weans, I don't have to put them in a nursery.' Gradually as we explored the idea of preschool education the advantages for the children became more obvious and the little girl was eventually enrolled. Now as the group of mothers considered which homes the few nursery trained students should visit I heard this same mother say, 'Well they should definitely go to that house, those twins are starting school and they haven't been to nursery, playgroup, family nights or anything else. Nothing! Those weans have had nothing! It's no' fair to let them start school like that.'

Another lesson we learned was about space. Moorpark had a large specially designed play space outside the Tenants' Hall. We had presumed this would be a popular spot for summer activities. The parents rejected this idea unanimously. Who could control it? If teenagers ran around through preschool activities what could you do? Smaller spaces within strict control of an immediate group of families were available at the end of each tenement block - the pathways leading to the dustbins! Here it was that many parents first encountered public examples of parent/child creative activities. Years

Outdoors Education - On the path to the Dustbins!



later a mother looking back on all that had been achieved could muse in wonder, 'Do you remember how all this started round by our middens?'

That start in 1978 was made at four corners of the little housing estate where the path to the dustbins was suddenly transformed. (12) Tiny tots stood painting on long rolls of wallpaper pinned to the railings. Others were engrossed in creating sand castles in old bread-boards donated by a kindly baker. Four year olds took part in action stories and the neighbourhood enjoyed the scene from the grandstand of nearby tenement windows.

But before that point was reached some parents had expanded their range of activities enormously and, in some cases, been prepared to flout local norms to set up these new experiences. The story of sand alone would make a saga. Outside of Local Authority schools and nurseries, where do you find clean sand in the inner city and how do you keep it clean from marauding dogs - and teenagers? How do you lay it out so that it can be easily tipped back into a container when the children have finished playing - and, anyway, what do you use as a container for the huge quantities of sand required for these different little play areas? Even when the Roads Department kindly agreed to lending a large disused grit bin, it had to be transported to a point where it could be conveniently supervised. 'Outside my window' Mrs

King said. the exasperating story of the removal of the bin to that point was described by Maureen (13), one of the mothers who had originally met me in Maisie's flat. Though she told the tale like a comedy act, at the time she had felt, to say the least, unsupported.

'We went to remove the bin and your brother told me you (Nan) were at the bingo and I was that mad that you were at the bingo, and I was moving the bin on my own (laughter). Marie and me and you were supposed to go round and shift the bin and I shouted over to Marie, "Are you ready to go to shift the bin, Marie?" and she says "Oh I'm going to the bingo." I was that mad, I just slammed off (laughter). So I met Doreen then and I said "Oh, I'm away to the bingo!" (laughter) So in the end we (Maureen's husband and herself) ended up shifting it ourselves - and what a struggle! The high end up in the middle of the street and "he" telling me to hold on, to hold the lid, and everybody was at their windows watching! I had Flo (her 3 year old daughter) and she was as black as your boot, you should have seen her. The whole street was watching, and oh, I was just ready to burst into tears. I just let the lid go and I said "Away you go on your own!" (laughter) If I'd known it was that big I never would have tackled it!'

By now the whole hassle had become a story worth telling

and it was the moment to congratulate her on the achievement. 'But it's great!' I said. That set Maureen off again to describe the new efforts by others which this triumph had promoted. 'I know! We suggested getting it painted and then the next thing Mrs. King sent round to see about a brush.' A whole new chapter of co-operation and effort then began as various people helped to paint the old grit bin.

These play experiences were meant to be shared by adults and children together, so we worked to encourage active participation by parents. This idea looked so neat in theory but it took on a completely different image in the complexity of real life. The adults responsible for these children were not always parents. Grannies, aunts, teenage uncles, day foster parents were all included and for many their responsibility for young children was an incidental reality within a much wider network of people. So it was that an elderly lady who enquired about our activity was offered a painting brush and her choice of wallpaper area at the railings. In bedroom slippers, overall and rollers she was delighted to participate, after a brief return to her nearby flat to put in her dentures. Surrounded by her friends she began to draw. 'There's ma hoose' she proclaimed as her paintbrush outlined a square on the paper. This raised a cheer from her admirers which encouraged her to continue with

'There's ma bed' and so on, through the creation of a child's picture of home. Further along the wallpaper frieze Harry, home now from his bottle-washing job, was directing some little boys in the creation of a collage. At another corner of the estate students, parents and passers-by helped children make figures out of junk. In the middle of it all an art teacher from a local secondary school worked with teenagers who had given up the struggle to attend school. Supported by students these boys built adventurous decorated bogies (boxes on wheels) which were proudly entered in the Govan Fair's grand parade. Like the pantomime, these outdoor neighbourhood activities were a wonderful experience for all concerned, a colourful vision of what life could be like - but it all lasted such a short time. We were fortunate that the good weather allowed us to capture some of it on video for soon the place was back to normal. The students left; mothers abandoned the back-breaking problem of storing and setting out sand without proper containers; the organisation became too much for the leaders and most of the new adult participants melted away after the initial novelty had worn off. Eventually all that could be seen was an expelled teenage boy trying to make a bogie on his own.

Why had each experience we introduced been taken on so enthusiastically and then dropped again?

We had glimpsed what could be done not only in this summer enterprise but in many other attempts. We could now look back on a collection of small successful events:- craft and pantomime workshops indoors, satisfying excursions beyond Moorpark to action museum, seashore or ski slope; art, drama, crafts and storytelling in colourful profusion in Moorpark's own streets. They had all been successful in terms of the numbers participating and the sheer enjoyment for everyone in the wealth of new and exciting experiences which had been offered, as well as in terms of our special goal of stimulating adults and children into shared talk which would include problem-solving, negotiating, categorising and sequencing skills. The activities were all new to the participants at the level of direct experience, yet not new - thanks to T.V. - at the information level. So why did we have to initiate these events at all, given that the ideas within them were not new? Why did they last only as long as we carried them and disappear when we stopped?

I needed to hear what my partners in this enterprise had to say. I decided to turn to the fourteen people who had worked hard in separate little committees and later in a joint planning group to run the Summer street corner art and drama groups. Armed with a questionnaire and a tape

recorder I made two lengthy visits to the homes of each of these people whose friendship I valued and who were willing to let me learn from them.

1979-1980 (17 February 1979)

1979-1980 (17 February 1979)

1979-1980 (16 March 1979)

1979-1980 (12 March 1979)

## CHAPTER 6

### NOTES

- 1 T088, 1 and passim (14 February 1978).
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- 5 T061, 5 (2 March 1977).
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## Chapter 7

# Shared Awakening



The 'Ford' family

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## CHAPTER 7

### SHARED AWAKENING

On sunny evenings in May and June 1978 while neighbours leaned over their window sills to chat with each other and with the passers by, in time-honoured Glasgow fashion, I made my way up tenement stairs in Moorpark (1) with all my recording paraphernalia. On May 11th I visited Janet. She was bringing up three sons by herself while sharing her elderly mother's tiny flat. Janet had a number of important points to make. The first was a very reassuring indication that our planned activities with the parents in the community were sparking off related action by the children in the home.

Janet had brought her boys to Higgs Castle, an action museum, and had herself acted as one of the guides there after taking part in planning and preparation sessions with other local parents. We talked about the kind of games her children played at home. Janet said (2) 'At the moment they're building a castle using cigarette packets, the cardboard out of the middle of toilet rolls and a big box they got over at the shops.' This might have seemed a normal enough activity since such models are often made in schools, but a little probing showed that they had never before brought this kind of activity into the

house. Had Janet's own encouragement been the key? To explore this I asked if her involvement in the Higgs Castle project might have caused the idea to take root.

'It could have been! I never thought of that. It could have been right enough!' She mused, beginning to show some excitement that her own action might have been responsible. This in turn led her to describe the castle in more detail. 'They cut out a door and put two bits of wool in it and made a kind of drawbridge.'

This was such a tiny indication that I would need many more to be sure, but it seemed possible that two new things were happening. Parental involvement in an informal educational activity had led to children picking up at home the model-making process they had probably learned at school but which had never by itself bridged the gulf between school and home. A second point was the effect of reflection on this action. As Janet thought about it she became more interested in their activity and would therefore be more likely to encourage its repetition.

The conversation moved from games to reading. Janet's tiny home was a meeting place for local children, so by her stories Janet could demonstrate the status of reading in that small community. We talked first of how the

children occupied themselves with games like cards and ludo and then, speaking of a neighbour's child who was frequently in her house, Janet said, 'Jack Clark even sat and read a book. He likes reading. He reads quite a lot. If I buy a new book Jack Clark is the first one to read it. The rest would sit and listen to a story, but he reads it himself. Now my two who play with him, they'll no' read a book. They'll read it if they get it out o' the library, but no' if I've bought it, you know. So I ended up givin' one I bought to the library and Bobby then went and got it out and read it twice.'

The library Janet spoke of was set up in the living room of the Project flat. Books were supplied mainly by the City Library but the way children and adults were encouraged to read them was part of our Urban Aid Project. Here Janet's sons had the opportunity some days of hearing part of a book read to them as an encouragement to read the rest. On other occasions they brought a chosen book to the teacher/literacy worker or one of her helpers, and a conversation about their choice or a piece of reading aloud by the boy or by the adult preceded the routine recording and stamping procedure. Some of this process was suggested to parents, but we had not at that time learned how to hand on the skill, so Janet's description of her attempts was: 'You know those wee Ladybird books? I bought one, I think it was 'Foxy

Woxy' - and it was the adults who read it! They were saying 'Did the fox eat all the birds in the end?' and our kids hadnae bothered with it!'

'Are you worried about the boys' reading?' I asked. 'Well Ernie (the eldest) is slow at reading, so I think the others are just acting it. Calum is getting everything wrong but he really knows it. Billy's went the same way and lost his book.' This loss appeared to be more than a single understandable incident. 'My aunty Mary recognised the wallpaper it was covered with when she saw it lying in the dairy. So she brought it up - and he lost it again twice! So I made out an order, if the book didn't come they were all going to get leathered! So the book came! Billy's quite good at reading and he was keen at first. I don't know whether it's the other two maybe not doing their's that has put him off.'

This was a family in which the mother was so keen to help her sons that she regularly made up crossword puzzles for them often using the words the older boys brought home for spelling practice. Yet reading was not a regular pastime and Janet could see no way of stimulating interest in books except by threats of 'leathering'. Jack Clark's home was rather different. His father was a keen reader and Peggy, his mother, who had taken part in

the original Stairhead Seminars had told an amusing tale of the discovery made by Allan, Jack's older brother, that reading was not simply a school chore for small boys but an enjoyable adult pastime.

At the other end of the scale was 'Wee Tommy' whose mother, according to Janet, would neither buy him a book nor take him to the library, when the school was encouraging all parents to do so. Tommy had been at school for only a few months when an incident described by Janet took place.

'Tommy came up and the library books were up on the mantelpiece. And Tommy says, "Where did you get the books?" I says, "They're out o' the library." "Where's the library?" I said, "Up the road." "How do you get the books?" I started to explain how he got the books. "Can anybody get the books?" I says, "You've got to join the library first." "How do you join?" Well while I was talking, Jack Clark came in and he seen a book that he hadn't read, so he lifted it up and he was reading it and wee Tommy said, "Jack! He can read!" Now wee Tommy, I think he was just started school then, you know, and I says, "I know he can read." But Jack - he can read! He can read! You'd have thought it was a miracle or something, you know. I think the wee boy thought it was only adults that could read. Why, I don't know, but I

think that's what he thought. I says, "I know he can read." I says, "He learned that at school." "Did he learn that at school - how to read?" I says, "Aye." "Can Calum read?" I says, "Calum can read as well." I says, "When you're at school a wee while longer you'll learn how to read."

Our task and that of the schools and the libraries was obviously far more complex than we had imagined; book provision and careful teaching of reading skills would never bring these boys into the world of books without a meaningful and informed partnership with keen parents like Janet. Maybe Jack Clark's mother, Peggy did not need support and perhaps wee Tommy's mother would never accept it, but Janet was ready and willing while her sons were rapidly becoming school failures.

I wondered if Janet could pick up clues about how to help them by trying to listen to the boys as I was listening to her. It turned out that she did listen to them regularly, but the tale she told had more to say about good relationships across religious differences, a constant topic of concern in the West of Scotland, than about schooling. 'If they're talking I end up eavesdropping', Janet began. 'The likes o' the time they were watching 'King of Kings' on the telly. It got too long and they all went out to play, but Calum says 'Shout

to us to come up'. He wanted to see the bit where Jesus was crucified. The rest of the film didn't interest him.

So I called him up and they all came up and watched it. And when it came to the bit where Jesus was crucified, they were talking about it and Jack Clark started explaining that Jesus died on Good Friday and was buried on the Saturday and he rose again on the Sunday, and that's how there's Easter Sunday and the reason why you get Easter eggs. Billy was sitting with his mouth open, he says 'And how do you know that, Jack?' and Jack says, 'I get it in school'. I says, 'He gets it in school and he gets it in church!' So when Calum heard me saying that, he says, 'That Jesus must have been a Catholic because Jack goes to the Catholic School'. So Jack says to Calum quite serious, he says, 'I don't think he was a Catholic, Calum, I think he was a wee bit a Catholic, a wee bit a Protestant and a wee bit o' something else.' Well, I found that - oh, I thought it was a touching explanation, you know. I thought it was really good.'

Janet and I went on to talk of holidays. How did Janet feel about them? 'Oh I think holidays are good for children. It lets them see the countryside especially if they live in the city.'

I had come to this interview fresh from a casual Loch Lomond trip by car with a Canadian couple and their four

children. The parents were geographers and so the whole family could see and discuss much more about the scenery than simple comments on the pleasing view. I had a little Scottish history and literature to contribute and we all knew the songs about this part of Scotland. Pebbles on the shore, plants on the hedgerow, boats on the loch, all were matters for question or report. Sketching was a current interest with this family and most of them tried quietly capturing the visit in this way.

Now I asked Janet 'Have you ever been on holiday with the boys?'. 'No' Janet said. 'Maybe that's why I would like it, I don't know. I mean, I haven't been a holiday myself since I was fourteen or something. I used to go when I was young but since I was fourteen I haven't been, except for once. My pal's mothers got a caravan and we went and stayed - we were working so we just packed up on the Friday and went down till the Sunday and then came back.' 'Apart from that weekend you've never been a holiday since you were fourteen? That's a long time! What would you like for your boys?' Janet's answer came quickly, 'I think you should have more visits, like the visit to Hagg's Castle, because even though Hagg's Castle's no' that far away, the children think they're going somewhere - you know - to them it's an outing; they've been somewhere. You know what I mean?'

# Janet

Have you ever been on a holiday with the boys?  
"No", Janet said, maybe that's why I would like it.



Jack Clark  
even sat and  
read a book.  
He likes reading.



I had asked what Janet would like for her family, expecting that she would talk about places she would like to take them herself, but her reply had presumed that the organisation would be in my hands, not hers. 'I think you should have more visits.....'

Janet was a sensitive and creative woman with a great interest in her children, so why did she not get on with taking her children away for the day to Higgs Castle and Loch Lomond or for a longer time to the seaside? 'What are our problems?' I asked, including myself in the question. 'Why do we not do all the things we're interested in, like holidays and visits?' Janet had obviously thought about this and was ready with a list of items. 'I think money for a start. Time is another factor. You've got to have the time to do it. Preparation as well, you know, getting prepared for it. 'Do you mean the whole organisation of the thing?' I queried. 'Uh huh' Janet replied 'Because usually if I'm going bus runs it's a rabble before you get there. I mean, you're trying to make up pieces (sandwiches) and you've got one shouting 'I cannae find this, I cannae find that', so by the time you're actually getting on the bus you're exhausted.' She paused frowning, 'If you've got one child it's all right, but if you're like Peggy, for example, with a number to get ready, you can dish out

orders saying, 'You do this and you do that' but you end up rushing about frantic, trying to get everybody all ready in time.' I thought of my Canadian friends to whom such personal preparation was a routine occurrence. How did a family build up all the skills and habits of shared responsibility so that all 'pulled their weight' and preparation did not degenerate into chaos?

My original question had really presumed that the main problems were in the organisation of the visit itself. We had spent some time in the previous months trying to share the planning of the various trips. Janet had not even begun to consider how she might take on such tasks; there were enough problems for her at home in trying to participate in an outing which someone else had organised. The further step of a family holiday in which overnight accommodation had to be procured, had never been in her own adult experience and was, therefore, completely beyond her horizons - except in wishful thinking. As I read over the transcript of this interview and became dimly aware of the size of the gap between the reality in the homes of Janet and her neighbours and the expectations in more affluent parts of society about normal holiday experiences, I began to search for ways of building steps which could lead to simple holiday organisation. An important starting point was the provision the following year of one overnight

stay away from home for whole families in a creative setting. But in the summer of 1978, I could do no more than listen and learn as Janet and her friends continued to teach me.

I was already very aware that reflection after an event allowed a new understanding of what had happened to emerge and be discussed, savoured and appropriated by those who had taken part. So I was not surprised that Janet had become more interested in her sons' model building or that I had appreciated more clearly the intricate web of family support which lies behind the interested young reader. But there was also a much deeper though slower process going on. Initially I did not see anything positive in it. As I asked people what they would like to happen I was surprised to find that not one of the fourteen people interviewed suggested action which went beyond what we had already offered. Dick, for example, baffled me with his total lack of new ideas. I had asked him (3) 'What would you like your children to experience beyond Moorpark?' 'That's a hard thing! Outside Moorpark?' he had puzzled. If Dick had some ideas of what he might do he was certainly not used to putting them to words. 'When you sit and think of it' he went on cautiously, 'you usually just pick up something and say 'come on and we'll go there'. I suppose what I would like is for them to get outside of

Moorpark, you know, easier access to things like transport.' This interview was in the month of June. Glasgow was full of fetes, festivals and special events; schools were running trips for classes to all the nearby seaside resorts and enticing rail and bus adverts were prominent in town, though not within Moorpark. 'If we could organise transport' I asked, 'where would you take them?' Dick shook his head, (4) 'There's a lot of places shut now - shut down at the weekend - through lack of money. I'd like to see more places open.' 'What kind of places?' I asked. 'I know a lot of the parks are open on Sundays' Dick began slowly, 'And, er, more things to do in the park, I suppose, would help. Activities in parks. I don't know what else....probably museums? There isn't really very much you can do outside unless you go outside the city, you know, unless you go to the seashore. There again it's the travel I think that's your main problem, travel.'

I was amazed by this reply which I was to find from other interviews was quite typical. Dimly I began to see that I was engaged first of all in a process of awakening dormant perceptions of the possible. Far from listing all the new things they now hoped to do in the wake of our single forest walk and seashore outing, we had only begun the task of raising awareness of the possibility of such events. Though a variety of opportunities existed

and were advertised publicly, I now saw that advertisements are not enough if what they offer is not within the range of normality. Janet and Dick were both showing me how far out of their normal range our outings had been. Even within Moorpark our little activities which everyone had enjoyed so much, had not been seen as the first of a series which would widen in scope. Instead, the question, 'Is there anything more that could be brought into Moorpark?' received the answer, 'Aye, more activities, they could maybe organise more things; maybe organise groups for doing more things for their kids'. More of the same would indeed be a step forward, it seemed, because it would bring consolidation and the chance for people in Moorpark gradually to make these activities their own.

Once more I was learning how unrealistic was my proposed timescale. I had seen the previous year's work as a way of introducing a number of small events which could be added together into a sample syllabus of informal activities in the community. These events would give children a wide range of experiences and many opportunities to interact with adults in ways which would be intellectually stimulating. They would also suggest to parents patterns of action and lead to further and more individually tailored undertakings. I was really falling into the class teacher's trap of beginning from

the ideal curriculum and paying too little attention to the people for whom it was intended. I was trying to move the action onward without considering the time necessary for personal growth.

Janet and Dick reminded me by their responses that change has many facets. These would all have to be addressed before the parents and their children could extend their normal pattern of relationships to make the intellectually stimulating events we had introduced become common practice. Once more I was forced to remember Bennis's point that human behaviour is like a centipede, moving on many legs. Raising awareness of the possibility of wider, rewarding shared experiences was one important step that I could now see clearly, but there were many others I had still to isolate. Tom and Sheila Ford were to highlight another necessary aspect, a good self image.

Tom and Sheila had taken part in many small discussion groups before the interviews took place. Transcripts from these groups afford a glimpse of some moments of change. Tom, an unemployed building labourer, had appeared at the door of the project flat in January 1977, a few days after we opened the little community library. With him were his brother Rod and his wife Sheila. The conversation, as relayed to me by Ann who had charge of

the library went something like this: 'I hear you're lending out books' he said. 'I've always read books - at school and that, but Rod, my brother here, he's never bothered and now he wants to learn to read properly.' His brother stood a few paces back, smiling nervously but saying nothing. Ann, the teacher/literacy worker, welcomed them all into the flat, assuring Rod that she would be happy to arrange a tutor for him and trying to put them all at their ease by showing them round. But Tom hadn't finished. 'Sheila's not too sure either' he continued. 'I think it's really her spelling.' Sheila's face showed no response as she stood just inside the library door scarcely moving enough to look round the room. Tom was the soul of affability. Ann mentioned the recently formed discussion groups which were held weekly in the adjoining room. 'Sheila and I will be there on Wednesday' Tom promised. To everyone's surprise, they came the following week - and remained to participate, to blossom and eventually to lead. But at least for Sheila the confidence to take some responsibility for the action only came after her own self-image was improved.

Initially Sheila was very quiet at discussion groups and Tom spoke for her. On a few occasions she indicated that she felt she had nothing to offer, or possibly nothing she felt we would accept because she was having literacy help. As I read the transcripts of these sessions I

realised that Sheila needed to be assured of my understanding that she was hindered by poor eyesight, not by lack of ideas or intelligence. My first opportunity came on February 9th 1977 when I was able to invite Sheila to tell the following story: (5)

'When I went to school I didn't wear my glasses at all and I used to sit at the back of the class. I couldn't see the board but I wouldn't say that to anybody. The teacher kept wondering why I wasn't getting on as well as the rest. One day she got hold of me and said to come into class again for a minute. She said 'sit there'. That was at the back of the classroom. She wrote something on the board and said, 'What does that say?' I tried to see it, but I couldn't see anything. She said 'sit there', moving me nearer the front and said, 'what does that say?' I still couldn't see it. Then she said she thought there was something wrong with my eyesight, and I started crying. She said, 'I think when the doctor comes, I'll send for your parents'. My dad hadn't been keeping well, so there was only my mum. We were all to get a medical and I went in and the doctor tested my eyes.' This was the longest piece Sheila had ever said and she stopped doubtfully now, in some surprise at holding the floor like this. I responded with, 'If only you'd had that earlier, you'd have picked up your schooling better. A lot of your problems start from

that.' Sheila took up her tale again, 'They asked my mum if there were any illnesses or anything. My mum said that I had had the measles when I was a child. They said that the measles maybe caused it with my eyes.' Tom, who had been sitting quietly for once added a point, 'It took five years to get her to wear the glasses when she went out at night!' 'It wasn't that' Sheila said, 'see when I went to school other kids used to call 'Four eyes!' It was horrible. I used to go into school and go to the top of the stairs and throw my glasses down. It wasn't for a while that I got past that stage. Only when my brother fell and he nearly lost his eye. The edge of the dustbin went right into his eye and he had to start wearing glasses as well. I used to say, 'aye, who's calling me four eyes now?'

As this session ended I took the opportunity to talk out with Sheila the anger (6) she now felt at having to learn as an adult many of the lessons she might easily have completed successfully as a child if her sight problems had been rectified sooner. I was so engaged in offering Sheila this acceptance and support to her self-respect that I missed the accompanying non verbal signs as Sheila responded to the situation. But Kathy, my partner in the discussion groups and well aware of my intention, was free to see the whole little drama.

Sheila normally sat back quietly on the couch almost out of the discussion circle. But on this occasion, as she was encouraged to release her unhappy memories and then to hear her current problem attributed to eyesight rather than to intelligence, her body moved further and further into the group. By the end of the dialogue she was sitting on the edge of her seat. She never moved back in any sense.

Months later, on May 25th, I reflected on the change that had taken place in Sheila's participation in the group, 'Do you remember Sheila when you used to come and not say a word?' (7) 'That's right, aye,' Tom cut in, 'She came in and she sat there. I was talking to yourself - I was talking away and she sat there for the best part of an hour and never opened her mouth.' 'And you used to talk for her Tom' I continued. 'Do you remember that Sheila? Tom used to say, "Well, Sheila thinks.... Sheila says...."' Sheila laughed and said, 'There are a lot of people like that. Lots of people say to themselves, "I wonder if I should say this", or "I wonder if I should say that" - "I wonder what they would think if I said this kind of thing." They let another person keep on talking and they wait and see the reaction on that other person and then they step in.'

Sheila had by then become a full and quite reflective

# Sheila Ford

By the end of the dialogue she was sitting on the edge of her seat. She never moved back in any sense.



"Do you remember, when Sheila used to come and not say a word and you used to talk for her Tom? Do you remember that?" Sheila laughed and said "There are lots of people like that".



member of the group. But it was Tom who in June 1977 gave us the clearest account of how the group meetings affected their educational efforts with their children. 'I was sitting watching the telly when Sandie brought me a book with all the letters of the alphabet in it. I just said absent-mindedly, 'Aye, hen', but she says to me. (8) "Daddy, are you going to teach me it?" Well, rather than turn the wean away, I says, "Well, come on then." But I wasn't keen. I didn't know most of the alphabet myself. Well, I knew up to "r" or something like that, you know; after that I knew "x, y, z" was the last of it. "Right - come on and we'll sit down." Well, see when I got started I got really interested. She seen that I was getting excited because I was learning as well as her. I said to her "Oh, daddy knows the alphabet now.' She looked at me as if to say, "Did you no' know it before? I've taught you something!" She says, "I've shown you that, daddy." And this is it. Self-satisfaction for the kid. Knowledge of me giving her a hand, plus the fact, me learning something out of it as well.. Well, my self-achievement was knowing the whole lot of the alphabet now. Her achievement was that she knows some of it, but also she's taught me the rest of it. We didn't bother with the television, we just carried on with her book.'

By June 19th I was in Harry's home (9) trying to tape

record the changes he could see in himself, while his children came in and out of the room quietly - when they remembered! The family dog being uninformed about the situation felt more free and punctuated or occasionally drowned the speech with his barking. Within these constraints we talked about the effect recent activities had had on Harry. His first response was on the way it had affected his attitude to his children. 'A've got more knowledge and understanding, I wid say, towards the kids, you know. A'm more tolerant towards them. A've more patience.' When invited to turn the searchlight onto himself, he was more reticent, except on the point of growing confidence through successful experiences. 'A've got satisfaction in the things going right when a' thought they widnae work!

But though Harry was happy to reflect with growing wonder on the practical successes he had had, he found it harder to capture the subtler reality of changing self-image. When asked, 'Have you seen yourself in a new light?' his initial response was, 'Naw, no' really. A'm just the same auld thing, the same auld Harry!' I tried again, 'Do you not see gifts in yourself that you never knew you had?' 'Naw, naw, - well, yes a' have. There are times when a've found that a' could dae things a' never knew a' would be able to dae. Like that drama thing. A' really enjoyed that! An' I hear there's talk of doing another

pantomime this Christmas?' (This discussion was in June!) Harry's enthusiasm was spreading to his workmates in the local milk bottling factory; 'A' find a'm talking more to outsiders like ma workmates about these groups we go to. A'm always telling them about it and about what we've done. They'd say "Where are you goin' the night?" and a'll say, "A'm goin' tae the Family Night Club" and a' tell them about the weans. A' say, they're happier doin' things.'

This last remark sparked off a final summary reflection, 'Just think! Ma kids would never have done a' these things if I had never joined the Project. They might have been runnin' aroon the streets as usual - and a'm learning at the same time, ye know.' We had come a long way since Harry, in cap and muffler, had stood grudgingly in the doorway at a Hallowe'en party.

I thanked Harry for his help and with many a greeting and wave of response left the Moorpark families enjoying the summer sunshine on the street or ensconced at open windows. After two visits to each home I not only had a daunting pile of filled in questionnaires and recorded comments, I also had a headful of responses which kept playing themselves over and over again like a tape recording in my mind.

# Harry

"That drama thing!  
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"Just think!  
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ye know".



'There are times when a've found that a' could dae things a' never knew a'd be able to dae.' As I underlined this comment on the transcript I could hear Harry's voice and see the look of quiet satisfaction on his face which almost amounted to awe at the changes which were beginning to take place in his life. I tried to sift through his answers to find the special ingredients which had given Harry this insight and sense of achievement. The clues were individually very small and unsure. Yet gradually I was piecing together some understanding of what our shared experiences had meant to my partners in the neighbourhood. Reflection on these responses helped to clarify my growing awareness that now I had to build a permanent structure of training and development which would outlive my personal involvement.

The task had not seemed so big when I started in 1974. Then in Maisie's home I thought that I only had to repeat my little ten week course with every parent in the neighbourhood and I would have fulfilled all that could possibly be done. This naive idea had been altered by three developments. In the first place, many parents did not choose to come. Then some of those who came were only interested in the activities. This brought a kind of success as adult/child planning and problem-solving patterns were accepted within the pantomime or puppet groups, but the foundations were so slight that the whole

structure could be toppled over very easily. By 1978 I was more experienced, more confident that our efforts would bring results, a little more relaxed and so able to laugh at my ridiculous hope that a problem which exercised the minds of international educationalists, would be solved with a little ten-week home-made course!

Now by listening carefully to what people were telling me and reflecting on this in the light of Freire's work on facilitating by education the growth of people to their full stature, I was learning that people need much more than information before they come alive to opportunities.

This was, perhaps, the single most important lesson I learned from the early years of this work. Freire's way of expressing it is: 'Information is useful only when a problem has been posed. Without this basic problem-statement, the furnishing of information is not a significant moment in the act of learning.' (10) I was gradually learning what was involved in creating that problem statement. For initially these parents in Moorpark saw no problem in the observable fact that neither they nor their children found school on the whole either meaningful or successful. Even further from their minds, they were now telling me, had been the idea that their own interaction within the family and community was a key feature in their children's learning skill. All the activity and reflection we had been involved in

together had at least raised that idea to consciousness now. I had already been convinced by Freire's point that 'telling' people something that they were not 'tuned-in' to was useless. As he puts it, 'We must not deny the learner the effort of searching that is so indispensable to the act of knowing.' But I had not realised how very slowly we each awaken to the possibilities which that search opens up to us and how very long it takes us to find the appropriate response.

Behind all this work with parents in Moorpark was the larger aim of discovering practical ways of tackling underachievement among inner city children. Gradually one important strand in redressing this balance had become clear and could be stated now as a principle:

Parents who have rarely considered the educational importance of their own interaction with their children have two needs:

- a) A long slow process of awakening before they arrive at an appropriate level of awareness of their own significance in education.
- b) Professional support as they begin to shape the opportunities already available in their neighbourhood into educational assets.

There were implications in all this for the role of

professional educators - community workers, underfives personnel, teachers, librarians. They too would need a gradual process of awakening before they could appreciate this fact and adapt their practice to fit the reality Gibran puts poetically: (11)

*'No one can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge.*

*The teacher leads you to the threshold of your own mind.'*

I had not begun, at this point to awaken to the fact that the professionals with the greatest problem in adapting were the educational administrators, furthest removed from the reality yet with most power to decide priorities. Major work with professionals of any sort was not on the horizon at this point, I was still unravelling children's educational needs in the community and beginning to see some immediate steps for myself and my little band of colleagues. We needed to invent a carefully planned programme which would offer crucial research findings in some palatable form to the parents who were now interested in reflecting on the meaning of these enjoyable experiences we were sharing. We also needed to help them develop practical skills in organizing educational 'fun' events in the community for themselves.

## CHAPTER 7

### NOTES

1 This set of interviews would make a little study in themselves. They feature Maisie and Peggy from the original group. Maureen would also have taken part, but at that point she was able to announce jubilantly that the Local Authority had agreed to give her another house in a lovely area some miles away. The fourth member of the 1974 group, Cathie, had left the district soon after the project started. Reflections from Agnes, Miriam and Molly, who all feature elsewhere in the study, are also recorded in these papers.

2 I06, 1 and passim (11 May 1978). Janet's story as given in Chapter 7 comes from this transcript of an interview made in her home.

3 I08, 8 (18 May 1978).

4 I08, 9 (18 May 1978).

5 T053, 12 (9 February 1977).

6 T053, 18 (9 February 1977).

- 7 T067, 5 (25 May 1977).
- 8 T070, 1 (1 June 1977).
- 9 I18, 8ff (19 June 1978)..
- 10 P. Freire, Pedagogy in Process, New York,  
1978, 11.
- 11 K. Gibran, The Prophet, London, 1980, 67.

# Partnership in Preparation



Planning an outdoor session. A parent/professional team.

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## CHAPTER 8

### PARTNERSHIP IN PREPARATION

The idea of local partners had begun with the discussion groups in September 1977 where Kathy and I worked as a pair. It seemed to us that we could take on more groups if we split up and took some of our regular participants as partners. The suggestion was well received among the parents and we tried out a small pilot version of a training course. As usual all meetings were taped so that we could reflect on each session and plan the next one with more accuracy.

On October 12th (1) a group of parents were discussing how to improve their skills in expressing ideas. Different levels of readiness show in the transcript.

AGNES: If you just listen, you learn sometimes -  
is that no' right?

DOREEN: It is true that you learn a lot by listening but you don't learn a skill just by listening to somebody else, any more than if I can't knit I'll ever learn to knit watching somebody else knit. You've really got to do it. This is what language skills are like so we're trying to get the children to work with us and talk with us and

not just listen.

AGNES: So that when they grow up they'll no' feel like we feel?

DOREEN: Right! They won't have this embarrassment.

MAUREEN: It must be through coming here, because I really don't bother with many people where I am, and I never really spoke to many people, Anna, sure I didn't? And yet since I've come up here, I think I could tackle talking to anybody; maybe no' speaking to them in the right way, but I wouldn't be embarrassed to talk to anybody.

AGNES: You're better speaking to somebody and them talking to you than being silent, even if you put your foot in it. Is that what you're saying?

By November 30th these mothers had begun to reflect that a small group in which everyone felt she had something to offer meant that learning was a two-way process. While appreciating the new ideas we were bringing into their lives, they could also see that we were learning from them. Harry's wife, Liz, said (2) 'Well, we're teaching you things that you don't actually know and you're teaching us things that we don't actually know.' When I agreed that it was a kind of give-and-take process Molly took up the theme. 'You're not in our homes with the children all day. We are. And we tell you what the children are doing all day, though of course you see them

in the library on a Tuesday night after school and at things like that. But we've got them in the house and what we're teaching them in the house is actually the ideas you gave us. We're actually carrying them out. You're only telling us, but we're actually making it work.' I was so encouraged by this insight that the transcription of my response reads more like a paragraph from a theoretical treatise than a piece of informal conversation! 'So you are the central teachers of your children. We might have specialist qualifications, but we haven't got that relationship with the children and that constant ongoing knowledge of them that is essential.'

In this attempt at an educational programme we were facing in earnest the challenge I had taken on to turn the jargon of the experts into the Glasgow vernacular. It was uphill work on an unmapped road and sometimes I became disheartened. A transcript of December 1977 (3) shows such a moment being shared with the participants. 'I don't know when I'm useful to you and when I'm not', I found myself saying. 'I really want help from you.' It was obviously 'Cheerup Doreen Day' for the first response from one of the mothers was, 'I think these notions are useful. They're opening ideas up in our heads an' we're saying things we wouldnae normally be saying.' Various mothers began to give details of

changes they had made in their relationship with their children. Liz said 'We're not saying any more "you go into a room and play by yourself". We're playing with them.' Molly continued this point and gave quite a detailed description of the changes in her home and the way her oldest child could see a new family pattern emerging. 'We're taking patience now to play with them' she said, 'when they come in from school. We do their reading an' that with them right away and then have a wee game after tea or something like that. Now, I never used to do that. I never done that wi' my Betty, no' the way I do it wi' the wee ones now. My Betty says, "All I remember is you took me to the park an' then I was put to bed." That doesn't happen now with the other two. They're up till maybe seven an' eight at night. You're playing wi' them or playing at snap or something like that.' I says, "Well, I've got more time now an' I'm learning." She says, "What are you learning?" I says, "It's just a new kind of education; to me it's a better way, this way."

At another point in the same session Kathy asked how the group would define education. Molly had something to say on this point too. (4) 'I would have said reading and writing and arithmetic - I think that's what you always think it is - but there's more to it than just reading, writing and arithmetic, you're using your expressions and

your ideas ....and your kind of ability to learn.' Molly's considered response highlighted the importance in this group work of a balanced programme which included the elements of theory, group work skills and a development of the language necessary to express ideas clearly as well as confidence building so that parents would feel free to express their thoughts. From that point they could move forward to consider new possibilities.

We had been learning for some time how this process worked. Months earlier, on May 25th Tom and Sheila had said: (5)

TOM: I'd actually said to Sheila already. 'Well, Kathy tells you how to do things, and that. Doreen comes in with the confidence: giving you a question and the confidence to get an answer back out of you. This is - what d'you call it - a magnet? You know, when you ask a question you're actually dragging it out of the person. And although the person doesn't really want to speak, they're committed to saying it.'

SHEILA: Aye, they're opening theirself, and the next time when you ask them they're more confident.

This led to a discussion of what made people willing to

offer an answer, even when they felt unsure and to the conclusion that people will 'pull an answer out of themselves because they want to find out what you're going to say about their answer.'

As I read this transcript I mused on how my thinking had changed over the four years since I had made my first attempts to communicate educational theory in Maisie's home. In 1974 I had thought that everyone in the area would want to take part in my little 10 week course. By 1978 I was happy to have a dozen committed participants. Not only had my first hopes been ridiculously naive, they were also too professionally oriented. The majority of the people in the neighbourhood could receive the new ideas more comfortably as they filtered through from these emerging educational leaders. Far from being second best, such a two-tier system of disseminating research findings gradually, through locally expressed talk, seemed to be both manageable and effective.

The whole aim of the course began to clarify now. These parents would not merely partner us in small discussion groups, they would take over the leadership of the Family Nights which had functioned for some time now on a regular basis and were beginning to show both success and problems.

At the simplest level Family Nights were carefully designed craft sessions which required adult/child verbal collaboration to bring that family's efforts to a successful conclusion. But underlying these obvious fun events were quite large scale educational goals. These evening activities were becoming our chief vehicle for communicating and supporting informal educational processes which we hoped would gently become part of adult/child norms in the local community and in family homes. We had tried to build regular reflection sessions into each evening to ensure that the participants became increasingly aware of the ideas behind the action. Reflection also helped to keep the practice in tune with those few basic principles we were attempting to hand on about the way children learn and the place of key adults in that process.

But I had been very disappointed to discover that as numbers increased at Family Nights and people joined us who had not previously attended a discussion group, this reflection process became hard to sustain. The further step in the cycle of moving on from reflection to improved planning for the next programme of activities was gradually being lost, even as an ideal.

Now, with a small group of local people who had become intensely interested in our ideas we were at the

beginning of a new way forward. For this little training course we struggled to find meaningful expressions for theoretical concepts and were rewarded by the enthusiasm with which these principles were turned over and re-expressed in general conversation. For example, a passing reference one day to a process which really amounted to helping children analyse concepts into their salient components evoked an aside from Maureen who said to her companions 'That's what I was saying to you in the butchers.' In the butchers! Learning theory was being discussed in the sausage queue! If such interest could be sustained and channelled outwards we were home and dry. But we had still to begin to make this rosy possibility into a practical reality!

By February 15th 1978, these parents were beginning to take over a short leadership role during group sessions. Feelings ran high and Sheila, who some months earlier had nothing at all to say at meetings, was now ready to put her feelings into words. First she led a discussion with a new group of mothers, then she reported back. (6) 'I'm frightened I'll let mysel' - let people down. That was what I was terrified of, you know. I says, maybe I'll no' be good enough. Maybe they'll say after: "Och, she was nae good" or something like that. I was terrified.' From such brave attempts we learned a little of what to put into a training course, so by October 1978 we are

able to produce a little syllabus (7) which contained some critical content and process elements.

The initial ten week course set up four years earlier in Maisie's home, as well as being a learning process for myself, had been directed towards raising awareness in parents of how they could stimulate their children's thinking skills at home. This had remained at the centre of the parents' groups set up in succeeding years in the Project flat. Now theory and practice concerning adult/child interaction were again at the core of the new course.

We also had to clarify our preference for small group work. From the beginning we had met in small groups rather than with individuals because reference groups have such a powerful effect on attitudes and attitude change. This community dimension grew in importance as time went on. Where families have no car they often know and are known by most people who live within walking distance, this makes them particularly vulnerable to the pressures of the local geographical area. In turn, they can also affect the whole neighbourhood, if they set their mind to it. This led to the conclusion that if the parents we worked with were to offer a lead in family leisure activities which would help to stimulate children's thinking skills, they would first have to

learn some basic group work processes themselves.

The setting up of this formal introductory training course marked a movement from informal discussions in the Project flat for the benefit of the families themselves to a planned series of practical and theoretical sessions at the Project office to train Neighbourhood Education Workers for the area. There was a conscious decision to use the procedures of a formal meeting for at least some elements of the work. This arose from a growing awareness that people who are uncomfortable in such settings cannot participate in many local decision making bodies in the wider society such as Tenants' Associations or Community Councils.

I was first alerted to this problem in 1975 when Moorpark's Tenants' Hall was opened. The Housing Department had built the hall and their representative was attempting to hand it over to a democratically elected committee. Some men in the crowded room obviously understood the process, but Maureen, one of the mothers I usually met in Maisie's home was not only puzzled but quite perturbed by the proceedings. The Housing representative called for nominations and various names were surfaced like 'Jimmy Smith'. 'Aye Jimmy's a good lad.' 'Jimmy, we'll have Jimmy.' The rep, who knew the community quite well was responding with 'So you

nominate Mr. Smith? And you are? 'John Green.' 'And you live at...?' 'The seconder? What is your name?' Maureen whispered to me in an anxious voice. 'Why is he taking their names? What have they done? Will something happen to them for speaking up?' I was startled by Maureen's complete lack of knowledge about formal meeting processes. Yet it was to take only a very small amount of input to allow her to respond quite actively in a similar situation.

By the time we planned the outdoor play activities at four corners of Moorpark estate in 1978 Maureen along with 3 other mothers who had originally been equally unaware of committee procedures had become their organizing committees' minute secretaries. The transcript of May 3rd 1978 (8) shows one of them, Janet, quite at home with the process. 'Can you read us the minutes, Janet' I'm asking and Janet immediately replies 'That was Wednesday 25th of the 4th 1978. We were to see Mr. Smith about the grit bin to go beside the railway...etc.' By October that year we were incorporating a little formal committee work into the Introductory Neighbourhood Education Workers' training course. The next four years were to see this organizational element become a carefully tailored section of the syllabus.

Handing on learning theory was a difficult nut to crack.

Most of the ideas I found so impressive were written in wearying jargon which made the message inaccessible to all but initiates. Yet, once penetrated, the information was so important that I was determined to bring it within reach of Anna, Harry, Janet and the rest. I was not sufficiently confident, however, to take the simplest route and incorporate the ideas, unacknowledged, into my own presentation. I felt restricted to re-phrasing the originals and so began the thankless task of writing a series of papers called 'Plain Speaking'.

The first article was a Glasgow version of the work of the Russian Psychologist, Luria, on the power of precise language, which would help among other things, to bring a work to fruition through verbalized planning. This proved to be reasonably useful as an introduction to Luria for professional workers, but too much at once for this local group. I next tried to re-write something from the Brazilian educator, Paulo Friere, whose work on the power of 'The Word' fascinated me. Learning from my Luria efforts, I offered only one thought at a time, but that made the work so slow that the group received no message at all! Bruner, next on my list, was never attempted. My venture into the world of educational primers was over.

Helped by a newly formed planning team which included a Community Education worker, I began trying to offer theory within an increasingly experience-based learning programme. Between this starting point in 1978 and the 1982 attempt to compile the first training course manual there were many interesting attempts to capture the essential elements of this process within a very brief training programme. These elements were not learned in the neat logical order of a textbook but in the jumble of ongoing action alternating with periods of reflection in which I tried to probe the meaning behind the surface realities.

By 1979 we had developed a regular pattern in which shared experience followed by reflection isolated the important components of the idea we were considering in any one afternoon session. That year's planning group had come to the conclusion that one thing the new local leaders needed to know was how to encourage other adults to work with them in family groups. We began the revised programme from that issue. A first step was for participants to become aware of the support there is for a learner in having a partner in learning. The main point we wanted to make was that when a learner is moving from the known to the unknown the sense of threat, sometimes even of failure, can be faced and conquered in the security offered by a partner encountering the same

obstacles.

We sat back that day after a long hard session in which we had at last been able to analyse the task sufficiently to be clear about the principles we wanted to teach. But as yet we were without a practical activity to carry these ideas to our participants. This was our usual problem. We had decided that if the training course was not to become side tracked into a course confined to practical skill training we had to clarify the principles first and then find activities which would begin to raise awareness of the chosen concepts through personal experience or highlighted feelings. This time Alan came up with a painting activity which was likely to evoke the kind of awareness from which the principles could be understood.

So it was that later that week we all stood round him - for one ongoing principle was that there was no 'them and us', we all did the activity - and watched Alan demonstrate how to make a simple drawing of a face. 'Now, take a partner', he said casually 'select a paint brush and paper and go anywhere in the room to paint your neighbour's portrait.' As they stood there electrified by his directive and not daring to put out their hands to the paint and paper I added 'I want you to think, not to say anything, just to think about how you are feeling at

this moment.' The group was already used to the idea that the session's introductory activity would contain the main idea to be discussed. So my request was greeted with smiles and a few nods of relief as we all moved on with our partners. Soon the room was full of shared giggles as people tried their hand and found themselves no worse than their neighbour. Into this new security Alan dropped his next bomb. 'As you finish, cut out the face please and bring it over here. We are going to mount them all on this wall and see if they can be recognised.' Into this gloom, as at each point of tension or security, I repeated my request for conscious assessment of feeling. Alan carefully selected first the 'portraits' of people with glasses or other obvious features like red hair or earrings so that the group could easily chorus the names until the last few could be guessed by a process of elimination, whatever their creative merit! Security mounted again and with it a certain excitement and sense of success as the very attractive group portrait was completed by the caption 'To see ourselves as others see us!'

After the coffee break we re-assembled round the meeting room table to reflect on the experience. Now that the ups and downs of feeling were over and the activity had ended in success, people were able to savour the effect it had had on them - helped by the moments of

heightened consciousness during the exercise. 'How did you feel', I asked 'when Alan first asked you to pick up paper and brush and begin to paint a portrait?' There was a moment's silence and then Sarah, a grandmother and something of a 'local worthy' stirred. 'I said to myself, I know I can't do that' she said with a sigh 'and in a moment everyone is going to know it!' This well phrased comment opened the flood gates of thoughts and sensations as everyone began to explore the feeling of expected failure, the support there was in having a partner and the need to be able to sustain some sense of fear or at least discomfort in the process of stretching out to achievement and success.

As the discussion moved on to the application of these principles within the organization of Family Nights, my mind kept going back to Sarah's beautifully polished and well delivered expression of her initial fear. In the activity period she might not have been a portrait painter, but she had polished and mused over the expression of that feeling until she had been able to offer a little gem of English at the reflection meeting. That made me feel successful too that day because encouraging this skill and assurance with words was an important aim of the whole project. Margaret Donaldson's book 'Children's Minds' (9) had been published during this period and had reinforced my obsession with the

power of the word. I had a growing awareness that planning and problem solving skills require an ability to juggle with complex ideas in words, breaking down that complexity into its component parts and rearranging these into sequenced steps to reach a solution.

We tried to build into the Neighbourhood Education Worker's Course a variety of tasks which would exercise these languages skills. We discovered that there was a reluctance to try finding the components in a complex idea and arranging them in a logical sequence unless the process was incorporated into a clearly rewarding exercise. One of our first attempts - which ended in failure - was with a form which had been delivered to the Project flat by the electricity board. I produced this at a group meeting and asked for advice on filling it in.

The group looked in silence at its complex layout of questions and answer spaces. "Don't worry about that" Tom said cheerfully "just wait till the electricity man comes about it and he'll fill it in for you!" The next week we tried another and more successful approach to the identical task, breaking down information into components which could be recorded on a computer. But this time it was a game called 'Computer Dating' (10). Working in pairs we were either to describe someone in the room in terms which could go into a dating computer or prepare a description of a well known personality so that the

computer would arrange a meeting with him/her. While a good deal of hard work went into finding how to break down the required information correctly, there was also a great deal of hilarity. At the end of the session each pair read out their list of salient points from which the rest of us quickly built up an accurate picture and could recognise their choice. During the reflection period which followed this activity we explored with the group the processes they had used. A certain degree of wonder grew as it became clear that everyone was using important analysing and sequencing skills very successfully.

At the same time we tried to promote communication skills by requiring oral and written work. One simple way of doing this was at the 'report back' period with which every session began. Participants were asked to tell the group how they had implemented an idea shared with them the previous week. One December when this reporting offered an opportunity for story telling we suggested taping the report back and having it transcribed. This was particularly successful with one young mother. Marie was a participant who felt very shy about her reading and writing skills and would never produce written work. Just before Christmas she told an amusing tale about her son Alex. The previous year she had sent him out of the room on Christmas eve while she opened the cupboard in which his presents were hidden. Her excuse had been that

she had to 'whistle for Santa'. Now she told the sequel.

'At this time you hear all the kids talking about Christmas. One night I was helping Alex write a letter to Santa. When we finished writing the letter I put it by in the drawer, kidding him that I posted his letter. By this time, it was time for his bed. I put him into his bed. Before I got the chance to put the light out, he said to me, "Mammy, will you whistle for Santa now? He knows what I want for Christmas." I said to him, "No, I cannot." "Why cant't you?" "Because Santa does not come till the twenty-fifth of December." "What do you mean, the twenty-fifth of December?" "That's the day Santa comes. He comes in the middle of the night and puts all your presents at the bottom of your bed and when you wake up in the morning your presents are all there for you." Alex could not understand. "But why can he not come now?" I said, "He's making all the toys for the girls and boys." "That's not true! He sent me a catalogue. He has already made the toys." I said to him, "Go to sleep now." No, he would not. He wanted an answer from me. I was sitting thinking what to say to him, then suddenly I thought of something. I said, "Do you know why Santa can't come till the twenty-fifth? Because there are children that live far away. Sometimes you have to take a plane, a train or a bus or a boat because they live so far away. Santa and his reindeer

have to go round all the other children first and that's how he cannot come till then." I had some time trying to convince him. He could not understand why he does not come till the twenty-fifth of December.'

This well told story received its just applause from the rest of the group and eventually Marie's self image as someone unable to produce sustained writing was transformed. But this did not happen all at once, for the first version of the story was a transcript of Marie's spoken tale and therefore did not have the punctuation and sentence formation of written English. Marie was appalled when she saw it. Everyone in the group was puzzled by the direct transcript version. Time had to be spent in discussing the difference between written and spoken language before they were ready to move on to using the transcript of their oral report as the basis for a written story. This exercise, however, generated such excitement that there was a demand for their stories to be 'published'. The result was a limited edition of a Christmas Booklet (11). Some copies were presented to the little Project library and a handbill advertising the booklet was delivered round the doors in the neighbourhood. The last word on the learning which arose from this episode comes from Marie as she began tackling the preparation of her story for typing. 'I see what those full stops are for now!'

'They're so you can read it and make sense. Nobody else but me would be able to read that one' pointing to the transcript. 'They should have told us that at school!' There was nothing to be gained by pointing out that over a period of ten years 'they' had probably tried often to 'tell' her. Only now when the reward was high enough and her own commitment secured could the message reach her.

By the end of 1978 the little local training course had elements in it which guided participants through the labour of learning how to organize a formal meeting, break down a task into its component parts for easy learning, keep a group together and well supported through the learning task as well as communicate clearly in spoken and written form. All this was focussed on one objective, learning how to set up and run parent/child events which would incorporate the ideas which research was showing led to intellectual growth.

The practical application of all this to adult/child activities on Family Nights was beginning to show results. The course participants each had a practical leadership task to do. Harry led 'new Games' sessions and successfully involved parents and children in a host of fun activities. Molly shared some ideas from the Open University's Pre-school Child course with mothers and

young children. Sheila ran both a sewing class and a toy making group at one point. Each of the others partnered one of these leaders or prepared a new area of work for the following term.

While all this was going on and being video taped so that they could each see their own successes and new learning opportunities, preparations were being made for a residential experience in January 1979 which we hoped would bring together all these training elements. (12)

Blairvaddach is a Local Authority outdoor centre in the West Highlands of Scotland completely geared to working with adolescents and adults. It was a rather bemused centre staff, therefore, who found themselves one snowy weekend at the end of January playing host to twelve Moorpark families intent on a course on leadership training.

Rather than lecture on the qualities required of a good leader I had looked for an outstanding example for them to meet and had found it in Peter Scoles - the man who had built up the Dolphin Arts Centre in Glasgow. The plan was for the trainee leaders to remain with their own children on Saturday and have the experience of Peter's leadership throughout the day. Sunday was to begin with small groups of adults who had similar specialisms such

# A residential experience

Out on the hills  
and shore looking  
for 'junk'.



Peter in his silver  
'wellie boots'  
taught us how to  
set up a display.



Active learning  
was happening  
all round the room.



as crafts, games etc. In this setting the parents would reflect on Peter's leadership and try to identify the qualities and processes which had contributed to the success of Saturday's events. The final step was for the parents to try to incorporate these leadership skills into the session they would lead during the rest of Sunday.

Peter in his silver wellie boots was something of a Pied Piper. He could inspire, enthral and lead with what seemed to be a personal, charismatic gift. But, questioned about the pattern of activities he had set up, he turned out to have very clear, well thought out reasons for his choices. On Saturday morning as soon as each family had been allocated one or more 'cabins' - small rooms with bunk beds - as their base for the two days, Peter had us out on the hills and shore looking for 'junk'. When we returned he taught us how to set up a display, mesmerising us with his ability to create an atmosphere from a big lump of quartz picked up by one of the children but now resting on velvet and moving round slowly on a turntable while a small spotlight gave it radiance and our minds were lulled by soft background music.

'An exhibition in the large hall' Peter had decreed.  
'There will be a formal opening after the evening meal.'

Straight after lunch groups set to work to arrange 'stalls'. An official photographer from Strathclyde Region had agreed to join us for the two days and he gave us excellent records of the effect of Peter's magic. One shot in particular summed up the feeling. Donna, with an unemployed youth on one side of her and a Primary teacher on the other, was reaching up to put the finishing touch to their display. Their faces show total absorption in their masterpiece - which consisted of an upturned bucket, a piece of bracken and on top a delicately poised fish tail picked up on the shore!

Over the stalls hung life size 'portraits' of the stall holders. Their creation had been an interesting experience, caught, once more, by the camera. The families had gathered in the big lounge after the junk collecting session and seemed to me to be happy and relaxed as they smiled and talked. 'Look how tense they are' said Peter quietly. Noting the smiling faces all round I responded with amazement. 'Their arms' said Peter. 'Look at their arms. They are all sitting very stiffly because they have taken on the totally new experience of all living under the same roof this one night and they feel unsure about it.' As he spoke he caused the situation to change completely. A simple demonstration and some good group work skills and people were laughingly drawing round a family volunteer who lay

stretched out on large sheets of paper on the floor. The end result made the exhibition room impressive. But it was not until I saw the photographs the following week that I saw the truth of Peter's observation and so learned a little more about the hidden elements within any group experience.

The next day we reflected on what we had learned from Peter about leadership. Then it was the participants turn to demonstrate leadership in their chosen areas of interest. Parachute games were still a very new idea at that time but here was a confident lively Harry organizing us all to play a game with an old parachute donated by the R.A.F. - after much persuasion. As he kept control of the whole group, bending the rules to fit the littlest ones without losing the attention of the teenagers, I thought about the Harry I had first met when he was dragging his feet unwillingly to the nursery school dining room for the Project's first Halloween Party.

It was a great joy to look round this room and recall the journey each one had made to this point. Miriam was at this residential course. She was the mother who had first become interested in our ideas when she was invited to join the summer play activities organized on the pathway to the communal dustbins. Janet was there with

her three boys and her new baby. Tom and Sheila were there, confidently discussing the next stage of the Neighbourhood Education Worker's course due to start the following week. Each one there was exhibiting quite unconsciously a whole range of personal qualities and skills which had lain hidden and untapped in the past. Although the Family Nights were set up for the children's benefit, the Neighbourhood Education Workers course was centred on the parents. This adult course was beginning to show some striking results.

The best surprise of all was Anna whose earlier awakening to her own potential was recalled in Chapter 4. Everyone had been asked to bring materials to help them lead a session. Anna and Agnes who were both helping in the library brought a selection of books about the seashore and the countryside. When I visited their planning session I was keen to point out that one of their books had illustrations of different kinds of fish tails. 'You could put that near Donna's display', I said 'and maybe find things to put on other tables.' I was surprised to be put off with a comment which amounted to: 'We'll consider your suggestion, but we will not just swallow it whole. We will incorporate it in our own plans.' Sometime later when it was their turn to lead they asked us all to return to the exhibition hall. In the centre they had set up a book stall with many books attractively

opened at relevant illustrations. I saw my fish tail picture. But I also saw a whole family involved in making the information their own. 'There's our fish tail in that book!' said one. 'No it's not. Well let's take it over and compare it.' This kind of active learning was happening all round the room. I mused ruefully that but for Anna and Agnes's independence I would have made that whole occasion passive by completing the links between the books and the exhibits! Anna and Agnes were obviously more committed to the learning theories I preached than I was myself!

Forty six of us tumbled onto the coach that Sunday afternoon in January and returned to Glasgow a little earlier than planned because heavy clouds hung over the hills ready to pour down a further shower of snow. Our first residential course had been a great success. Yet heavy clouds hung over the Project too. The three years of Urban Aid would come to an end in June and it was not at all clear what would happen next.

## CHAPTER 8

### NOTES

- 1 T078, 1 (12 October 1977).
- 2 T085, 3ff (30 November 1977).
- 3 T086, 13 (December 1977).
- 4 T086, 9 (December 1977).
- 5 T067, 9 (25 May 1977).
- 6 T089, 1 (15 February 1978).
- 7 BM17 (October 1978).
- 8 T099, 3 (3 May 1978).
- 9 M. Donaldson Children's Minds, Glasgow, 1978.
- 10 T059, 12 and passim (23 February 1977).
- 11 BM19 (December 1978).

## The Watershed

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**Storm brews  
over 'Wine  
Alley'  
project**

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## CHAPTER 9

### THE WATERSHED

The end of January 1979 came. Urban Aid funding, on which the whole practical work depended, would cease in five months time and there were no signs of any Local Authority plans for continuity, apart from a condescending suggestion that I might personally remain in Govan as some kind of local do-gooder. Over my head I discerned faint signs of manoeuvres and counter-manoevres but, apart from presenting my viewpoint in writing, I had no access to these policy discussions. In fact, I knew nothing at all about the world of politics and administration and naively presumed that elected members and officials were there just to make life get better all the time for the people of Glasgow by swiftly implementing improvements in services.

So, trusting that everyone involved shared my priorities and that all I had to do to correct misapprehensions was to commit my plans carefully to paper (1), I remained immersed in the practical realities. But time was ticking by and the nagging problem of continuity was assuming serious proportions.

Meanwhile the local Govan paper highlighted the library which stood at the centre of our work.



*STV News presenter John Toye chats to Mrs. Elizabeth Murray, the 1000th member of Moorpark Community Library. Photo: Courtesy Govan Press.*

## **1000th Member for Community Library**

The community library at 15 Orton Street, Moorpark, Govan, marked the latest milestone in its development on Thursday, 18 January, with an informal presentation to its 1000th member.

She is Mrs. Elizabeth Murray of 4 Kellas Street, who was presented with the complete works of her favorite author, Agatha Christie, by Mr. John Toye, the STV news presenter.

A few days later Scottish Television presented a comprehensive picture of our attempts (2) to improve the education of children through building on the interaction already present within a family. They showed a group of parents enjoying an entertaining approach to the

understanding of how children learn to read. There were also Family Night scenes in which recreational activities were shared by adults and children. First steps in formal committee structures were illustrated as well as informal discussions in which local men and women spoke their minds about the ideas and activities of the Project as they had encountered them in their own lives. For the first time the public was able to see an overview of what we were about.

It was five years since I had knocked on Maisie's door in Wine Alley and asked her if she would help me try out a little seed of an idea. Now I began to relax in the glow of this first public harvest. All the efforts had been worthwhile both for the practical results they had brought locally and for the clarification of the ideas which should eventually become useful within the whole educational system.

As I planned the next stage of the work, it seemed to me that my simple idea of introducing parents to the concept of cognitive stimulation through adult/child verbal interaction, coupled with widening experience within a new structure of parent/professional partnership, had created ripples like a stone dropped into a pool of water. The first tiny ring (1974-76) had only encircled Maisie's home. Urban Aid (1976-79) had allowed these

ideas to reach a wider circle, Moorpark Estate. This too was now too small. The next ring should take in the whole East Govan area, served by the two Primary schools already slightly involved.

It all seemed so obvious to me, committed as I was to single-minded pursuit of this vision, that I was puzzled when politicians, Education officials and H.M.I.s met as a Steering Committee and received my proposals for the next stage in a seemingly detached fashion without giving the matter a great deal of attention. People seemed to be talking about the whole project as if it had been some kind of "one-off" theatrical production; interesting, even memorable - but completed. Continuity seemed an incomprehensible concept. The idea of an immediate use for the whole complex interactive process, improved and expanded now through what had been learned, met only blank stares. Urban Aid had been granted by Central Government to Strathclyde Region for a three-year phase and as that span ended people were moving on to other things.

Why could so few see that, far from ending, it was all just beginning at a new level! We had only done enough preliminary work to begin the major pilot scheme. No one even argued. There was nothing to say, it seemed. The message appeared to be that if they shut their eyes long

enough the funding would end and then I must surely go away! I felt like a voice crying in the wilderness.

Then from Moorpark itself opposition erupted like the explosion of an unexpected bomb. February 12th Evening Times carried the article -

# Storm brews over 'Wine Alley' project

AN educational project in Govan's notorious "Wine Alley" has come under fire from local residents.

The Moorpark Tenants Association has claimed that the project, operating from a council flat in Orton Street, is a waste of ratepayers' money.

It was difficult to gauge the size of the blast. Councillors from both Region and District were asked to make public statements on the issue. Accusation and counter accusation were hurled by Moorpark residents at one another.

Davie, a local boy who had a Youth Opportunity job in my office came in with the latest news. 'They've got a petition going in the Tenants' Hall. They're asking everyone to sign it.' 'What does it say?' 'We, the residents of Moorpark wish the library at 15 Orton Street to be closed when the Govan Project ends in June.' 'Are there many signatures to it?' 'Not many yet - just some of the Tenants Hall Committee. But they're leaving it out and asking everyone who comes in to sign it.'

What could we do? What should we do? The fears of the Tenants' Hall Committee had seemed to be about the project's work encroaching on the hall's space. But maybe we were mistaken about local involvement in our work and there was some other more serious cause for this negative response. How could we possibly know what the people in Moorpark really thought? 'A counter petition?' suggested Davie. That was it! The identical format but with the opposite message! Spurred on by our approval the seventeen year old drew up his counter-petition.

'We, the residents of Moorpark wish the flat at 15 Orton Street to continue to be used as a library when the Govan Project ends in June.'

What would we do with it now. It was no use keeping it in the office. 'I'll go over to the library and see who is there' Davie said. 'Maybe some people would want to sign it.'

The office work went on. I was immersed in reports for College students on placement with us and preparation for the next session of the Neighbourhood Education Workers Course. I heard nothing from the library or anywhere else. But feelings were running high in Moorpark. Encouraged by the reception he received in the library, Davie was now offering to take his petition round the doors. This action proved to be the needed catalyst. Suddenly the little group following the Neighbourhood Education Workers course became a Council of War planning strategies and appreciating the need for a structured approach. Until this point their only action had been to tell one another over and over again what was wrong. Now they were ready to plan carefully and take responsibility for action. Even at this critical moment I found myself reflecting on the effect that a real life situation was having on skills and judgements which had gradually been building up and now began to crystallize and produce

results.

Moorpark has 516 homes in it. These were divided into small sections and taken on by volunteers with Harry co-ordinating the responses. This first attempt at organization was a bit ragged. But even so, before the end of the week 450 people had signed the petition asking for the library to remain.

What should we do with it now? The newspaper which had triggered off the conflict had moved on to different news and would not consider it. What about the Councillors? Had they not already been given the negative view? The petition was photocopied and delivered to both District and Regional Councillors in record time.

The local Regional Councillor was now faced with a dilemma. She had approached her colleagues responsible for Education and asked for a response to the accusation that this Project in her area was a waste of public money. Now she had hundreds of signatures opposing that view. She decided to hold a public meeting and since this Urban Aid phase of the work was the responsibility of a Steering Committee, she called on those Regional Councillors and their Education Department Senior Officials who were members of this Committee to attend her meeting.

This new pressure on the Steering Committee brought two realities together in my mind for the first time. In December 1975 I had presented to the Steering Committee my plan for a co-ordinated educational environment for the child in a paper called 'Total Education'. Though it was accepted on the surface, behind the scene there had been an attempt to have the Urban Aid submission altered to the provision only of remedial teachers. Fortunately I had discovered this plot and had been able to counteract it in the nick of time so that funding was allocated for my original plan. Now I realised that the lack of interest at the Steering Committee in my further plans in 1979 stemmed from the fact that some views on the committee had not changed. The assumption remained that the school was the only real educational factor and that all the work in the project library and the local community was an unimportant frill. In requesting the presence of two members of the Education Committee and two Education Officials at her meeting, the local Councillor was causing this view to be questioned, for now they had to listen to the judgement of the people. This decision to try to find the truth of the matter in one small area of the city was to have a dramatic effect on the future of home/school/community work in Glasgow.

Everything hung, not on the fruits of international

research, nor on carefully argued recommendations, but on what the people who were supposed to benefit had to say about the service they had received. The Education Department had made the point to the Councillor that our work was with families to support the children's education. She would ask the parents if it was successful. She did not want to know what we, the professionals, thought we were doing. It was the opinion of the local people whom she represented that mattered. The meeting was scheduled for March 6th. (4)

If there were some elected members who really wanted to do nothing more in Govan they might soon be able to do that with clear consciences. For the local people could only get a positive response to their petition on condition that they turned up to the meeting and then were able to articulate their conclusions concisely and clearly.

That was the challenge. We had six days to prepare our case. The timescale in this teacup storm had one advantage. We had some real hope of reaching the truth, since only those concepts deeply imbedded in people's feelings and thoughts could be sustained in the cut and thrust of such an 'instant' public meeting.

But would any local people be present? Public Meetings

like Schools Councils rarely drew their members from Moorpark. Supposing they did attend, how would they make their points to the four very different members of the formidable platform party which would confront them? I was not permitted to be present at the meeting, but if my role of informal educator to Moorpark parents meant anything, the preparation of those who would be present was surely my most important current task.

We tried role play. In a popular TV 'problem' series the anomalies in costs and conditions of Rail transport had recently been raised. This offered something of a parallel situation. Students and YDP workers acted out an imaginary rail problem, taking care to show throughout what kind of issues should be addressed to officials and which to Elected Members.

I tried to apply what had been learned from this to our educational situation. At the same time I was anxious that the parents would see the platform party not as distant critics but as human beings interested in the people of Govan. My efforts in this latter direction may have been a little too enthusiastic, for the subsequent report made it clear that some senior officials were hailed warmly on first name terms as they entered the hall!

There were other issues to be considered in the preparation.

When everyone was clear and comfortable about the scope and membership of the platform party the content of the meeting became the crucial subject. An argument about the location of a small library had created this public forum in which the local people could place a whole range of issues before the decision makers.

What did the parents want when the three years of Urban Aid ended? Analysing the work into clearly discernible pieces which would be both meaningful to the local people and fit into categories recognisable to the Steering Committee members, was a major undertaking. Various preliminary discussions had taken place already, since consultation had been part of an ongoing process in the neighbourhood for some months. But previously the reports had been written up by an interviewer who first selected the questions and then tried to interpret the answers.

This time the local people must formulate the ideas. We talked through the issues using a paper (5) 'Ideas Behind the Project' which I had circulated. Gradually various people took on responsibility for presenting particular points which mattered to them.

On the evening of March 6th the rain stopped at just the right moment for the local organisers to marshall their

friends and neighbours. At tenement openings and street corners a surprisingly large group had gathered. There were a number of reasons for this. Various individuals and small groups regretted the immanent end of Family Nights, Parents Groups, the Toy Library and the link teachers' work and the little library was of real interest to many people although they might not have fought for it by themselves. All these people responded to the organised effort of the little group learning to become Neighbourhood Education Workers and agreed to take part in a concerted effort. Summoned by Harry and the other trainee leaders, they crossed the main road which divided Moorpark from the rest of Govan and gradually assembled in the school hall.

Invitations to the meeting had only gone out to families with children at the local Primary schools but, understandably, those who opposed the Project wished to be heard and defiantly turned up to occupy the hall's back row.

The little leadership group which had been alerted to the very positive possibilities which this meeting presented and who had prepared their case carefully, walked confidently to the front seats.

As the official party entered they were surprised to be greeted as if the local group had called the meeting and were now the hosts. 'I'm Tom Ford. I'm doing a course with the Project. Are you a Councillor or from the Education

Department?' The official who was incautious enough to include his first name as he responded in surprise to this greeting found himself addressed as 'Philip' from then on!

All this I heard afterwards, since I was not allowed to attend the meeting. Instead I waited anxiously in the Project library, tape recorder at the ready, for the participants to return. An hour or so later the first teenagers ran up the stairs followed closely by members of the little planning group. I switched on the tape and began to describe the scene before me. (6)

DOREEN: This is the beginning of people coming back from the Public Meeting, delighted with what happened. General noise, excited voices, doors banging. Can I have some of the detail of what happened? What did you say?

LIZ: It went in our favour. I was talking to that Director of Education, Doreen, at the end, and I said to him, 'You were asking why there was such a good turn-out? You were really surprised' I said, 'Well we were under the impression the library was getting shut down, so that's why.' I said, 'We're ready to fight for it.'

Do you know what that Director of Education said? He said, 'If your door is open for education, the only one that can close it shut is yourself.' I

said, 'Well there's no way that's going to happen.' I mean it really did go in our favour.

MOLLY: We've never seen, you know, people so high up interested in weans. To me, see the likes o' people like that - my earlier impression was they didnae want to know us. I thought that us - we were just a bit of dirt. They didnae want to know anything about us. They've got money - we're nothing. But I got found oot wrang there. They were really interested.

HARRY: Well I'll tell you. They got a shock as well because they'd never met us before. They were surprised at us being ready to give them our ideas right away.

SHEILA: It did go great really!

TOM: That other Councillor says to me he was pleased to see fathers. He doesnae see them in his area. And he also said that when the Project was getting started he was against it.

Early the next morning that surprised Councillor from the Steering Committee phoned me to express his first reactions.

My hastily jotted notes (7) from that phone call read :

'I liked the turnout. The content was very good. I was aware of particular items that were being requested, the library, home visiting teachers and the family workshop.

Those who were opposing the work have horizons at their feet. I lectured the chairman of the Tenants' Hall for daring to say he spoke for 90%. He may represent them in one capacity but he doesn't speak for them. He should be looking at the best interests of the community and the most exciting aspect was the library. Certainly we will retain the library, not in the house, but maybe in Broomloan School Building. They were very articulate especially some of the "faithers". It is an achievement to have men involved.'

The Local Govan Councillor's comments were equally as positive as my notes of her phone message show.

'The Councillor felt that the members of the Steering Committee who were present must have been very impressed by the meeting. There were about 60 people present. She had asked for this to be the local people's meeting, not taken up by official speeches. This had happened; people spoke up right away. The comments by Tenants' Committee members were allowed briefly, but only where they touched Project matters. Digressions were not permitted. The Councillor felt that there were sincere and genuine ideas coming up from the local people. It was a pleasure to attend such a positive meeting when so many are all about complaints. She noted that "even lassies of about twelve" were sitting quietly attending to the meeting. Parents had given clear examples of

improvements in their children through the Project. Janet's story of her son Ernie was remembered particularly. Out of the meeting had come a clear indication that the library was wanted, as were home/school links.'

The presence of a small library in a Council flat had sparked off this public meeting but, by the local people's planned response, it had served to bring the whole continuity crisis dramatically before influential members of the Steering Committee. They had received a clear demonstration of the educational effects of our work on the local adults and I was so delighted that I could not see how partial and biased was the official response. Disappointing practical outcomes were later to send me back to the transcripts to look for clues. It was then immediately obvious from these records that the Councillors and officials could only hear with any conviction those elements of the work which they could visualise in terms of the one educational thing they knew - school. So they could hear 'home/school links' and - particularly because of the origin of this meeting - they could hear 'library'. But the parents version of the meeting shows that they were at pains to request continuing support for more informal aspects of the project - Family Nights, which required Community Education involvement, and underfives work in the

neighbourhood. It had seemed to them at the time that the platform party had taken note of these points. Time was to tell a different story.

The tape recording taken immediately after the meeting shows the seeds of the problem. (8)

TOM: Their opinion is that most of the things there are necessary. What they say is if they get the library and they get the school links they are the two main things and they get the pre-school - talk to Education Officer himself on any other problem. He says to phone up and let him know about it, see what he can do about it!

SHEILA: See, I kept on - I said 'There's not two main things, it's three. There's the pre-school, the home link and the Family Workshop.' I said, 'Most important is the family workshop and the home school link. Because the pre-school could follow after that, I mean - We could run that ourselves.' I think they were all mesmerised because we said that we were doing a course and all the different things, you know. They think that we're doing nothing - we just go to a meeting and sit and do nothing.

DOREEN: What did you say Marie. I believe you said your bit.

MARIE: They said there is a possibility of getting these premises.

LIZ: We said, 'Couldn't we have more facilities because, I mean, there's too many people using that one room.'

MOLLY: We said we were desperate for premises! And I put in that the Tenants' Hall in Moorpark would be too small for the Family Workshop as there's about sixty or seventy children come on a Tuesday night and so many adults that you had to have different space for each - doing candle-making, the painting the the papier-mache.

HARRY: I mentioned Family Workshops too. I said a Family Workshop is an education and a way of getting other parents talking to other kids, getting other ideas, and that's all part of education, and Margaret backed that up. I'm quite sure they'll go on there to fight for Family Workshops.

TOM: And then I put in a bit about us doing the Neighbourhood Education Workers course and the certificate, you know, and that if the Project did cease we would be prepared to take it on ourselves as we're doing this course.

DOREEN: And what did they say to that?

HARRY: I think they were all for us.

But there was not to be support in any substantial form for the Family Night or Workshop idea. It did not fit into the already settled pigeon holes of youth work or adult work in Community Education budget terms. Family Nights, by bringing adults and children together caused an administrative problem which was not even to be considered seriously until 1986. In the aftermath of that public meeting I also became aware of a deeper conceptual problem which has continued to puzzle me in various forms.

How could the Councillors and officials miss the informal educational element of the work despite being delighted by the public meeting at which such clear statements were made? (9) One stumbling block I had not appreciated was at the unseen level of assumptions. For many people education is viewed completely in administrative and professional terms. There is no accepted vision of the children's perspective which does not have an arbitrary division of life into a specialized learning section for six hours spent on 200 days of each year with a professional educator and the rest of life spent with a variety of people. Some relic of having fought to bring schooling within the reach of all seems to incapacitate adults from attaching the label 'education' to anything taught by word, example or experience if it happens before 9.00 a.m. or after 4 o'clock and is not initiated

by a certificate holder.

In setting up an educational project which appreciated the significance of the continuous educational net in which children are enmeshed throughout their lives, we were presuming it was easy for responsible people to expand their older blinkered view and take this opportunity to try out a service in a limited area which allowed every significant adult in the children's learning environment to combine their strengths and knowledge. This was not the case. I had not worked hard enough at raising awareness but presumed that a co-ordinated view of education was self evident when this was, at that time, only true for those free and secure enough to take their feet off the bottom and try it.

Yet some kind of breakthrough at least at gut level seemed to have been reached at that public meeting. (10)

LIZ: Janet talked about her boy Ernie. He was eight when the Project started and he couldn't do a thing. He got one hundred sums marked wrong and he couldn't even spell 'and'.

HARRY: Now he's come on tremendously.

DOREEN: She stood up and said that?

HARRY: Yes. She didnae need to say it. But she got so worked up in case they weren't going to understand what it meant to us that she just told them her whole story.

Janet's highly emotional tale created more awareness of the value of home/school links than any of the reasoned well researched arguments I had offered for years. I was to hear references to her story from the whole platform party. The other major impression from the meeting was the composure and competence of the local speakers, a fact which quickly led to an appreciation that serious development courses were behind this success.

MOLLY: I didn't know that they'd seen some of our library and home/school rooms upstairs and all that. I said 'Excuse me, I'd like to get a wee bit in. I don't know whether you have seen any of our work during the last two years. The slides and films and all that. I think that it would be good to see how we've developed' - And he said 'We've already seen that.' I said 'I'm talking about the pantomime - you know, all the new things....'

HARRY: We werenae anxious or anything. We got our points over and I think we won those points. And

I think it's going to go for us. They were delighted. Before that, one Councillor went on about the good numbers. he said, 'I go to meetings. I'm not used to people sitting in these front two rows. They never sit in front. but here it is different.' He says 'Mothers, fathers, kids, everybody interested in it.'

We basked in the success of that meeting and I thought that those who attended would see the significance of the Interim Report of 1978 where I had described in detail the educational work we were building up in the neighbourhood. But there was no message to them about essential elements. All that had happened was that the public meeting had made it a little clearer to a few Councillors and a couple of officials that the Project had really affected the lives of a little inner city community. The precise educational nature of that effect was not at all clear and so the number and type of staffing necessary for continuity and for inservice was equally obscure.

Completely missing this reality I continued confidently to draw up detailed plans for turning the Project Offices into a fieldwork training unit for professionals throughout the city who wished to use our home/school/community link ideas in their own area. The

concept of such a unit came from a Strathclyde Regional Council document, the Worthington Report, so I expected no problems in implementing this proposal. At the same time the new centre would continue to support the local work both for the sake of the people in Govan and as an ongoing example and practical training opportunity for professionals and local leaders from elsewhere in the city. In the time honoured pattern of communication from the bottom up, I presented my suggestions and stood aside humbly waiting for the oracle to pronounce judgement.

Gradually word filtered down. There would be no fieldwork centre nor would co-ordinated organization be set up. Instead there would a Home and School Co-ordinator for the city based in the old project offices - without any staff. (11) An amendment to that allowed a teacher/literacy worker to be attached to the now reprieved library and support the ever faithful Anna who was being paid at that point by the Wates Foundation as a library helper. As usual, I was expecting too much too soon. A service which co-ordinated the total educational environment of a child was not even on the horizon of the decision makers.

As a round of 'End of Project Events' began in Govan my reflection notes for July 1979 read:

'The Project has now ended. Perhaps the most obvious

feature at this point is that no member of the team has a job except one teacher, Teresa, who has gone back into the classroom.'

This situation was made worse by a printers' strike which meant that even the two jobs of co-ordinator and teacher/literacy worker were not yet advertised. Like the rest of the team, I too could not be sure of a job in the autumn. The local people's response was one of resignation. To those with the expectation of nothing, the promise of so little was not a surprise.

The July notes end with a brief indication of work gently coming to rest, awaiting new life. 'At this moment the centre is clean, tidy and empty.' Yet there were some positive features. The project premises were to be retained, a permanent foothold, however small, had been gained in 'the system' and at least one Councillor and one official had publicly declared their interest and support. The project offices lay bare like a field in winter, yet there was an expectation of spring and with that new life would come too a marked difference in my work emphasis. I had learned now a number of important lessons about how inner city parents could and would affect their children's learning capacity, given a helpful relationship with professional educators. But I had learned, painfully, that there was little hope of

parents being given this chance unless changes were made in 'the system' as well as in the locality. So I was ready now to find ways of working with professionals too.

## CHAPTER 9

### NOTES

1 BM18, 1ff (30 November 1978).

2 This television presentation was the opening programme (29 January 1979) in an eight part series entitled Home and School.

3 BM21, 1 (19 January 1979). See also BM16, 1ff (30 May 1978).

4 BM23, 1 (1 March 1979).

5 R31, 1ff (February 1979).

6 T110, 1 and passim (6 March 1979).

7 R32, 1 (7 March 1979). See also BM21, 1ff (8 March 1979).

8 T110, 8ff (6 March 1979).

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6 T110, 1 and passim (6 March 1979).

7 R32, 1 (7 March 1979). See also BM21, 1ff (8 March 1979).

8 T110, 8ff (6 March 1979).

9           BM25, 1 (April 1979). This recommendation to the Regional Education Committee from the Director of Education specifically lists the parents' enthusiasm for the work which had led to 'several persons gaining certificates as part-time leaders of education.' This was noted as one of the aspects of the project that had been most successful. But the recommended staffing did not include this work!

10           T110, 10 (6 March 1979).

11           Minutes of the Strathclyde Regional Council Education Committee, Point 774 (16 May 1979).

12           R36, 1 and passim (July 1979).

## Uneasy Partners



Receiving the course certificate: a totally new experience.

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## CHAPTER 10

### UNEASY PARTNERS

I was in limbo. The Govan Project had ended in the summer of 1979 and the Home & School Centre which was to grow from it had not yet been set up. In this hiatus I flew to the United States to catch up on three research projects which had already influenced my action through their connection with three dominant themes in all the work we had built up: the place of parents in education, the complementary contribution of different educational agencies and the central importance of some particular forms of language and thought.

I had met Earl Schaefer some years previously (1) and my first stop was the University of North Carolina to update my understanding of his parent involvement studies and to meet some of his colleagues in related fields. In Philadelphia I met Thomas McNamara the manager of the city's Early Childhood evaluation team (2) and learned what they had discovered from trying out examples of each of the main intervention models in different parts of the city at the same time. Finally I took part in an International High/Scope conference (3) in Michigan to celebrate the Year of the Child. David Weikart and his colleagues had unconsciously affected the lives of people

in Wine Alley by their writings on stimulating children's intelligence through a creative pattern of adult/child interaction. This fact brought me to their conference. While there, an enlightening presentation on research and development widened my interest. A chain of events was to allow me to introduce this source of information and support to Strathclyde and incidentally to gain invaluable help over a number of years from Terry Bond, then High/Scope's head of research. But at that moment as we stood among the potted palms of an American Conference Centre and explored the possibility of such links, the Glasgow work I talked about only existed in my mind - and I did not even have a job!

Some time after I returned to Glasgow I became the city's Home & School Co-ordinator. The post carried the imposing if vague remit (4) of developing home/school links as a professional skill not only with Govan teachers but with other teachers in similar posts in the city. The job description said I was to provide a co-ordinated approach and mount inservice training. It was authorization to offer schools in the city the fruits of the past five years of work in Govan. That was an exciting prospect though one full of problems. The first being that I was not invited to offer inservice support to any educators other than teachers. A reminder of my failure in all these years to make the smallest dent in

the assumption that education equalled schooling. Performing the one sided miracle of providing a co-ordinated approach single handed - as the lack of staffing or strong links to other educational agencies indicated - would not happen overnight, so I turned with relief to the second section of the job description. Almost as a personal favour, I was also to be permitted to continue to co-ordinate the intricate many-sided work already set up in Govan; though how this too was to be achieved without appropriate staff was not indicated. Alan, a former home/school link teacher in the Urban Aid project had obtained the only other appointment, that of teacher/literacy worker supporting the little library. Apart from office and library back-up staff, who were approved but not appointed until the next financial year, no other workers were to be employed by the Local Authority in the Home & School Centre.

It felt odd to belong to a tiny team of two. Alan took to buying a newspaper and disappearing behind it during the lengthy pauses which punctuated our attempts at lunchtime chat. After all the life we had been able to bring to the area in the Urban Aid phase, our new presence in the neighbourhood was like the tip of a snowdrop emerging into a still and barren landscape. I was thrust back into memories of the starting point five years previously when I had begun from the pavement and

tried to share my ideas with parents through the open window of their flat. Remembering the steady progress through work in Maisie and Hettie's homes to the Project library which was still there ready to offer us a restarting point, my heart reassured me that new growth was possible. It only needed the courage to begin again.

The vision of future possibilities made us both stretch forward. For, tiny though our unit was, we had now a permanent foothold in the system. The Home and School Centre, as I grandly headed the notepaper, might be no more than four creaking classrooms at the top of an 1876 school building, unchanged from a few months previously when they had been called the Project offices, but it was not the same thing. For now it was a permanent base for the work I had been nurturing so long. The seed had taken root in the Local Authority's educational system. More like wild grass that grows out of some unconsidered crack than an important acquisition cherished at the centre of a garden, still it was securely planted. It was up to me to tend it and make it flourish.

I had been given a free hand to map out a future for home/school/community links in Glasgow. It was an exhilarating yet sobering thought. Whatever I started now would build up its own momentum and if I chose the wrong path I might not find that out until it was too

late to change course. Cautiously I began rehearsing to myself how I had come to this point and what now seemed to be the essential components in a strategy of co-ordinated education.

In 1974 I had arrived in Wine Alley with a headful of theories based on educational research findings from Europe, U.S.A., South America and Russia. I had the simple idea that this combined information might contribute to a solution for the widespread problem of the failure of Western society's schools to educate successfully large sections of their pupils who lived in low income areas. Research was showing that many of these pupils who found no success in the system were as intelligent as those who went on to higher education. Learned journals propounded separate answers to different aspects of the problem. It seemed like a good idea to bring these partial solutions together and try them out as a co-ordinated whole.

Seasoning my selected pieces of research with some theory about the way in which any change is usually brought about, (5) I had knocked on doors in Wine Alley and asked the parents if I could learn from them how these ideas stood up when mixed with real life and everyday learning. At that stage I had no preconceived notions about which professional workers in education should

become involved or adapt their practice. I was prepared to take on whatever roles seemed appropriate in order to turn all this theory into practice.

Six years later as the Home and School Centre opened its doors two organisational points had become clearer.

The educational activities which turned out to be most significant in co-ordinating the daylong world of education for children could all be accommodated within a co-operative pattern of the family and four already established groups of educational workers: teachers, librarians, Community Education and Underfives personnel.

Among them, these were the people who should be partnering parents in the process of successful education.

The second very simple point was that no attempt to improve education for children could work if the children themselves could not make sense of it. New measures had to be consistent, from the children's perspective, or they could not respond with assurance. If children spent part of their day in one situation which demanded a 'sit up and shut up' response and in another where there was a willingness to interact creatively, children withdrew from such confusion either by adopting one method and ignoring the other or by refusing to co-operate at all.

The simple solution of bringing all significant adults together to agree on an approach and to learn some of the vital information which research could now offer on the connection between language, learning and power had seemed blindingly obvious to me but had proved immensely difficult in practice.

There was no problem in interesting parents in co-operation but it was clear from the Home and School Centre's staffing that the administrators were not able to move their categories to accommodate these ideas. Professional groups seemed to value their autonomy so much above the possibility of increased success that without positive leadership from the administration, the ideas could not even be tried out on a voluntary basis with mainline staff from the four appropriate educational agencies. If the children round about the Home and School Centre were going to have the chance of hearing a consistent educational message from parents and professionals and if practice was going to take account of research information, we would have to provide all the professional workers ourselves from the Home and School Centre and set up a demonstration.

Apart from Alan and myself only one element of the Urban Aid project staffing had survived, and this without any formal links with the new Home and School Centre. The

two local Primary schools had been offered home/school link teachers, and at that point one school had accepted.

This staffing emphasis on schools, unconnected with any other educational department let alone parents organisations, was in keeping with the prevalent viewpoint that home-school links were a matter entirely for schools. That the home and its local community might also have a leading role in this partnership, or that Community Education and the various underfives services might have a contribution to make, were incomprehensible concepts. There was no appointment or support for Family Nights or the emerging Neighbourhood Education Workers course, neither was there anyone to take up work with underfives. Unless I could find some other source of staff, Alan and I would have to wear many different hats for I was quite sure that the Home and School Centre was going to take the home seriously and that meant, for me, providing professional informal support within the community.

The five previous years had taught me that children's education was doomed to failure if attention only began at 5 years of age and was confined to the schools. There was a disturbing phrase often used at that time by those advocating education for underfives. 'If at first you don't succeed - you don't succeed.' I was well aware of this reality and convinced that educational success had

its centre in the family, my first priority was to find a way of obtaining educational support for parents of very young children. That search led me into the labyrinths of 'job creation' and the criteria set by the Manpower Services Commission. I emerged eventually with a qualified and enthusiastic Underfives worker, Caroline who, for the next five years, would extend and consolidate Underfives work in the neighbourhood.

The community also needed a worker to support the Family Nights, those adult/child leisure activities which had a thought-stimulating content. This person might have come from Community Education, but that service was still struggling to find its identity within youth work and adult leisure classes and did not seem able to envisage adults and children together. The absence of a Community Education worker in the new team was ironic because the parents' groups Kathy and I had begun and the very alive pilot Neighbourhood Education Workers course were easily the most successful work we had produced during the Urban Aid phase. I had to find a qualified worker to build on this successful start. Since the Local Authority was not to supply one, I would look elsewhere for support. In the appointment of Caroline the Underfives worker, I had begun my apprenticeship in how to help funding agencies feel our work was worthy of their interest. I turned now to the Wates Foundation, who had already shown a slight

interest, to ask for the much needed community worker.

Sir John and Lady Morton came from London to visit us on behalf of the Foundation. They had recently returned from diplomatic service in Africa and took great interest in all they saw in Govan. I doubt if they had ever seen in all their foreign service anything so delapidated as our setting or so naive as our approach! Content with my old school premises I did not notice the unpainted conditions of the building as I walked these guests round a display of pictures from the Urban Aid phase and enthusiastically explained our work.

Alan and I then proudly showed our visitors a nearby surplus school building, which was in an even worse state of repair than our own. There we were already running Family Nights. This programme could be expanded, we explained, if we could obtain a community worker from Wates. The tour over, we took Sir John and Lady Morton to lunch in the only restaurant in the Govan area at that time, a little back room behind a pub on the ground floor of a mouldering tenement building. The next week Sir John phoned from his London office to say we could have our Wates worker.

Beginning to use this generous three year grant was not a simple matter. Strathclyde Regional Council had first to

consider if it should be accepted at all and various education officials had to make sure their interests were satisfied before Morag, qualified both as a teacher and a community worker, could join our growing team.

While these efforts to build up an appropriate network of professional support for children's day long learning continued, the pantomime season had arrived in Govan and one piece of enjoyable education got under way. About fifteen families gathered with us one grey evening in early November to make a start. They ranged from a shy single parent whose little boy clung to her, to a complex extended family complete with grandma. They all sat on the floor or on the small school chairs left behind in the abandoned classroom of the surplus Victorian school we were allowed to use rent free until its closure, scheduled for the following spring.

The families had previously been invited to search our little library, where Anna now presided as part-time paid assistant, for likely stories for the pantomime and come to the Family Night with their ideas. Three large sheets of paper were pinned on to the wall ready to receive their suggestions. Through the generous flexibility of a local Secondary school and the teacher's own interest in our work, we had obtained the help of a Drama teacher, Barbara. She now led the discussion and I wrote the

suggestions on the papers in large letters.

Contributions were slow in coming. 'Could we have Red Riding Hood?', whispered an earnest little girl. 'No! No! I want Snow White' her cousin pleaded anxiously. A nine year old lad murmured with scorn, 'Can we not have something more for boys - like Robin Hood?' Agnes who had first joined us when we were exploring the idea of a dock visit some three years earlier, was there with her daughter. In her usual unsure fashion she offered a suggestion and immediately discounted her own contribution, 'The Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe? But maybe that would be no good.'

Initially most people sat quietly, offering neither idea nor comment, their interest indicated only by their presence in this unattractive room on this miserable evening. But the papers on the wall were now beginning to show some pattern, as suggestions slowly built up. Barbara, Alan and I had analysed the possibilities at our planning meeting and come to the conclusion that most pantomime stories could be fitted into one of three situations 'princess and castle', 'magic forests' or 'toy shop'. The pantomime only needed 3 scenes, castle, forest and toyshop to accommodate everybody. In this way everyone's contribution could be used, there would be no

wrong answers and even the smallest suggestion would contribute to the whole. The pantomime would really be their own, created from their personal thoughts and words.

As the participants began to see that all suggestions were really welcome and were somehow adding up to a new idea, the chorus of voices grew and everyone joined in - some showing a surprising knowledge of the less well known fairy tales, Rapunzel, Rumpelstiltskin and the like. When the suggestions were complete it was time to look at the categories and offer a lead. 'Couldn't everyone become the person they suggested and let all these different characters share in one story?'

By the end of the discussion that night Cinderella had been selected as the pantomime title. All the other princess-type characters would attend the Prince's Ball and be presented and named. So the little Snow White enthusiast would have her hour and Agnes would find herself on stage as the old woman in the shoe. Even the non-committal dad could become king for a day and preside at the royal ball. Of course the courtier with the glass slipper would seek its owner in the wood and meet Red Riding Hood and Robin Hood and as many Merry Men as the nine year old 'Robin' could muster.

Over the next six weeks adults and children worked together or separated out as seemed appropriate. The ever popular majorettes were invited to entertain Cinderella and her Prince at their wedding, while Harry partnered the drama teacher to create two Ugly Sisters in the best Glasgow Pantomime tradition.

On the surface this was a simple community fun event but embedded in the activity was our basic educational aim of adults and children working together at a task which would sharpen language and thinking skills. Drama is an ideal vehicle for encouraging the ability to analyse ideas and find words which will communicate important points clearly, so the pantomime had no initial script. Instead each group had to work out the messages which they wanted to convey to one another and to the audience.

They had to learn both to express their own message clearly and also to respond to that given by others, whether in a ritual pattern of words or not. Of course Alan as literacy worker was particularly busy in all this, helping people express their ideas fluently as well as assisting in the production of a written script for those who wanted their words eventually written down. This writing process offered security to the anxious even if it did not completely reflect what was actually said on the night! Families from the surrounding flats had gradually joined the 'regulars' from Moorpark in these

Family Nights and had automatically become part of the pantomime cast. During the Urban Aid project we had had difficulty in confining attractive programmes of work to residents of our official project area. Now we were free to widen our scope to people living anywhere in East Govan.

This brought us in touch with a new Tenants' Association which was very involved with old people's welfare and with providing youth clubs for their district and a new, uneasy, local partnership began to emerge. This Association also used the old school building for its activities and feared the influx of Moorpark and all the Family Night activities, but, unsure though they were about us, few people in Glasgow can resist a Christmas pantomime so they eventually joined in with some great song and dance scenes from both their youth organizations and their Pensioners' Club.

Costumes, scenery, a growing participation from the neighbourhood, all this built the pantomime into a memorable event. Yet this moment of high endeavour would pass. There was no permanence, no solid base from which to work for we were merely tolerated in the old school until the date set for its closure. The project flat in Moorpark was much too small for this type of activity. We did not even have a place to store the costumes. The

need for permanent neighbourhood premises was becoming acute.

But where? My eye roamed over the old surplus school as the pantomime rehearsals continued. Dilapidated, with plaster hanging off the walls and water dripping through the hall roof, it still had potential as a base for families to enjoy co-operative leisure activities which could include a whole realm of thought provoking opportunities.

My imagination began to run riot. Here was an ideal setting for the little library which was currently inaccessible to those participants who did not live in Moorpark. Upstairs the Family Nights could have art and drama rooms designed to meet their requirements. I looked at Caroline holding the interest of a group of young mothers and their children and thought how her work with the underfives and their parents could expand in these premises. Ever since the Public Meeting the previous Spring there had been a growing awareness that adult/child activities in the community needed space if they were to flourish. Was this old school that desired space?

Another thought began to emerge. Buildings for public recreational use could be administered in several ways,

but on the whole if they were for educational purposes of any sort, the Community Education Service carried responsibility and involved the local community to varying degrees through a management committee. What if we set this up the opposite way with the local people carrying responsibility and involving Community Education as an important contributory service?

Here was an exciting possibility and one that went to the heart of the educational problem I was trying to address.

The most devastating complaint about the educational system did not concern its exam results but its failure to empower its clients, to equip them with the tools and the self confidence to take on their own lives and that of their society. There was a growing acceptance in educational circles that the Brazilian educator, Freire, was describing our situation in Scotland when he said that the Western system of education was too didactic and likened the teacher in such a system to a kind of bank clerk handing on finished nuggets of information' as if knowledge was a finite, static possession. This kind of teaching caused lifeless conformity and dependancy he argued rather than empowering pupils to begin a creative, dynamic search for solutions to the problems of real life. It was easy to accept his analysis: had we not all been the objects of such a process? But apart from short fun activities I had found it impossible to create

learning situations which sparked off real responsibility and 'ownership' of the search for knowledge.

Now as I looked round this dank, despiriting old school I wondered if I would have the nerve to take on an educational gamble. I knew nothing of what might be needed to bring about the necessary transformation. Would I dare to put my ignorance alongside that of the local people and partner them in a very real piece of learning which might lead us into requiring who-knew-how-many thousand pounds and participation in all kinds of professional and political wrangles?

Supposing I found the nerve, what basis did I have for presuming I might find local partners with sufficient consciousness of the possibilities and sufficient faith in themselves to work with me? My thoughts went first to the little group which had so successfully organized the local response at the March Public Meeting. They seemed likely to have these two qualities. This group had completed their Neighbourhood Education Workers Training course a few weeks after that meeting and we had arranged to have their certificates presented at a small ceremony on May 1st 1979. (6) Their choice of Special Guest was the Senior Education officer who had attended the Public meeting and impressed them by his close attention to their comments. The presentation turned

out to be a warm friendly affair in which the parents, while insisting on describing him as 'that Director of Education', happily addressed him by his first name to the embarrassment of employees to whom he was a rather distant 'boss'. The group had taken this officer and his wife round the old disused school to show him their Family Night activities and talked of their need for premises. Now I would ask them if they would like to join me in trying to take over this huge 1890 establishment.

I had found one possible source of local partners but that was not enough. By the time I was daring to consider such a scheme it was 1980 and some people had been able to use their certificates to obtain local jobs and would not be available to work with me. I had also to remember that the old school was used by a much wider group of people than the original band from Moorpark. In fact by that time a second group representing a wider area was taking the Neighbourhood Education Workers Course. They received their certificates on June 19th 1980 with much more pomp and ceremony than the original pioneers. For a start, the presentation began with a performance from a full brass band! The Home and School Centre's job creation secretary played the trumpet in her free time and kindly brought her entire group to support our event. She went further and obtained the services of

her father, an unemployed ship's caterer, to lay out our home made buffet in impeccable style.

The whole event went off with a solemnity which bordered on the ludicrous. On to a makeshift platform in the bleak unrenovated hall of Summertown Centre, as the old school was now to be called, clambered two senior Education officials, the spokeswoman for the Tenants' Association and Harry, representing the parents. With them were the Community Education Area Officer and myself since we had provided the previous year's course. The seats had been placed in front of what appeared to be a large red curtain but was actually some spare convent bedspreads carefully draped to look continuous. At the platform party's feet was a beautiful floral stage edging, lent free by the Parks Department on the strict understanding that it would be returned the next morning in good time to go to its real destination.

Speeches had been limited to four minutes each, for everyone on the platform had something to say but the audience in holiday mood took it all very lightly. Parents included in their chat a visiting H.M.I., local professionals used the opportunity to have a word with colleagues from further afield and the children tumbled about as they liked. While it all looked cohesive, there were little indications of the gulf between this

educational course for parents and formal school expectations. An obvious example came from one of the officials who was at a loss when his approach to the microphone did not signal total hush. 'Silence!' he barked, like some 'old school' headmaster at assembly 'I must have complete silence!' Sheer amazement gave him an uneasy stillness at least for a moment.

The only times of real concentration came when the names of certificate recipients were called out and local people walked up one side of the hall, across the stage to receive their certificates and be photographed and return to their places in what might be time honoured award fashion, but was a totally new experience for them.

Most of the people receiving certificates on this occasion had only begun to work with us in the previous year. The possibility of putting their new skills to use in the Summertown Centre had inspired much of this interest, including that shown by the presence of two members of the Tenants' Association Committee who had become determined - if somewhat uneasy - members of the group.

Education as empowerment seemed to be taking on some reality as the two successive groups of Neighbourhood Education workers, sixteen in all, posed together for their photograph, flanked by many who had helped with the

# Neighbourhood Education Workers

1979: Mrs Drake presents certificates at the end of the first pilot course.



1980: Two groups pose together with the guests of honour and all who had helped to run the course.



The course was meant to help local adults support creative adult/child leisure pursuits.



course, tutors, students, volunteer staff and the two Education Officers who had graced the certificate presentation ceremony. Here was a sizeable group of emergent educational leaders. In an ideal world such a group could be expected to work together to create Summertown out of the disused school. But the pressure of funding deadlines had meant that a few of us had already banded together and taken a leap in the dark by applying for an Urban Aid grant to renovate the building before this group had completed the course.

Morag, the Wates Worker as she was known in the documents of the period, was a guest at the certificate presentation and I was glad that she would soon be joining the Home and School Centre staff as a Community worker. There was already much to do.

I had started to consider in the previous January how I could help the community take over the building supposing they ever came to a point of wanting to do so.

At that time I had no idea where to begin except by contacting somebody knowledgeable for advice. But who? I toyed with a few possibilities and then dialed a number at Regional Headquarters. At the other end was the young executive who had played the piano at the Halloween Party - was it only three years ago? - and moved on that night to partner a reluctant Harry in organizing one of the

games. He had retained his interest and helped to keep the Chief Executive's Department in touch with our needs as well as our progress. His reward was to be disturbed that morning, and for several subsequent years, by the question 'What do I have to do to take over an old unwanted school building?'

I might have guessed that I was offering to begin a task which would take three years to complete. Would I never learn that progress is a slow laboured affair only to be undertaken by those with commitment and a brave heart? First we had to join up with the Tenants' Association, a risky uncomfortable partnership on both sides, always liable to collapse, bringing joint action to a halt until some peace formula could be found to allow planning to proceed. But though we had completely different perspectives on life, leisure and the use of Summertown Centre, there was a great deal of genuine good will, a growing appreciation of one another and a great shared goal to be achieved.

From my point of view the renovation had to be designed to make the space itself encourage people to try new experiences and move easily into activities enjoyed by adults and children together. Other people's priorities centred round opportunities for Bingo or football. Yet others wanted to know where prams could be kept safely.

Slowly the little joint Management Committee agreed on the allocation of space.

Then we had to communicate these thoughts to the Architects' Department. We were anxious to do this well, for we had heard talk of building changes which did not reflect the users' aspirations. Penetrating the Local Authority's Department of Architecture was an interesting experience for me. The architects probably described these encounters in more colourful language! Our first communication was a drawing, not an architect's blue print to us but a little home made sketch to them with 'pin men' figures drawn into each space. These indicated how each area would be used and what the links would be with other spaces. My diary has an entry for July 25th 1980. 'Met the architects today.'

We began by changing the Victorian entrance to the building which consisted of two dark tunnels headed respectively GIRLS and INFANTS. The wall between these was removed to create a large airy entrance hall carpeted and decorated with ceramic tiles individually designed by adults and children on various occasions including one evening event called a 'Night on the Tiles'. Elsewhere in the entrance area were large photographic records of the building's new users in action. The rest of the old school was a simple square with rooms on ground and first

floor set round a central hall with a glass roof above it. This central hall was carpeted and the new colourful library opened on to it, like a jewel at the heart of the building attracting all users from the pensioners to the underfives. The hall also linked the gym and the dining room as well as the drama and art and craft areas and the ubiquitous bingo section. When complete the place was beautiful, not just functional. It was designed to lift peoples' hearts and give them hope; to make it easy for them to believe in themselves and in each other.

But it had taken two years to complete and by that time many of our hopes both of local leadership and of support from the higher officials in Community Education had disappeared. Some professionals moved away, while the officials went about their other duties and never implemented their avowed interest in furthering the training and eventual payment of these Neighbourhood Education Workers. Some certificate holders left the district, others found the training useful in different areas of work and so never participated in Summertown. These included both Tom and Harry who obtained paid employment elsewhere through holding this certificate. After the long year of Summertown's renovation there were very few of this whole group available to work in it. I had to keep reminding myself and others that the Neighbourhood Education Workers course was not there

solely for Summertown Centre. The course was first of all for the personal use of these parents and their own families, in this it was very successful, so the work was never lost.

My reflection notes for July 1982 read (7) -

'Summertown is absolutely beautiful! Everything we dreamed of has happened.' But it did not just 'happen'! The hard truth was that a very small group of people had carried the administrative and executive responsibility for renovation - with Morag bearing much of the work load - and as it neared completion we had very few people ready to help the centre come alive. So, long before it was 'absolutely beautiful' we discussed how we could raise awareness of its potential. Providing a building only created an opportunity, Summertown would remain an empty shell unless we could find ways of opening people's minds to its possibilities and of helping them acquire the necessary skills to make the place their own. We needed to invent some kind of creative awakening process.

Another little course perhaps? By August 1981 local shops were carrying advertisements for a course called 'Create your own Centre'.

On September 17th sixteen people unconnected with the Neighbourhood Education Workers course began the six session programme and we explored with them what could

now happen with such a resource as Summertown. We 'brainstormed' about activities and made notes about budgets. We planned gala weeks and special events and looked at the problems of management and organization. For one session we broke into groups and designed a series of 'dolls house' rooms in old shoe boxes, so that we could look at a first home-made model of what the Centre might be like and what furniture we would need.

Some parts of this course were filmed as the first section of a video which was to stretch over two years.

(8) One of the 'dolls house' planning boxes shown on the film is the gym. Joe and Willie, two men who became very involved with Summertown are recorded there working out how their beloved 'fitball' and the requirements of the annual pantomime could be reconciled in one room. The reality of that gym programming, with many an addition to its scope, was to become an important area of responsibility for one these men for many years.

This course was over by November when all attention had switched to producing the annual 'cast of thousands' pantomime. But by January 1982 we were again trying to rouse personal involvement in Summertown Centre by setting up potential 'Users Groups' for each room in the building. (9) These groups were to begin practical arrangements for furnishing those rooms which had first

# Turning an old school into Summertown Centre.

Preparation from  
the Home and  
School Centre.



'Create your own  
Centre'. Making  
practical plans  
to buy the right  
equipment for the  
gym.



Small children  
in the 80's  
could expect  
creative  
activities  
with their  
parents in  
their very  
own  
Summertown  
Centre.



been designed in shoe boxes during the 'Create your Own Centre' Course. It was heady stuff, with adverts saying:-

'Come and spend £1,500 on the new Cookery Room!' or 'Who wants to say what should go into the Pre-school Room - and spend the money!'. All this talk of large sums of money caused a good deal of excitement - tempered by the discovery that 'spending' meant filling in requisition forms and never seeing hard cash!

A specially constructed wall diary charted the progress of each group. January was to be spent in going out and seeing how other organizations had furnished their Dining Room, Gym, Art Room etc., since money could be well spent only when all those involved had widened their experience and could make informed choices. There was much friendly rivalry between the groups as they marked on the wall diary the places they had visited: Community Centres, Colleges, showrooms and workshops - and read where the others had been. February was spend choosing curtains. Again there was much to learn about standards and fireproofing, colour schemes, size of patterns and proportion of budget available.

Many learning points came together in practice one afternoon during this curtain choosing stage as the

Underfives room Users Group looked at a brilliant pattern with balloons cascading down in a riot of colours. A heated discussion began, 'Oh, you couldnae have that! I couldnae live with that in my house every day. I'd go mad!' was one mother's comment. But her neighbour saw it differently. 'But it's not for your house. It's for those great big ugly school windows. It could be exciting for the weans and you wouldn't have to see it every day - or no' all day anyway.'

Then there were other considerations. 'All that money! Supposing we didn't like it?' 'Supposing the other mothers didn't like it, and we'd chosen it!' 'Oh, I think it's smashing! It would look great!'

Caroline, the Underfives worker slipped out of the room while this discussion went on and telephoned the manufacturers of this exciting material to find where it could be seen hanging in full length, since we only had a small sample at the Home and School Centre. The nearest place was Edinburgh, so the following week this whole group took a 50 mile minibus trip to see the thought provoking curtain material displayed among other children's designs. When it was eventually chosen, much more had been achieved than a simple window covering.

These mothers, like many others who formed groups to turn

the dismal old school building into their own neighbourhood centre, were not simply fulfilling their dreams. They were first of all becoming inspired by these creative possibilities to begin dreaming. As the vision grew, so did the willingness to take on the intellectual burden of analysing the task into a sequence of steps and of learning how to negotiate results within the constraints encountered in any group decision making, especially when everything is subject to Local Authority regulations. This conceptual process was exactly the skill which research was showing gave people some power over their own lives.

Many of these parents, who had left school without seeing any sense in the necessarily contrived tasks set by the school examination system, were now grappling with quite difficult conceptual processes because they found both reward and meaning in this work. Not everyone stayed the course, some dropped out because of the pressure of such demands, but enough people remained with the task, determined to win through and bring the development of each room to its final exciting conclusion.

While all this was going on I was, as usual, experiencing great difficulty in keeping my two feet of community and school in step. Every Monday the little team I had gathered at the Home and School Centre, plus eventually

Yvonne and Marie, the two local link teachers who gradually obtained permission to come, met to reflect on the ideas behind the work and to share with one another how each was putting that theory into practice. Ed Darcy, the Community Education Area Officer joined this group almost as soon as it was formed bringing to it a whole new dimension of experience and interest. But it was very difficult to bring a school focus to the joint task until the local situation changed and Yvonne, the first link teacher appointed at that time in Govan was able to take some steps towards sharing the curriculum with parents. The story has its starting point in some United States research.

Trying to keep abreast of developments abroad, I had used a satellite link to search the files of the California-based Educational Research and Information Centre (ERIC) to find home/school/community work elsewhere in the Western World. Among the many interesting studies I read in this way was one about a Games Night in Brooklyn, New York. (10) In this school parents learned how to support their children's step by step progress in maths by setting up stalls in the school hall at which games could be played which exactly matched children's mathematical learning needs. The whole affair was made into a colourful fun event. Children were given colour coded cards which both indicated their current

level of skill and promised special prizes for success in the appropriate games. Yvonne was a keen mathematician and took up this idea with enthusiasm. As a first step towards such an event she began to plan a maths game for nine year olds. The children's parents were invited to join her one Tuesday morning to try out the idea and I promised to be there too to give her support in this very new venture.

Caught between my desire to encourage Yvonne to work with parents in a curricular area where she herself had confidence and my fears about the appropriateness of using maths as an introductory subject for a first parents group, I approached the parents room that morning with some anxiety. Maths is a daunting subject for many people and even the nine year old level is quite high for some adults who use very few mathematical skills in daily life.

Two mothers had arrived before me. They seemed quite confident, though they kept their coats wrapped round them like security blankets and responded very briefly to our attempts at conversation. Yes, they agreed the room had been adapted well for parents; of course it was a good idea to have a creche worker present who could take care of their underfives; certainly they would help Yvonne give out the tea and biscuits after the workshop.

The comfortable give and take of unselfconscious chat was embarrassingly absent in this new and unpredictable situation.

We lapsed into silence. My eyes wandered round, taking in all the careful preparation which had made this place both welcoming and convenient for parents' workshops. Yvonne would dearly have loved to occupy herself with little jobs round the room, but knowing that at this early stage that would set up a 'them and us' situation, she gave her complete attention to the tiny group, while glancing hopefully at the door from time to time.

The minutes ticked by and no more parents came. Yvonne was disappointed. She was still new enough to expect an instant full throated response the moment the school decided to make a first offer of curriculum sharing. Conscious that few people are to be found in a school who are not present there by law, or because they draw a salary for attending, my expectations were not quite so high. Still, a group of two did seem rather a depressing starting point! But that was before I had time to consider the prepared task. Gradually, as I looked at the complicated number board before me, my feelings about attendance came closer to relief than dismay. The numbers 1-100 were randomly scattered on a colourful homemade 'ludo' type board, while bright little dice and

counters were arranged at one end of the table. We were to take part in a cumulative number game in which we should add the number thrown each time to the previous score and cover the answer with a counter - after we had found that number on this bewildering board. This might be a reasonable challenge for nine year olds who were having daily maths practice but it was a paralysing threat for adults on a first visit to school! There was no time to discuss this problem with Yvonne before she began explaining the game enthusiastically and encouraging us to start.

We had just finished the first round when Rita, another of the mothers who had been invited, came into the room accompanied by her fretful three year old son Jimmy. She stood hesitatingly in the doorway eyeing the board and its numbers as Yvonne tried to coax her to join in. Eventually she sat awkwardly on the edge of a seat, while Jimmy pulled at her coat and refused to join the creche worker at the other end of the room. 'Would you like to throw the dice?' asked Yvonne. I knew, as Yvonne knew, that Rita would not be expected to do any more than that. Neither her understanding of the game nor her number skill was going to be questioned. But Rita felt no such assurance, so the dice remained in Yvonne's outstretched hand.

It was all like a flash back to my own early efforts in the flat in Moorpark; so much effort and goodwill on both sides yet such a frail basis for co-operation when expectations and assumptions were so different and the fear of rejection at every step was very real! Though I still did not know how to express my fears and feelings to headteachers, I had learned by this time to show my sense of inadequacy to parents, and I knew this offered a little firm ground on which to build. Already on this occasion I had made some comments on my lack of speed in the game's initial round. Now I found it easy to say to Rita: 'Maybe you'd like to partner me, though I might not be much use to you, because I'm not very good at this!' Rita said nothing but moved over to sit beside me and watch as the game went on for a few more turns.

As soon as possible I suggested that we stop the game and begin to reflect on how we had felt during it. The parents seemed pleased to put down the dice, relieved to find that their number skill was not the main purpose of the meeting. Yvonne, to whose mathematical mind the whole game had seemed absurdly easy, was puzzled by the problem the activity was causing the parents and so she was glad to take this cue and move on to a discussion about the importance of feeling secure and successful in the learning process.

We began to list on the blackboard how we had felt during the session. 'I felt stupid' I said, 'I was afraid that I wouldn't know what you wanted me to do and I would just be a failure!' Rita opened her eyes wide as I spoke and relaxed for the first time. A little breathlessly she began to speak. 'That is how I felt when I saw what we were supposed to do. I was going to say, "Jimmy is causing trouble, I'll take him home and leave him with a neighbour and then I'll come back."' She paused and looked round at us all, 'but I was never coming back!' she confessed.

By the time Rita felt free to say this, the group was more relaxed and aware that we were all ordinary people with different kinds of knowledge and experience, groping towards the best way of combining that we each knew with an understanding of the contribution being offered by the other members. Everyone's horizon was widened by this open and trusting exchange. The teacher began to see that though she understood the maths involved, she lacked awareness of the common reality that most people who are unconnected with schools have no cause to build up a skill in counting numbers at speed, since it serves no useful purpose in their lives. The parents realised that an important support they could give their children was to appreciate how they were affected by success and failure even in tiny pieces of homework, and so to be

patient and interested in the tasks their children brought home.

Always on the lookout for ways of co-ordinating the educational environment, I took the opportunity at the end of the meeting to ask these parents if they would be interested in joining the groups who were beginning to develop Summertown. To my surprise Rita readily agreed to come. She quickly became an enthusiastic and creative member not only of that parents' group in school which grew and flourished from that tentative beginning but of the Underfives group in Summertown Centre where she helped to set up, furnish and run the playroom.

While local decision making was growing in strength and parental involvement in education was expanding in both school and community, I was earnestly pursuing with those professionals who met on Mondays the need to reflect on our activities to ensure that they remained true to our ideals.

The use of 'the word' in Freire's sense (11) of conveying both reflection and action was a recurring topic of discussion. This point was reinforced by a shared study of Margaret Donaldson's book 'Children's Minds'. This book (12) raised our awareness of the power of the written word. The place of books in learning had always

been a central issue for me but now in addition all the little efforts to support people's own writing grew in importance. Mary, the teacher/literacy worker at this point, took the opportunity created by the Summertown enthusiasm to produce a booklet (13) 'We created our own Centre'. In it many people captured in print their high endeavour.

As I look now at the booklet's Contents page, I see a kind of potted history of the eight years from 1974 when the Stairhead Seminars began until 1982 when the Centre opened. Tom who had first brought his wife and brother to the library in the flat contributed an article about all the subsequent activities in which he and his friend Harry had shared. Meg, who as a three year old used to accompany her mother, Peggy, to Maisie's home for those first meetings was at secondary school in 1982 and had joined Summertown Library's Young Readers' Club. Anna and her friend Donna agonized in these pages over the transfer of the library from the flat to the new premises. People unconnected with the 'Wine Alley' days are also here, including Rita, who says of the refurbished Centre 'I can't wait for it to open!'

Step by step - with many a false step between - Summertown was renovated, furnished and opened on 17th June 1982 by and for the community. (14) The official

opening by the Chairman of the Education Committee would be months later. This preview in June was a first glimpse and the neighbourhood poured through its doors to see what had happened to their old school and what might now happen to their chances of a cultural and social centre for themselves and their families.

Each Users Group had provided a small event in the room which they had been furnishing with so much effort and care. This gave a flavour of things to come and offered a welcome to people now wanting to participate. It also may have helped some of the professionals responsible for the renovation to see that the dance we had led them during all these changes had had some point. I watched one of the Region's Senior Architects pick up a tiny pancake from the cookery room's demonstration event and enjoy it while watching the songs from 'Oliver' put on by a local school in the neighbouring lounge. In the art room his wife had joined an all-age group making still more tiles for the Centre's front hall. There was no special guest status, they were part of a crowd of equal people - not separately labelled 'parents' or 'professionals'. Downstairs, the crowd milled round, joining the library, playing a line of bingo, or moving on to buy a special 'first night tea', to the tune of a ceilidh band in the hall. It was a night full of hope, and human growth and of fulfilled vision which had now

become the starting point for new dreams.

Setting up Summertown Centre was essentially an adult task and the effort required was so great that there was neither interest nor energy left to consider involving children in the preparation except in a few specially arranged pieces of work. Nevertheless, the children gained much from the changes which were happening in the parents' attitudes, skills and priorities. We perhaps pay too little attention to the importance of this general effect which parents have on their children, yet if the different effects of T.V. characters who model violence or peace is seen as a powerful influence on children how much more subtle and persistent is the model offered all day long by parents. The unspoken question, 'What is an adult? a mother? a father?' is answered in great detail, however unconsciously, by the home in which the next generation is being shaped.

When I try to select an example of this modelling behaviour, the contrasting 'snapshot' memories I have of Ellen, a dark haired vivacious mother stand out. I first met Ellen in the old 'Wine Alley' days. 'Met' is not an accurate term. Ellen was often to be seen leaning over the windowsill of her second floor flat conversing with the neighbours and making oblique comments about us as 'interfering so-and-so's' who had no right, in her view,

to be present in a neighbourhood in which we did not have our own homes. At Ellen's side during these moments was her three year old daughter, assimilating both the views and the verdict. What was a mother for this child? The answer must have been many sided, but it quite possibly included components connected with indolence, insularity and abusive language.

By the time Summertown Centre was being renovated we had all learned from each other and many things had changed for everyone. Ellen was frequently at the Centre, sometimes in the underfives Users Group, at other times story telling with a group of children including her own six year old or again stopping, diary in hand, to try to agree a date for a parent/professional planning meeting on some topic of general interest. There was another three year old in the family at that point who would often be at her mother's side during these activities. What would her concept of a mother include? Among the ingredients would surely be an ordered existence into which many obligations had to be fitted. A mother now was someone with skills in negotiating, planning and organizing; she also had time and thought to devote to interacting with her small children and, since this mother was Ellen, a mother would also be a bright lively personality with a sharp edged wit! Both three year olds would have appreciated the vivacity and the quick tongue,

but the overall message and model for each child would be significantly different.

In November 1982, the National Children's Bureau asked for an account of the work. It seemed inappropriate for me to express alone what had been done by a large though constantly changing group of local people who were trying to learn with our support how to work together and produce a worthwhile neighbourhood centre. Four Govan people, Anna, Linda, Ellen and John worked with me to make a slide tape show (15) expressing their own points and view. They told of the difference the various elements of our work had made to them, of the Neighbourhood Education Workers course, the library and the whole Users Group growth. They showed the joy and the hope the new Centre had brought and the assurance they felt now as they reached out to those special partners in their children's education - the teachers in the school. Ellen showed pictures of herself helping to choose the curtains for the Underfives room, then she enthusiastically moved on to outings in family groups to lochside and farm, returning to pictures of Summertown for storytelling in the library before finally showing her participation in a parents' group in school. The last line of her self written script summed up her view of the opportunities available in Govan at that point, 'I'm into everything! Busy lady, eh?'

This group of parents sat with me as a team of five facing an audience from all over Britain. The parents answered questions and explained situations both during question time and later in smaller groups over meals. They were assured, confident, empowered to spread the ideas they had helped to shape. For me this was a very special peak but it was also the parting of the ways. For two different reasons it would soon be time for me to go.

Locally I had been influencing the action for almost ten years. If I stayed any longer I would become an institution, an immovable object, a nuisance. Whether or not my work was finished was beside the point, I was becoming stereotyped in people's minds and so muffled, unheard, useless.

At the same time a very uneasy relationship was developing between myself and the Local Authority administration. My job description had been rewritten without consultation and issued to me minus the section about continuing the local work. (16) The official case was quite simple. As the head of my line management saw it, I had been employed principally to develop home/school work for teachers. A school was a school was a school and should be the focus at all times. The idea

of beginning home/school links from both ends, or of seeing the child as embedded in an educational milieu which contained other elements than school was, in the official view, something very close to eyewash.

Apparently he had no idea that what I was doing had sound research backing. So the harsh though unspoken message to me was: 'It is very sweet of you to care about these people! But stop it! Now!'

In my estimation there was really no cause for these anxieties 'at the top'. Although I was passionately involved in the success of Summertown and in all the local people I had come to know and love, yet my central interest was in fulfilling children's educational potential. What we were jointly developing in Govan was an educational seedbed. In it we were beginning to discern the central ingredients of a co-ordinated educational environment in which language power had an important place.

While getting the ingredients together in Govan, I was also getting people together across the city to share in these ideas.

## CHAPTER 10

### NOTES

- 1 Earl Schaefer, 'Parent and child correlates of parental modernity' in Parental Belief Systems The Psychological Consequences for Children, London, 1985.
- 2 The text of Early Childhood Education in Philadelphia, (Philadelphia, 1979) was prepared by Dr. Thomas C. McNamara, Manager of the Early Childhood Evaluation programme in that city.
- 3 Dr. David Weikart, one of the pioneers in early childhood intervention programmes in the U.S.A. is founder and director of the High/Scope Foundation, a centre pre-eminent for research in the effectiveness of a cognitively oriented curriculum for young children. The High/Scope Conference, Ann Arbor, Michigan, May 23-29 1979, though part of a series of annual conferences organized by that Foundation, had a particular international dimension in 1979 because of the world-wide 'year of the child.'
- 4 R3B, 2 (January 1980).

5 W.G. Bennis, K.D. Benne and R. Chin, The Planning of Change, London, 1970.

6 BM24, 1 (1 May 1979).

7 R40 1 (July 1982).

8 This video record by St. Andrew's College of Education of the whole process of local people creating Summertown Centre out of an old dilapidated school captures much of that exciting venture.

9 The 12 minute slide/tape show 'Four Voices of Change' gives a brief glimpse of local people working confidently in Users groups to furnish a huge multipurpose building.

10 The Family Education Program and Intermediate School '55, New York, 1977 (ERIC No.UD 18919).

11 Paulo Freire argues that there is power contained within each person's own expression of reality. He says 'Within the word we find two dimensions, reflection and action, in such radical interaction that if one is sacrificed - even in part - the other immediately suffers. There is no true word that is not at the same time a praxis (action/reflection). Thus to speak a true

word is to transform the world' Pedagogy of the Oppressed, London, 1972, 60.

12 M. Donaldson, Children's Minds, Glasgow, 1978, 90ff.

13 BM35 (June 1982).

14 BM36 (17 June 1982).

15 V22 (1982).

16 BM34 (n.d. ?1982).

17 R38 11 (January 1980).

# Getting it Together



Parent/Professional Partnership in Priesthill

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GETTING IT TOGETHER

Ever since the Home and School Centre was set up in 1979 the presence of specially appointed home link teachers in various parts of the city had given me a starting point for sharing the lessons of Govan more widely. Home link work was to be found in various pieces of specialized education:-

multi-racial programmes, experimental underfives work and a range of needs supported by the Child Guidance service.

My interest was not in those who could be identified as having 'special needs' but in those unlikely to have their names on a school's list of successes, the 'ordinary failures' of the school system. In some areas of the city it seemed to be the majority who were in this position by the end of their compulsory school years. I knew very well from my own experience that this could not be dismissed as the school's fault; it was too late to be begin tackling the problem after the situation was clear enough for failure to be identified. I also knew from research that the solution must be sought within the

total environment, a point which was becoming sufficiently clear to cause some people in Glasgow to appoint home link teachers as part of a response to the problem. Sadly I could find no trace of staff from the home side of education, such as Community Education Workers, being appointed to help parents link into the schools from their viewpoint.

In the autumn of 1979 I brought together all the home/school link teachers that I could trace who did not have any support beyond the school to which they were attached. When the dust had cleared from this process we were able to produce in January 1980 a 'Who's Who' (4) which listed nine people who were not appointed to serve some special section of the population, but who were beginning home-link work for the ordinary children in schools ranging from nursery to secondary. Each remit was different as were expectations, understanding of the task and access to useful materials. What these workers had in common was a sense of insecurity in this new role, an almost complete lack of information about the successes and failures of many similar attempts which had been made elsewhere in the Western World, and a growing awareness that this new task demanded new skills which they were having to learn 'on the job'.

I held regular Friday sessions to help the group face these issues. Even though they were so disparate, they had a good deal to offer one another, beginning with a much needed sense of identity. One member described her situation graphically. 'I begin to dread the moment at a party when someone says, "What do you do?" It used to be that my friend would say "I'm a maths teacher" and everyone would nod. Then I'd say "I'm a primary teacher" and they would nod again. But now I say "I'm a link teacher" and they put down their glasses and say, "You're a what?" It is no better when I try to explain. There is always someone who says. "and do you get paid for that? I mean, do you get the same as those who are really working?"' At least on a Friday afternoon she found people who could help her laugh away the pain of such insecurity.

The group shared skills and knowledge. I contributed some of the relevant information from home/school/community research studies carried out in various parts of the United States and Britain. We looked at lessons learned in Govan during the previous six years and we began planning a course for future home-link

teachers. We were far away, at that point in 1980, from believing that eventually College of Education courses would give every class teacher the necessary theory and practice to be ready to share the curriculum with parents in a comfortable pattern of partnership, so that specially appointed link teachers would become unnecessary.

It was enough for most of this group that organised attempts to harmonise home and school were springing up in schools in the city and that these were coming together at the Home and School Centre. For me, this school initiated work was one piece in a complex jigsaw. I was delighted that these home link teachers existed, but I was equally aware of the successful educational work which my Govan team were supporting in the local community at that time. They could point to creative parental involvement in library activities, in underfives

work in the community, at Family Nights, and at Certificate Courses for Family Night leaders. They knew how to organize the 'Create your Own Centre' Course which enhanced self image, educational skills and organizing ability in the community. I found it frustrating that I could obtain no support from the Local Authority for all this work. In fact the climate was so negative that I was sometimes forced to be grateful that such work was often invisible and so not totally uprooted. On the other hand, the idea of home link teachers was tolerable in official circles, even slightly fashionable. So, always ready to begin from a positive reality and build from this to a better future, I put energy and thought into this school-start work.

Once the initial task of supporting and sharing some general theory with all the link teachers was completed at the Friday meetings, it was impossible within a joint session to cater for the needs of people with such widely different posts. In the summer of 1980 when four primary school link teachers joined us, some of the original group began to share with me the task of supporting these new members. Others saw the Home and School Centre as a resource for occasional work and a contact point for special efforts, but no longer a regular meeting place.

These four new workers had been appointed to primary

schools in Priesthill, (5) a large housing estate south of Govan and one of those areas designated by the Local Authority in its deprivation strategy as in need of priority treatment. These posts were set up in response to the pressure from this local area for the Education Service to be seen to be participating in the new initiative. The Education Officer responsible for deciding on the appropriate response had been on the Steering Committee of the Govan project and so not only chose to create link teachers as the Education Department's particular form of co-operation, he also made it a condition of these posts that the training and support would come from the Home & School Centre in Govan.

The headteacher in each school decided the main emphasis of the work these link teachers were to do. My task was to help them understand the background to their work and the whole parent/professional partnership approach. I was also concerned with helping them design a suitable curriculum for parents' meetings. I therefore spend a great deal of time with them. As well as the Friday sessions I met these link teachers once each week on their own ground (6) in Priesthill.

These meetings began by developing parent/teacher work on the reading curriculum. Alan, who had helped to invent

the made-up alphabet initially in Govan, now demonstrated its use in each of the Priesthill schools. He also illustrated how a sense of a partnership could be built up with parents rather than a formal 'them and us'. Since one of his chief themes was that learning should be fun, he made sure this too was present. Four rather bewildered link teachers tentatively followed on from these brief demonstrations as Alan left Glasgow to take up further study. Slowly, painfully, yet with much laughter and goodwill a series of sessions for parents of small children was begun. The work of linking home and school before children first start at five years of age became a special focus of their work.

But five year old children are not solely 'school entrants', the world which is shaping their learning is much wider. For the first time since I had knocked on doors in Wine Alley in 1974 I had the chance to discuss at length with teachers the idea of co-ordinating the educational dimension of children's whole environment. With these four teachers I explored the learning possibilities in children's entire life space of home, school and community and in their time span of weekdays, weekends, evenings and holidays. They quickly saw that an important element in their new work was the building up of links with other agencies, particularly Health, Social Work, underfives organizations and Community

Education.

By 1981 these primary school link teachers were not only on their feet within their schools but were stretching out to co-ordinate their work with local Community Education Service. In a very short time the Neighbourhood Education Workers course in Govan began to include Priesthill parents. Little did we know at that point that Glasgow would build its whole Partnership in Education Resource and Development Centre on these Priesthill foundations.

Yet despite all the labour we did not have a clearly structured 'net' of educational provision for children either in this 'priority' housing estate or in Govan. We were still further away from sharing the central ideas within the work with the various educational agencies in touch with us. There was very little knowledge among our contacts in Glasgow of the co-ordinated education which research was showing to be so important and little hope of reflectively sharing with others the convincing theoretical base for this many sided approach. Instead, a great deal of effort was required to keep the grass roots reality from being destroyed by the very Local Authority which owned it. I felt like a juggler trying to keep a whole range of ideas and practicalities in the air while also trying to keep my own feet.

# 1980-1986 Priesthill



While I struggled with these acrobatics I became increasingly aware of another aspect of my task. The pattern of home/school relations I was offering was not the only one around. Many of the same ingredients could be found in other initiatives led by enthusiastic and dedicated educational pioneers working largely on their own. If I was supposed to be developing a co-ordinated approach it seemed logical to try to get all these examples together. There was, however, a major problem. Though these various innovators held some general ideas in common, their practical approaches were quite different. If I brought them together it would be like a fairground. After the first shock of that thought it began to seem like the seed of a good idea. We would hold a Home/School/Community Fair! (7)

Everyone I could find who was working from school, underfives, literacy or community to promote links with parents was invited to take a 'stall' set up in a fairground fashion. The rules for participants were quite simple. 'Provide a 3 or 4 minute game or activity which illustrates your shared work. Parents rather than professionals should take responsibility for the stall and conduct the game.' The response was most enthusiastic. By the beginning of June 1981 everything was ready and the hall keeper at the Palace of Art,

watched us anxiously as we carried wooden sections for 20 market stalls into his beautifully polished exhibition space to set up 'Home/School/Community Fair 1981'.

By the evening of June 9th the hall was full of exciting and colourful events. One enterprising headteacher, who managed a great amount of home/school/work without any additional staff, had a game about choosing your ideal school using a board with coloured lights which lit up participants results. All the schools with link teachers had brought curriculum based games which they used in their parents rooms to introduce parents to children's learning. Underfives organizations had painting events as well as explanatory literature about the educational significance of their parent/child work. Summertown Centre was well represented: the library had a book stall, while community workers and parents from the Centre had organized a ceramic tile making activity. Elsewhere the Secondary Family Learning Units invited passers-by to judge the 'readability' of school text books. A break was made halfway through the proceedings to allow a display of Chinese and Indian dancing demonstrated by multi-ethnic groups of children comfortably including some very Glasgow inner city boys.

One of the Priesthill schools whose stall was in a central position in the hall had a number game, made by

the parents, in which paper fish inscribed with numbers were to be caught using paperhooks attached to canes. Here a chance conversation between an official and a parent offered an interesting contrast on theory and practice. I happened to be nearby when the very interested senior official responsible for setting up the whole Priesthill Schools Project approached the stall, 'What have you here?' he said affably. 'You take one of them' responded the parent, indicating the canes. 'And what do you do with it?' he continued without even considering the possibility of complying. The woman continued to look at him but did not speak. After a puzzled moment the official reached out and picked up a 'rod'. Immediately the 'stall holder' answered him, 'You catch one of these' she indicated the paper fish. 'Yes, but what is the point of it?' he persisted, paying no attention to the fishing process. She looked at him quizzically. 'You're not very good at it, are you?' she rebuked him.

The change in tempo was quite marked. The official immediately put his mind to catching the paper fish with his bent paper clip. The mother's pattern changed also. Now that this stranger had at last understood the process, she could concentrate on explaining the meaning behind it. As he gave all his attention to fishing, she gave all hers to explaining clearly and briefly how this

process helped her child to acquire number concepts. It was a fitting summary of the meeting of minds which this Fair made possible.

I was quite buoyed up by the atmosphere at this event. Now was surely the moment to ask decision makers to meet and consider an application to an interested Educational Trust in Holland for funds to staff a planned development of this parent/professional work. I moved between the Chinese dancers and the maths-games-for-families inviting local Councillors, Government Inspectors, College representatives and a couple of senior officials to meet and discuss such a step. On that heady evening in 1981 as I serenely collected this group of influential people together, I was delighted to encounter everywhere great interest and willingness. I never guessed that I would not obtain authorization to go ahead.

So what on earth had the Fair meant? It had allowed us to take a tiny step forward but, as usual, most people only saw the outer husk of the educational principles we were trying to convey. To the Councillors, administrators, inspectors and advisors we had demonstrated that Glasgow had a wide range of interest, enthusiasm and skill in home/school/community links. To

those directly involved, both parents and professionals, we had given an opportunity to see that they were not alone, that someone else understood and supported what they were attempting. But exactly what they were trying to do, how well it succeeded, what were the goals, objectives and methods of each initiative; none of this was clear. The fact that serious well planned organizational support would be necessary to move all this effort from the realm of a colourful Fair into a Regional reality was not to be considered.

For me this had been a starting point from which to begin to bring different groups together. That would allow the sharing of information and skills and the opportunity to see the relevance of a balanced input from a range of educational agencies. For others, despite the addition in other rooms of workshops and lectures, the Fair was merely a colourful spectacle, a gala day without any serious message. Reflection on this lack of progress brought me to the conclusion that I was too near the grassroots to affect policy.

Perhaps I could persuade someone with an international reputation in education to come to Glasgow and make the points for me within an event where the ideas could be experienced in workshops? This thought led me to approach Dr. David Weikart, internationally known for his

research and his Michigan project 'High/Scope'. The story of my links with his work is told in Chapter 10. By 1982 he had been to Glasgow from the U.S.A. to set up a small joint research and evaluation project with Strathclyde Region.

I soon learned that if I organized a conference I would not be permitted to charge a fee even for attendance at David Weikart's lecture, so I couldn't offer him hospitality at a central hotel. Maybe I was meant to understand from this that the the Education Department did not wish me to invite him. I never thought of that, instead I asked if he would consider staying in the convent guest room and giving a free lecture? He agreed and I embarked on planning a large scale Conference (9) for 1982.

Two hundred and fifty people came to the Dr. Weikart's Lecture. His book 'Young Children Grow Up' (10) on the progress of a group of children studied from 1962 till 1980 had recently been reviewed in the educational press.

It gave clear evidence that children who had the opportunity of an intellectually stimulating environment in their early years of life, and whose parents were involved in some way in this process, continued successfully through schooling and into employment or higher education; whereas many of those in the matched

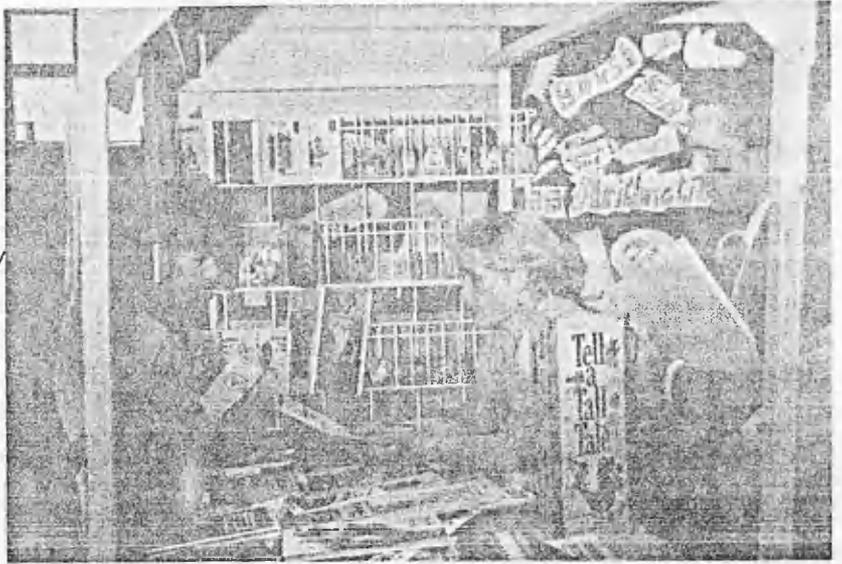
control group were kept back in class or required remedial or special education and did not succeed later at secondary school.

David Weikart not only described his own research but, using a wall sized screen, he illustrated his points with examples of the Glasgow work which would be presented in the next days' workshops. Using slides of parent/professional meetings in and out of schools in the city. He said (11) 'Effective long term parent involvement is a two way street. We have to meet parents on their own ground; they have to meet us on our ground. It is important that we share our views, our professional knowledge with parents. But we must also be taught by parents. Parents teach me and my staff about the child's world outside school, helping us to build in-school programmes that are responsive to the culture of the community and the special needs and interests of individual children.'

His lecture made a good introduction to the next day's group activities. Within a setting which included multicultural education and contributions from other Glasgow work which was well beyond the scope of the Home and School Centre, we had under one roof a carefully chosen series of workshops. These focussed on four categories: Underfives work; 'Family Nights' run by

# City Wide Sharing

1981: Home/School/  
Community FAIR.



Dr. David Weikart:  
a free lecture on  
the elements in  
successful  
innovation.



1982: Home/School/  
Community  
conference.



Community Education; parental involvement in schools and some specialised parent/child work in libraries.

In this 1982 Conference, 'Getting it Together' participants could consider those four learning areas across children's life span and also life space. If these learning opportunities could be co-ordinated, education would become both predictable and creative. These connected educational elements were clearly together in the building and in the programme. I was not quite sure we had yet managed to make their relationship to each other clear to conference participants.

After the workshops came the Final Debate. At this time, 1982, Strathclyde's Councillors were beginning to formulate a policy which was later to be summarised in a booklet 'Social Strategy for the 80's'. Parental involvement in education fitted very well with the strategy, but the commitment of some senior Education Officials to the continuation, far less the promotion of the work was, at best, unclear. Feelings were beginning to run high as people found themselves 'out on a limb' in terms of career advancement if they took on this work which was, on the face of it, part of central policy. We had arranged, therefore, to have the session tape recorded so that the Conference Report could put these differing views together in print. As one of those

employed by the Local Authority the risky step of recording all comments was liable to ruffle feathers. But running the conference at all had been an unpopular move, so it seemed all of a piece - and I had no career interests to consider.

The tape showed the Education Department surprisingly ready to record a very positive policy statement about future directions in Glasgow. (12) 'Our intention is to take more and more of this work into mainline. We would like to encourage a "whole school" approach to links between the schools, the parents and the wide community. We would like to encourage development on a community basis. The schools are there to serve the community. We would like to see the theme of the conference happening in reality with the preschool, school and community staff "working together" with parents and members of the public. We would try to go for a sort of comprehensive approach in an area, rather than try to provide additional resources to help one sector of education in different areas. I think we have to try as well to provide some sort of co-ordination in the sort of support we provide; and we need to try to do what Dr. Weikart was saying on Wednesday, we need to try to make some sort of evaluation.'

It would be nice to say that this all-embracing statement

was believed at the time and implemented thereafter. But neither happened. The tape recording goes on to show a series of attacks, some from people who feared this really meant that all the special initiatives so precariously balanced on top of a very traditional system were to be swept away and the 'whole school approach' could be equated with 'business as usual'. They were not the only ones who thought this statement was too good to be true.

Three members of the audience had been invited to act as 'official listeners'. They were to try to stay out of the debate themselves and listen to all the arguments so that at the end we might hear a coherent summary of the whole event. One of these 'listeners' put her finger on the central problem. (13) A whole new exciting era was being promised overnight without any concrete preparation. There were no programmes, training courses, staffing arrangements or support services to carry this suggested co-ordinated area approach.

Yet it was a great possibility and I could not help hoping, despite all my previous experience to the contrary, that maybe this time the people with the power and the growing band of experienced educators who could lead parent/professional co-ordinated education were really going to move forward together and somehow produce

all these materials and support. I remained a little puzzled about how it would all happen without outside money for I was well aware that there was no extra money inside the Education Department! However, always the optimist, I contacted local heads of schools and a variety of interested people and prepared to set up a series of Glasgow discussion groups to plan co-ordinated work with parents. A poster showing Strathclyde Region and inscribed 'Who Cares?' invited those interested to sign up to prepare inservice courses at various levels; to produce packages of materials useful in working with parents on curricular topics; to participate in: 'Do it yourself' evaluation. This was to culminate in a 1983 Fair.

It was then that I became aware of what seemed to me an interesting 'glass wall' tactic which effectively stops all action. It consists of a very simple message 'This is too important to do hastily.' With this kind of barrier no opposition can be seen, yet no advance can be made. Everthing is plainly within sight, yet nothing can be reached. This strange 'disconnected' period coincided with the opening of Summertown Centre, my changed job description and the attempt to close down the Home and School Centre completely. My simple little efforts seemed to be causing waves in a number of directions.

No wonder I was aware by the time four of the parents from Govan and myself were presenting the creation of Summertown at the National Children's Bureau Conference in November 1982 that I would not be in Govan much longer.

But, in the brief time that might be left, there was something I could do. As hope faded that we were going to have the proposed educational co-ordination across the city I picked up the discussion again with Beth at the Bernard van Leer Foundation in Holland.(14) By January 1983 I had the prospect of a quarter of a million pounds for an initial phase of work (15) and the support of this Foundation which had an international reputation for enlightened early childhood education. I also had some serious trouble!

Aided by a Local Councillor I had obtained permission to begin discussion with this Dutch Foundation about designing for Priesthill a new, carefully balanced version of this model of co-ordinated education now coming to the end of its pilot stage in Govan. 'Partnership' was the new term that was emerging as I struggled to formulate this definitive shape for the work. The 'Partnership in Education' project would devise educational opportunities which could support the

growth of a special kind of partnership between parents and their children. (16) Parents would be encouraged to explore ways of enriching the experiences they shared with their families. They would also be helped to develop discussing and negotiating processes with their children and there would be attempts to raise awareness that this kind of talk would help their children put their thoughts into words and take hold of their own world. We were also facing for the first time the implications of this for mainline Education staff.

As I began refining these ideas in 1982 I was very aware that I had moved a long way from my original ten week course. Now I knew that I was proposing a long slow process which would require at least a small change in the roles and skills of a range of professional educators in the community and in the schools. They too would have to take part in a number of partnerships and might find this extremely bewildering, even - for some - threatening. It might be quite a shift for some to see themselves as the specialist partners to parents who, it turned out held the central, if diffused role in their children's education. Parents who had the right to have the myth taken out of the infant curriculum so that they could participate. They might also find it a strain to partner professionals in other fields and move towards co-ordinating the local educational provision across

underfives, community, libraries and schools.

I was therefore clear about the role of the new project's staff. (17) They would not be repeating the Govan work. They would be supporting the local professionals in Priesthill so that the kind of work which had been done by special project workers in Govan would eventually become part of 'the System' and be carried out by underfives personnel, teachers, community workers and librarians as a normal part of their professional duties.

For me this was a change in emphasis learned the hard way through a painful period of trying to affect the system simply by example and by responding to spontaneous interest. To be successful the new project in Priesthill has to help educational practitioners adapt their roles in specific ways. The changes required neither great financial outlay nor major time commitment from mainline staff. The challenge was in quite a different direction.

They would be asked to look at the process even more than the content of their relationships with parents. Hopefully we would be able to produce little 'starter-packs' which would supply the matter for parents meetings and activities. But would community workers, underfives personnel, teachers and librarians all be willing to learn the lessons coming from research on the

pace and the process of educational partnership? Would they be willing to see themselves as a co-ordinated group of professional workers with a unified approach in a geographical area?

If parents and professionals together were willing to build up a creative yet predictable environment rich in adult/child meaningful talk, we would have gone a long way towards overcoming the problem of inner city underachievement. I knew this goal was far in the future, but its light lit up the path for me and I became immersed in attempt after attempt to write it all down so that others could see the vision. The immediate 'others' were the Education Department's officials and the Bernard van Leer Foundation's decision makers.

I was to learn that permission to discuss was one thing, freedom to follow talk with action was something else. The encouraging response I received from the van Leer Foundation to my tentative proposal for funding included an invitation to fly to Holland at their expense and present my case. In Glasgow that provoked stormy interviews, threats, tears and finally, since I went to Holland despite their protests, a formal warning on my successful return. (18)

It also provided some laughter behind the scenes. 'Boedicea' they called me - and sometimes even 'Atilla the Nun'! One official's version of the story was said to include his conclusion that, at the end of his demands and commands, the only way left for him to stop my flying to Holland was to 'Declare a state of emergency and close the airport!' Another's after dinner story was 'I took disciplinary action against her and she said, "Thank you - and here is the small fortune I obtained towards the work."'

But I was really very angered and upset by the whole unpleasant procedure which put me through quite unnecessary pain. To soothe my feelings I wrote up my version of the story as if it were a chapter from Alice in Wonderland. I called it 'Alice in the Sweet Education Castle.' (19) In this administrative castle the simple and naive Alice found a variety of 'sweets' in charge. Her requests to them were, of course, full of gentle reason. The response of the 'sweets' depended on their type, for some were Cough Drops who felt free to cause Alice's eyes to sting with tears and others were officious Smarties. but worst of all were the Sugared Almonds. The introduction to the story notes: 'I have frequently observed that as people move up the ladder of power anywhere, they begin to present a smoother and sweeter manner but at the same time a harder and harder

shell which offers no openings for real dialogue. This is not to suggest they they are unpleasant or insincere. They may be the best of people, but they remind me of sugared almonds - pastel, well groomed, smooth and impenetrable - with no hint on the surface of the kind of nut that is inside. In my experience sugared almonds come in every size in Local Authority Administration.'

At a different level from all these teacup storms, progress was being made within the context of Strathclyde Region's determined effort to implement its 'Social Strategy for the 80's'. On February 18th 1983 representative Council employees from all its Services were called together to participate in a seminar, 'Children in Adversity'. In some ways this was a Local Authority response to the 1974 University seminar at which Peter Wedge, an author of the research document 'Born to Fail?' had presented statistics which showed the appalling extent of Glasgow's disadvantage and its related underachievement. Peter Wedge was present again at the 1983 seminar as Councillors and officials weighed up how they were collectively tackling the problems highlighted almost ten years previously. This time there was an additional visitor from outside the Region, one who had a contribution to make to the Region's response. Dr. Fred Wood, a Scot, though based in The Hague as head of programmes for the van Leer Foundation, was present in

the audience.

As the public meeting ended, another began in private. Councillors and officials gathered to meet Dr. Wood, whose Foundation supported research-linked innovative programmes for young disadvantaged children and their families in 36 countries across the world. They had assembled to discuss with him how this Foundation might co-operate with the Region in developing the co-ordinated approach to the education of young children which I had already piloted in Govan and had now described in a draft document as a basis for a submission for funding.

It was quite a surprise to learn that the Foundation had, over a period of five years, followed my work as it clarified and showed itself to be rooted in reality as well as in theory. I would suspect that most of the Councillors present at that meeting had never heard of me or my work, but they were genuinely interested in a new approach to the educational system in which so many of Glasgow's citizens were currently failing, so they were happy enough to assure Dr. Wood that they wanted to try out my co-ordinated, parent/professional partnership ideas within the educational service. Of course the officials present stoutly declared they were in complete agreement with this idea. With such assurances, made concrete by a commitment to fund two staff members for a

new version of the work to be set up in the large council housing estate of Priesthill, Dr. Wood agreed to present a submission to his Board of Trustees for an initial three years funding. The details of the submission, and the leadership of the emerging project, were to be left in my hands.

At 11 a.m. on 1st November 1983 I had said farewell to Govan and was standing alone in a bare, cold, dilapidated classroom in Priesthill about to begin all over again. It was nine years since I had knocked on Maisie's door in Wine Alley and been offered the help of one hour each week in my search for the key to inner city education's success. Now the Partnership in Education Project which had grown from the lessons of those years was about to start.

By this time I knew that children would develop their thinking skills best if all the significant adults in their environment were willing to share creative experiences with them and help them talk in ways which strengthened their planning, reflecting and negotiating skills. I had been confirmed during those nine years in my original guess that the most significant of these adults in shaping children's expectations and patterns of action were their parents and the others who make up the home community. I was quite sure now that this was the

central partnership and the hub of all learning. I had also learned that what the educational practitioners had to do was to accommodate this reality within their professional range of work. That made up the second kind of partnership and this new Partnership in Education project was going to address itself particularly to that task. A third partnership, co-ordinating the varying professionals themselves in community, underfives, schools and libraries would form the outer ring of the whole wheel of learning.

There was another important difference between the original starting point with Maisie and Hettie in 1974 and this new beginning in 1983. I did not have to begin this venture alone. Support and co-operation were secure from a variety of sources. My line management now had at its head an official who had at least some general appreciation of what I was trying to do and had even, on occasion, supported it. Irene Kay and Stanley Struthers from Strathclyde University had helped me plan the final version of the grant submission document for this new beginning and would now, as the project's evaluators, support me by pointing out the lessons on the way.

There was also local support. Meetings had already been held with parents and practitioners from the community and from every form of educational organization;

Children's Centre, Nursery, Schools, Library, Community and Adult Education Centres as well as the Social Work Department and the Colleges of Education. Processes were even then being set up to involve all these people in the setting of criteria for staff selection and in deciding who would be on appointment panels. (20) From this beginning the new team would have at least a few committed local partners from the start.

More immediately, as the blank walls looked down impassively on my fidgety anxiety on that November day, a little band of tried and trusted co-workers were at that moment preparing to join me. Vi, the serenely competent Govan secretary was seeing second hand furniture on to a removal van at a training workshop before joining me as Project Administrator. Tony, an audio visual specialist who had agreed to edit videos for me found himself at one end of the tables being donated to the project from another source. Anna and Joe who had been link teachers in Priesthill in the Urban Aid phase and had been appointed by the Local Authority to join me as Development Workers, were just then leaving the schools they had served to help me unload the van as it arrived.

Finding such a new home for the work had not been easy. I had visited every one of the eight primary schools in the new project's area asking for accommodation. Most

had been built at a time of rising rolls and were now operating with decimated numbers. But work expands to fill the space available and it seemed there were no empty rooms. It crossed my mind that there might have been room for me, at least in some settings, if the proposed tenant had not seemed too much like a cuckoo in the nest, liable to cause inconvenience to my host - to say the least. Whatever the cause, no one offered accommodation, no one that is, except Ellis Poole, headteacher of Burnbrae Primary where Anna had worked. Ellis made the generous - some might say, courageous - move of inviting us into her school.

1986 saw the end of the first phase of this new 'Partnership in Education' project. The work started so long ago in 'Wine Alley' was at last beginning to affect the Local Authority educational system. Supported by Angela and Rosemary from the development team, nursery nurses in a nearby Children's Centre were extending their role to work with parents in ways which incorporated many theoretical insights into simple parent-centred events called 'Baby Talk' and 'the Wednesday Group'. This educational experience did not stand alone. Parents who brought their little ones to this Children's Centre or to the local Nursery or Primary Schools could also accompany them to one of the 'Family Nights'. There Peter brought theory and practice together in parent/child fun events

which were followed by group reflections on both practicalities and inner educational meanings. Together underfives centres and the parent-led 'Family Nights' provided similarly informed educational support on home ground for parents and children before school began.

'Family Nights' continued across the first few years of school supporting parents with educational ideas, negotiating and problem solving skills and self esteem as they began to work with their children's teachers. It was now clear that the growing sense of equality which could spring from this community experience helped to make home/school meetings balanced events rather than completely led - some might even say dominated - by the school.

This was a difficult idea to get across to a Local Authority which still equated education with schooling. I was painfully aware of this from an incident some years previously when the term 'building a bridge between home and school' was the slogan. I was present at a meeting where it was taken for granted that all initiative should come from the school. Eventually I exploded at an unsuspecting bureaucrat, demanding if an observable engineering fact had escaped him. 'A bridge is built from both ends!' I had reminded him in exasperation and gone home to prepare a cartoon in which half a bridge

stuck out from a school and a teacher walked towards its edge over deep water. At the other side of the page the label 'home' had no matching structure. 'You are asking teachers to "walk the plank"' the caption said. The accompanying letter warned that I was not prepared to run lifesaving classes when the appropriate action was co-operation with Community Education who could offer informal educational support to the parents' efforts.

I had my doubts, even in 1986, that this point had been taken, though by then we had Family Nights as one clear element for the home side of that bridge. The school side of this bridge had quite a few arches in place by the end of the project's first phase as brief, low-cost parent programmes based on the infant curriculum were introduced by class teachers - showing varying degrees of confidence! Anna, Fiona and Joe, the development workers, were now gradually moving on to prepare preservice and inservice materials in which theory and practice could be seen to meet in a rich but very simple, comfortable pattern.

Across all these educational areas of underfives, community and schools ran the co-ordinating influence of books and book-based activities as Kenneth drew these different educational strands together with his many sided programmes based on well known stories like the

Three Bears or Postman Pat. Through each, like a river, ran increased analysing, sequencing and communicating skills for children.

Now the Partnership in Education Centre, based in the former infant department wing of Burnbrae school looks set to become Strathclyde Region's resource and development centre for home/school/community work. Here people can find theory and practice together. In the immediate area, beginning with the host school, there are practical examples of parent/professional partnerships which address the problem of underachievement in inner city pupils. In the Centre itself there is a growing emphasis on the production of 'starter-packs' for others who wish to apply these principles to their own area. What principles you ask? It is time to try to lay out the main points of this background theory in some accessible form.

7 Home/School/Community Fair, 'Palace of Art',  
Glasgow, 4 June 1981.

8 BM31, 1ff (16 June and 29 June 1981).

9 'Getting it Together', Home School Community  
Conference, Glasgow (25 March 1982).

10 L.J. Schweinhart, D.P. Weikart, Young Children  
Grow Up, Ypsilanti, U.S.A., 1980.

11 BM37, 27 (March 1982).

12 BM37, 120 (March 1982).

13 BM37, 132 (March 1982).

14 The Bernard van Leer Foundation describes itself  
in its literature as: 'An international non-profit making  
institution dedicated to the cause of disadvantaged  
youth.'

15 BM38 1, (14 January 1983).

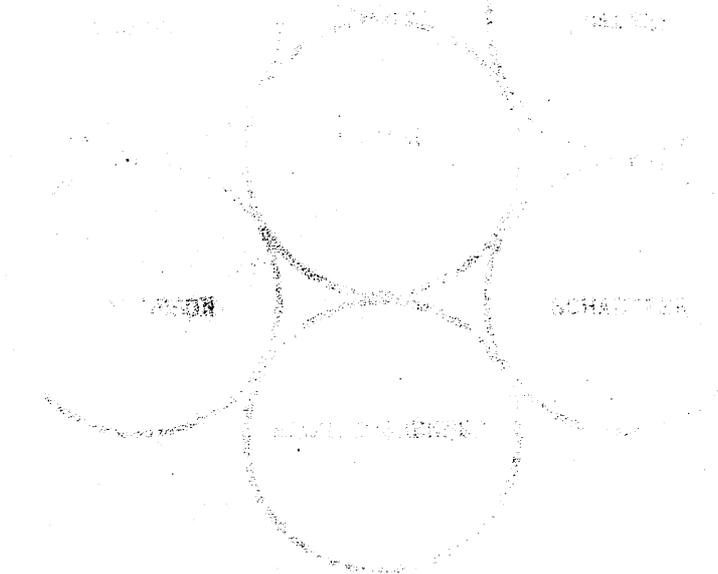
16 BM43 (August 1983).

17            Background Notes for prospective  
home/school/community tutors, a 'Partnership in  
Education' document (December 1983).

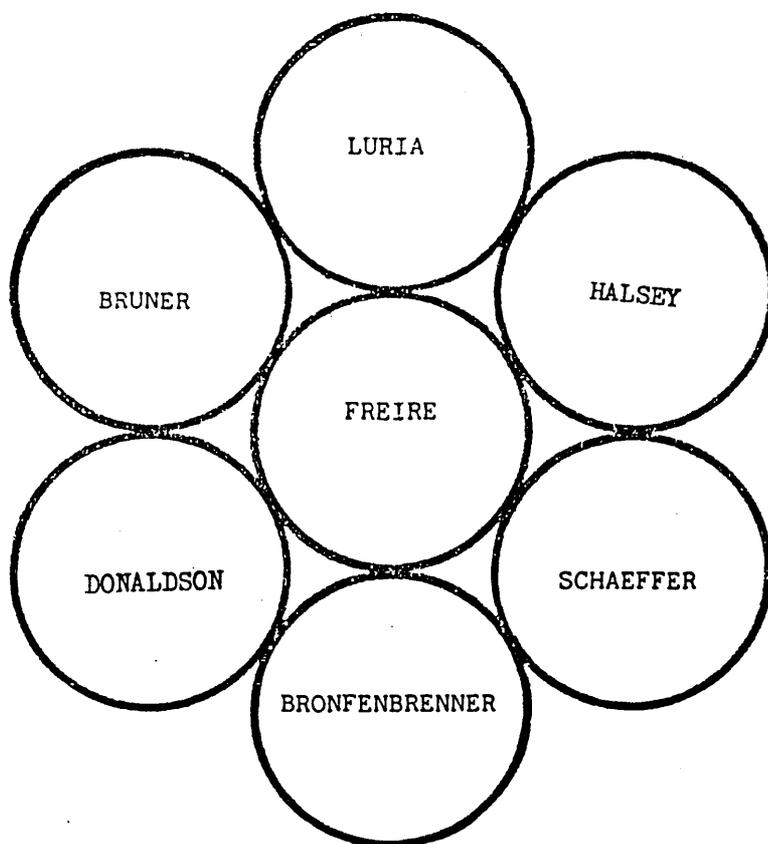
18            Formal Warning: Glasgow Division Department of  
Education: 18 January 1983.

19            BM39 (January/February 1983).

20            BM45, Report/Forecast 1984 to the Bernard van  
Leer Foundation (January 1984).



## Seeds for the City



## CHAPTER 12

### SEEDS FOR THE CITY

The preceding chapters have offered the reader vicarious participation in a Glasgow action-research study. This chapter invites involvement in a very different way as it, first, elaborates the three cardinal principles which guided this work from the outset and, secondly, reflects upon a fourth and integrative notion - positive co-ordination - which, as the work proceeded, proved to be equally important to its overall success.

The values which originally guided Learning Relations were as follows; that parents are the most important educators of their own children; that language skills are positively associated with intellectual power; and that education only becomes genuinely liberating when it is carried out in dialogue.

## Parents as educators

'Children are educated by their whole environment', begins one of the 1974 'Stairhead Seminar' videos.(1) It continues: 'The school has a specialist function, but the central place belongs to the home.' These statements incorporate an awareness of the crucial role of parents in education and express the earliest principle on which Learning Relations was built.

In 1970 a few heads of schools (including myself), met together with a small group of researchers and administrators from Britain and the U.S.A. The seminar, held in Oxford, was entitled, 'Education for the Less Privileged'.(2) Its key conclusion was that underachievement could not be remedied by the school alone. Instead educational progress depended on 'dissolving the frontier between school and the rest of life'. Such a positive attitude to family influence did not come about by chance. It arose from the convergence of two lines of research, one from the United States, the other from Britain.

U.S.A. influence.

The U.S.A. evidence focussed largely on parent-child interaction. Four investigators in this field had a particular influence on Learning Relations: a psychometrician from North Carolina (Earl Schaefer); a professional research worker in inner-city New York (Phyllis Levenstein); the professor of psychology, human development and family studies at Cornell University (Urie Bronfenbrenner) and a cognitive psychologist from Ypsilanti, Michigan (Dave Weikart).

Schaefer was one of the Oxford seminar participants. During the Sixties his work became well known among educational practitioners in the U.S.A. through his production of professional rating scales, such as the Classroom Behaviour Inventory. (3) In the closing years of that decade, however, Schaefer's educational thought underwent a sea-change. He came to the view that education was not solely the concern of professionals. Indeed, in Education of the Infant and Young Child (1970), Schaefer found a new voice. 'Parents', he wrote, 'should be recognized as the most influential educators of their own children.' (4)

Levenstein, who had become one of the leading pioneers in the Headstart movement, added to this argument in the same year. She challenged the view that parents are merely the educational auxiliaries of professional teachers. Her co-workers were encouraged, instead, to highlight the educational potential of the parent-child dyad. 'Keep constantly in mind' she told them, 'that the child's primary and continuing educational relationship is with the mother.' (5)

Bronfenbrenner was also drawn into these early childhood debates, (6) in response to conflicting claims about the effectiveness of intervention programmes. As part of a survey of more than 150 projects, (7) he drew attention to three elements which, he believed, gave educational potential to any parent-child relationship.

First, Bronfenbrenner pointed out that the very existence of prolonged parent-child contact necessarily makes the home an important educational setting. Secondly he noted that, in this setting, parents provide their children with a powerful role-model of learning and teaching. Finally Bronfenbrenner proposed that if this model was to be educational it should involve, 'parent-child verbal interaction around a cognitively challenging task.' (8)

Weikart's work centred on the early stimulation of

cognitive ability. (9) In the nineteen seventies he set up High/Scope, an educational centre to test his ideas about the educational value of a 'cognitive curriculum'. Young children were given an intellectually stimulating start; a requisite, Weikart believed, for making use of later learning opportunities. Moreover, using his cognitive curriculum, Weikart paid particular attention to children's thinking skills. These should be, he claimed, 'highly visible at school entry'. (10) Skill in expressing intellectual ability was crucial at that point, he declared, because both adults and children were coming to important conclusions within the first few days in class, 'judgements made by children', Weikart pointed out, 'about their status as learners as well as by the teacher about each child's potential.' (11)

#### British influence

If the U.S.A. response to underachievement was focused on the parent-child dyad, the British response focused on the educational potential of the child's neighbourhood. British efforts were largely concentrated in five Educational Priority Area projects (1969-72). (12) Three leaders of this EPA movement had a significant influence on Learning Relations: the West Riding research officer, George Smith; the Liverpool project leader, Eric

Midwinter; and the national director of the whole initiative, A.H.Halsey.

Smith and his research team identified education as a community process. All the significant adults in a child's environment were recognized as educators - a role which was no less effective for often being unconsciously fulfilled. This view made it unproductive to concentrate support for learning within educational institutions. The learning possibilities within the day-long, year-long environment had to be exploited, if any real change was to come about. But this understanding came too late for the EPA projects themselves. 'The recognition that the child forms part of a larger social group of family and community' wrote Smith in 1975, has implications for educational reform which have hardly been touched' .(13)

Midwinter's team, in the Liverpool EPA,(14) was concerned with demonstrating how a parent's local knowledge and the teacher's pedagogy can be combined to develop a child's learning skills. Striking examples of parent-professional partnerships were presented in the inner city district known as 'Liverpool 8'.(15) But the achieving of such collaboration, even for a single short-term study, was a monumental task. Educational Priority, reporting on this work in 1975, notes

regretfully, 'It could take a generation or more to persuade teachers and parents to co-operate at this level' (16)

Halsey, as national director of the whole EPA initiative, focused on the future. Futurology as prediction, he noted, was no more than an acceptance of the recent past. The EPAs brought action and research together 'to change the world by understanding it.' Their concern, therefore, was with moving education forward to a 'postulated... desired, future state.' They were involved in 'futurology by design'. (17)

This notion of a deliberate, integrated design for educational change had a profound impact on Learning Relations. (18) This study is a conscious attempt to provide such a design. The first step was to combine ideas on parent/child interaction, developed in the United States, with two further suggestions from the work of Smith and Midwinter. Recently Halsey identified these as follows: 'The key words in both Plowden and the EPA reports,' he said, 'were, "community" and "equality".' (19)

## Language and intellectual power

Human language is a complex mystery which has sustained analysis from many perspectives. The facet which has been developed in Learning Relations concerns the connection between language and cognition. It draws particularly on the work of three writers: Luria, Bruner and Donaldson.

Luria was part of the Russian school which came to prominence alongside the popularization of Vygotsky's work in the nineteen seventies.(20) The speech of parents and other significant adults, Luria taught, influences a young child's intelligence and self-directing ability. 'The word, handing on the experience of generations,' he says, 'becomes a tremendous tool.'(21)

In his classic twin study, Luria demonstrates how young children develop this tool and begin to use it to plan and to reflect. Initially these twins had very little speech and occupied themselves with repetitive, unimaginative play. Three months later, after extensive thought-provoking talk with adults, they used language

within their play to plan and to build a complex model of their world. In so doing, Luria claimed, they gained power over their surroundings through the use of two vital cognitive skills: analysis and synthesis. Interaction with adults who use problem-solving speech, 'introduced new potentialities for the organization of the child's mental life.' (22)

Bruner, working in the U.S.A., was also concerned with the relationship between language and experience. As far back as 1964, (23) he saw language as a tool which allowed reflection to be combined with knowledge such that new 'realms of intellectual possibility' could be uncovered. Yet, for children to acquire this level of language skill, Bruner concluded that they need to organize their thoughts through the medium of verbal interaction with adults. Children have to discover, he said, that words are like 'cognitive coin(s)' which can be exchanged with the adults in their environment.

The effect of such to-and-fro talk, Bruner believed, was to 'unlock' the child's capacity. A sentence from Bruner's 1964 essay ran like a refrain throughout the implementation of Learning Relations: 'What is significant about the growth of mind in the child is to what degree it depends not on capacity but upon the unlocking of capacity.' (24)

Donaldson's contribution to Learning Relations was to highlight the importance of the written word. 'The lasting character of print,' she points out in Children's Minds, (25) 'means that there is time to stop and think.' This important attribute - equally true of personal writing - provides an opportunity for reflection and discernment, as well as for language awareness. The written word can lead, she concludes, to 'incalculable consequences for the development of the kinds of thinking which are characteristic of logic, mathematics and the sciences' (26)

There is a quantum leap between the more immediate expression of words embedded in current experience and these higher skills of analysis, synthesis and discernment. As Luria, Bruner and Donaldson all point out, disembedded, or generalizable language is a learned skill. Children do not automatically acquire those forms of cognition, for they are divorced from proximate practice. Luria and Bruner both discuss how an adult may help to hand on these skills. Donaldson alone faces the problem that children require more than the support of an interested adult. They need, 'the resources of the culture, she says, 'marshalled in a sustained effort.' (27) In that phrase Donaldson offered to Learning Relations a challenge which grew with the study.

Children's learning required that the resources of parents and professionals be 'marshalled.'

### Education as Dialogue

Paulo Freire is resident professor of education at the university of Sao Paulo, Brazil and visiting professor at Harvard's Center for Studies in Education and Development. In the nineteen sixties he created a new pedagogy of dialogue among the poor farmers of Northern Brazil. They were trapped, he said, (28) in a 'culture of silence' - submerged in an economic and social situation in which critical awareness and response were practically impossible. Freire's educational revolution profoundly affected not only these farmers, but the lives of millions of people in all the Americas. An English translation of his works in 1972 extended that influence to Britain and so to Learning Relations. Looking back from the nineteen eighties, Freire summed up his method in the following terms: 'Through dialogue, reflecting together on what we know and don't know, we can act critically to transform reality.' (29)

'Reality', Freire insists, 'is really a process, undergoing constant transformation.' (30) Human knowledge, therefore, is always incomplete. Teaching,

in this view, cannot be a matter of 'telling'. Whether working with children or adults, the teacher should never be a 'well intentioned bank clerk' (31) storing nuggets of finished information in the pupil's mind. Instead, the work of both teacher and taught is a search for an ever clearer expression of truth. 'Searching,' Freire says, 'is indispensable to the act of knowing.' (32)

Education is dynamically developed when parents and professionals carry out this search in partnership. 'Knowledge emerges,' according to Freire, 'through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry people pursue.' (33) Such interaction also has a positive effect on those taking part. Through dialogue, Freire believes, 'People achieve significance as people.' (34)

Freirian dialogue is centred on 'generative themes' and 'codes.' A generative theme is an issue which spontaneously generates a reaction in the whole person, mind and heart. Distress and anxiety are, therefore, as likely to arise in such dialogue as enthusiasm and joy. Yet, good does not automatically come out of bad, so the dialogue is carefully structured to channel attention towards a positive goal. The process begins with listening to what people say, to what makes them withdraw into silence and to what releases that trust which allows them to communicate again. As Freire puts it, 'it

becomes the duty of the educator to search for appropriate paths for the learner to travel.' (35)

Presenting information is not the main task in such dialogue. The learners, not the subject matter, are the focus. Information only has impact, Freire maintains, when a question has already been raised, at least implicitly. In an area such as schooling where people only have experience as recipients, not as providers, many questions are submerged and surface merely as muffled reactions. The first task, then, is to identify the main concepts within these inchoate responses. (36)

Once the themes have been identified, the group leader's task is to find 'codes' which will epitomize the themes and so re-present them for focussed dialogue. (37) A Freirian code is an arrangement of the theme in some evocative form - tape recording, picture, activity or role play. This detached form of presentation frees the participants to speak their hidden and often unconsidered thoughts, instead of automatically regurgitating some learned or expected response.

In the context of underachievement in school, the ultimate goal of such dialogue is an improvement in children's learning. But there are intermediate goals. Parents need to work through hidden fears and feelings

which block successful involvement in their children's education. Positive feelings have to be strengthened in two areas; pride in their role as educators of their own children and interest in widening their own knowledge base and personal scope. The parents are, therefore, the central participants in this educational dialogue; talking and discerning with their own children, with each other and with professional educators.

### Reflection

Three seeds were selected from the most successful educational experiments of the nineteen sixties (38) and cultivated by Learning Relations for twelve years. The chosen remit was to fashion a viable whole from these successful - but disparate - elements. The goal was to create, by this means, an educational environment in which children learned successfully, parents supported that learning confidently, and professionals shared their expertise co-operatively.

The first eleven chapters of this thesis describe the steps taken in pursuit of that goal and the gradual emergence of creative yet predictable learning environments for children in small areas of Glasgow. It remains to summarize here the problems encountered and to

discuss the final development required to reach the project's end.

As the study unfolded it became apparent that the three initial principles did not automatically work to support each other. Moreover, disproportionate attention to any one of them obscured the coherence of the design. Inevitably this led to a misreading of the project's goal. Where the strategic goal was not recognized, then the resultant action was fragmented, dissipating the power of the whole. And where the goal was not accepted as legitimate, then resulting action caused alarm.

Fragmentation was expressed in the isolated application of one principle, eclipsing the significance of the others. The problem was demonstrated when a parent-child activity did not highlight cognitive stimulation; excessive zeal for language skills disallowed full parental participation; or an overriding desire to impart information undermined constructive dialogue. This tension between emphases became more pressing in Learning Relations as the number and variety of participants increased. It gradually became apparent that the final goal of co-operative and successful learning was often unrecognized by those who had not participated in the project's underpinning theory. Both for those who saw the potential of Learning Relations

and for those who feared it, the principles and purpose had to be made explicit. For that purpose then to be achieved, planned co-ordination of resources became an immediate objective.

#### Positive Co-ordination.

Learning Relations began with an awareness that underachievement could not be tackled successfully unless educational resources operated as a cohesive whole. Children need both the experience handed on by parents and the stored learning of varied groups of professionals. And they need them in harmony. During the study it became increasingly clear that an optimum level of unity had to be created from the surrounding diversity. To promote all three principles - and create a coherent educational environment - positive co-ordination was required.

Sharing ideas at the meta-level of inclusive goals is a formidable task. It is equally daunting to keep every practical element in strict balance while encouraging people to become enthusiastic about their own contributions. To keep both cardinal principles and the developing action together, a shared awareness of the assumptions which upheld the overarching vision had to be maintained through constant dialogue. This integrating

factor required a positive place in the project design.

Co-ordination will not 'happen'. (39) It requires conscious decision to participate in open and trusting dialogue on principles, processes and plans. The two urban settings in which Learning Relations operated include underfives centres, a public library and a Community Education service, as well as many informal meeting places. A cohesive educational environment could only come about through the co-ordination of all these agencies with home and school. Such a 'marshalling' of resources (40) necessitated a mutual exploration of the distinctive contributions, as well as boundaries, of each agency. Attempts to set up this process were made with increasing precision over the study's twelve years. Initially these were planned by the project team, while local leadership developed. Finally, in 1987, parents and professionals, from a wide range of agencies, took positive steps at a local conference to plan together the coordination of an interactive learning environment in the neighbourhood. The seeds had taken root in the real world.

## Epilogue

Education is like a centipede, it walks on many legs - or it does not advance at all. This thesis has examined the dynamics of that movement: the educational power of the home, heightened by the conscious use of problem-solving skills; the potential of a neighbourhood as an educational unit, in which the school holds a unique - yet integrated - place; language as a tool, forming and shaping the mind - or a coin, facilitating the exchange of thought. Central to the release of all these beneficial forces, is a responsive awareness to people. Children's success in learning is closely related to the positive bonds between those adults who touch their lives.

The notion is really very simple. But it requires time, commitment and shared planning to bring it to fruition. Some educators may cling to a Lewis Carrol world of: 'No time! No time!' But there is plenty of time - if positive commitment to the co-ordination of educational resources is a first priority.

CHAPTER 12

NOTES

- 1 V 02 (1974).
- 2 Ditchley Paper 29. Report of a conference at Ditchley Park, Oxford. 20-23 February 1970
- 3 E.S.Schaefer, M.R.Aaronson, Classroom Behavior Inventory, Preschool to Primary, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1965.
- 4 E.S.Schaefer, 'Need for Early and Continuing Education', in Education of the Infant and Young Child, 1970, 79.  
See also, E.S.Schaefer, 'Toward a Revolution in Education', in P.L. Houts (ed), The National Elementary Principal, Washington, 1971; 'Parents as Educators: Evidence from Research', in Young Children, New York, 1972; Summary of Research on Parent-Focused Child Development Programs, St.Louis, 1975; 'Parent Interview and Socio-Demographic Predictors', Paper presented at American Psychologists Association Convention, Chapel Hill, 1979; 'Maternal Infancy Predictors of School Adaptation of Low-Income Children', Paper presented at Society for Research in Child Development,

Toronto, Canada, 1985; 'Parent and Child Co-relates of Parental Modernity', in Parental Belief Systems: The Psychological Consequences for Children, London, 1985. Personal contact with Earl Schaefer, after the 1970 Oxford seminar, has taken the form of a lengthy visit to Chapel Hill in 1979 and intermittent correspondence up to the present time.

5 P. Levenstein, 'Cognitive Growth in Preschoolers Through Verbal Interaction with Mothers', American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1970, 40, 429.

6 See, for example, A. Jensen, 'How Much can we Boost I.Q. and Scholastic Achievement?', Harvard Educational Review, 1969, 39, 1-123.

7 U. Bronfenbrenner, 'Is Early Intervention Effective?', in M. Guttentag and E. Struering (eds), Handbook of Evaluation Research, Beverley Hills, 1974.

8 Ibid., 594.

9 Weikart's experimental and control groups in the Perry Preschool project have been followed up for twenty years. See D. P. Weikart, Preschool Intervention: Preliminary Results of the Perry Preschool Project, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1967; and J. R. Berrueta-Clement,

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1984. See also, D.Z.Lambie, J.T.Bond, J.P.Weikart,  
Home Teaching with Mothers and Infants, Ypsilanti,  
Michigan, 1974.

10 L.J.Schweinhart and D.P.Weikart, Young Children Grow Up,  
Ypsilanti, Michigan, 1980, 10.

11 This discussion of Rist's findings, (Rist, 1971) caused  
Learning Relations to create a set of parent/teacher  
programmes in preparation for school entry.  
Weikart's personal contact with Learning Relations  
was first by exchange visits. Later support from  
High/Scope came through regular visits to Glasgow  
(1981-83) by Terry Bond, then head of research, as  
well as through Weikart's public lecture in 1982.

12 Educational Priority, HMSO, 1972-1975, vols. 1-5.

13 Educational Priority, HMSO, 1975, 4, 253. See also,  
G.Smith, 'Positive Discrimination by Area in  
Education: the EPA idea re-examined', Oxford  
Review of Education, 1977, 3 (3) 269-281; and  
G.Smith, 'The Experience of action research in  
Britain 1970-80,' Journal of Community Education.

1981, 1 (1), 31-46.

14 E. Midwinter, Priority Education: An Account of the Liverpool Project, Hammondsworth, 1973.

15 Educational Priority, 1, 154.

16 Educational Priority, 1, 136.

17 Educational Priority, 1, 4 and 165. See also, A.H. Halsey, 'Would Chance still be a Fine Thing?' Report on the O.E.C.D. conference, Paris, 1975; Change in British Society, Oxford, 1978, (revised editions, 1981 and 1986) A.H. Halsey, J. Karabel (eds), Power and Ideology in Education, New York, 1977, A.H. Halsey, A.F. Heath, J. Ridge, Origins and Destinations, Oxford, 1980.

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- 19 A.H.Halsey and K.Sylva, 'Flowden: History and Prospect,'  
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1962. This translation of Vygotsky's writings  
allowed his work to come to the attention of many  
Western educationalists. Bruner and Donaldson both  
express their debt to him.
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- 22 Ibid.,24.
- 23 J.Bruner, 'The Course of Cognitive Growth' in American  
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- 24 Ibid., 166. See also, J.Bruner, The Process of  
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- 25 M.Donaldson, Children's Minds, Glasgow, 1978.

- 26 Ibid., 95.
- 27 Ibid., 123. See also, M.Donaldson, R.Greive, C.Pratt (eds), Early Childhood Development and Education, Oxford, 1983.
- 28 P.Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Harmondsworth, 1972, 12.
- 29 P.Freire and I.Shor, A Pedagogy for Liberation, London, 1987, 99.
- 30 Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 48.
- 31 Ibid., 48
- 32 P.Freire, Pedagogy in Process, New York, 1978, 11.
- 33 Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 46.
- 34 Ibid., 61.
- 35 Freire, Pedagogy in Process, 10.

- 36 Freire placed great emphasis on time series data, in the form of audio and video tapes, as an accurate source of these concepts. cf Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 93ff. See also data base transcripts and tapes in this thesis.
- 37 Examples of codes are reported throughout this text. In addition, the thesis format is itself a code for the reader.
- 38 Most of the large scale successful experiments have still to be implemented. For events surrounding Headstart see, Westinghouse Learning Corporation & Ohio University, The Impact of Headstart Experience on Children's Cognitive and Affective Development, Springfield, Virginia, 1969; E.R.House, et al. No Simple Answer, Urbana, Illinois, 1977; I.Lazar and R.Darlington, Lasting Effects after Preschool, Washington, 1979. For a detailed study of the EPA outcomes see, G.Smith, 'Whatever Happened to Educational Priority Areas?', Oxford Review of Education, 1987 (13) 1. For a summary of other studies see, W.Donachy, 'Parent participation in Preschool Education,' British Journal of Educational Psychology, 1976, 46, 31-39.

39 cf W.G.Bennis, K.D.Benne, R.Chin, The Planning of Change, London, 1970. See also, Strathclyde Regional Council, Social Strategy for the Eighties, Glasgow, 1983.

40 Donaldson, Children's Minds, 123.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **METHODOLOGICAL RATIONALE**

## METHODOLOGICAL RATIONALE

Underachievement, like any other problem, does not immediately 'leap out' as the onlooker observes a community going about its daily life. The relationship between educational success or failure and the real lives of people in low-income areas is only revealed when viewed through a relevant theoretical framework. An appropriate research method must then flow from that theory.

Certain of the research practices which informed *Learning Relations* have already been discussed in chapter 12 (viz. the attention given to dialogue, to language use and to parent-child interaction). This appendix provides the background to two additional yet complementary concerns: the project's commitment - retained throughout - to an action-research style of investigation and the decision - taken much later - to adopt a Freirian stance in the presentation of this thesis.

## Action-Research

'Action-research is not itself a method of research,' wrote George Smith in 1981.(1) He was reflecting on the British EPA initiative, in one of whose projects he had served as research officer. Thinking over his experience, Smith had been led to the view that action-research describes inquiries where action and research are conducted in tandem. Learning Relations fits this definition. Its action component sought to promote change on the basis, among other things, of the accumulated knowledge of earlier change - agents; and its research component sought, in a comparably disciplined manner, to reflect upon the consequences of that 'action'. Thus Learning Relations drew not only on the personal experiences of local participants but also on a large body of research literature.

The action component

Freire, whose concept of education is central to this whole thesis, had two points to make about what he called, 'problem-posing education.'(2) It must strive, he said, 'for the emergence of consciousness.' This aim, within the limited field of Learning Relations,

was interpreted as increasing parents' awareness that they are the prime educators of their own children. Freire's second point was that such interactive education would lead to 'critical intervention in reality.' The action in this study began, therefore, by sharing with parents the principles which underpin the emphasis on adult/child cognitive language skills. Only on the basis of such knowledge could their practice be 'a critical intervention.' Certain chapter titles in this thesis indicate the progress both of that awareness and of the informed intervention: Stairhead Seminars, Experience-based Learning, Shared Awakening, Partnership in Preparation.

Freire's view of the relationship between an alert group of parents and the qualified educators who are in positions of leadership is: 'The more sophisticated knowledge of the leaders is remade in the empirical knowledge of the people, while the latter is refined by the former.' (3) A complementary task in *Learning Relations*, therefore, was work with professional educators. Chapters 3,5,7,10 and 11 offer a range of examples. In the earlier chapters the researcher and project teams are the chief learners. Later they were able to share what they had learned with other professionals. This became increasingly prominent as the study continued.

Professional support took two forms. One was the direct process of seminars, conferences and short courses. The second, and particularly effective form, was though the development of easy and enjoyable practices in which theory was securely embedded. Thus professionals were invited to explore both the ideas and the practical implications of becoming, in Schaefer's terms; 'more effective collaborators with those highly conscious parents.' (4)

Chapter 12 discusses the research which underpinned that action throughout its twelve years. Constant contact with researchers, both personally and through their writings, provided further direction as the study progressed. The subsequent selection of relevant theory was guided by Freire who insisted that investigations should develop in an orderly fashion as a 'thematic fan.' (5) Through reflection, 'codifications should open up in the direction of other themes.'

This 'opening up' caused the action to develop in three phases. The first of these, following an M.Ed. course in Liverpool, concentrated on discussions with parents about what Stones called 'the optimum atmosphere for learning.' (6) Stones' Learning and Teaching (7) provided the basic content for this early work. These

discussions issued in action. This accords with Freire's belief that, 'When a word is deprived of its dimension of action...it becomes an empty word.' Eric Midwinter's Liverpool seminars, (8) together with the writings of A.H.Halsey and George Smith in vols. 1 and 4 of Educational Priority, (9) suggested much of the initial format of that action. And U.S.A. intervention material, (eg Weikart's Cognitive Curriculum, (10) ) was also used selectively over those first five years.

The second phase of this study was prefaced by the visit to the United States in 1979, noted in chapters ten. That was made in the wake of the debate about the Headstart programmes and offered a period of immersion in U.S.A. research. The 1979 work of the Early Childhood Evaluation Unit in Philadelphia (11) confirmed the view held in Learning Relations that the 1969 Westinghouse evaluation criteria (12) had been inappropriate. This possibility had been raised in 1976 by House (13) and borne out (1977, 79) by Lazar's re-evaluations (14).

That U.S.A. visit afforded the opportunity for a series of meetings. In North Carolina, theory and related practice were debated at length with Earl Schaefer. Thomas MacNamara, Manager of Philadelphia's Early Childhood Evaluation, discussed both action and underlying theories in that city's wide range of

intervention programmes. The beginning of work with Dave Weikart also stemmed from this time in the United States.

The presentations by his research team at the international conference in Ann Arbor, Michigan, marked the beginning of three years of consultancy offered by Terry Bond, then head of research at High/Scope. In 1980, a computer-base literature search (15) using the Federal Data-base, ERIC, also put the action in touch with a wide range of research projects in related fields.

The third phase of the work may be conveniently dated from 1983, when a clearer expression of practice was begun in a new area of the city. Many of the practices which flowered there, however, had their roots in the preceding phase. To provide a congruent educational milieu for children, the project embraced a number of areas of action at once. Professional educators held key roles in most of these. The 'action' component of Learning Relations was, therefore, located within the Local Authority. The three main spheres of action were named: underfives, school, home/community, to fit that framework. In addition, the emphasis on language was signalled by the working title; language and literacy.

Each of these educational areas was affected separately

by new research studies. The underfives work sharpened its focus particularly on the work of Gordon Wells,(16) the studies issuing from the Thomas Coram Institute,(17) and the work of the National Children's Bureau.(18) Home/school cooperation adapted research programmes from as far afield as Brooklyn (19) and Washington (20). At the same time there was special interest in British studies such as the paired and shared reading projects at Haringey (21) and Belfield (22). Staff development courses in this whole field of literacy used Donaldson's Children's Minds as a basic text, while Joan Tough's work (24) on children's language served a similar function in the field of speech.

Only one major area of action seemed to be without comparable studies elsewhere. This was the potentially fruitful field of parent/child recreational activities. No practical examples were found on which to build programmes of work which could exploit Bronfenbrenner's idea of 'adult-child interaction round a cognitively challenging task.' (25) But this notion itself, and Freire's teaching on 'codes,' (26) provided the organizing principles for initiatives within the 'home/community' sphere of action.

The multidimensional, organic change necessary to combat underachievement cannot be brought about by small

emendations to the prevailing system. This was made clear in the classic text, The Planning of Change. (27)

Following Bennis, the scope of Learning Relations was systematically widened from 1980 onwards until action-for-change included most of the personal and institutional determinants in education. Bennis had said that change is not brought about merely by information, it also requires plans and commitment. By the time Learning Relations ended, planning - at least - was in place, and a wide range of parents and professionals were acting in conscious co-operation.

#### The Research Component.

This element of the study was, from the start, located within what could broadly be called the ethnographic or anthropological concept of research. The principal influence was from British researchers, of whom Walker, Stenhouse, Hamilton and Shipman had a sustained impact during the many years of its preparation. This was due, in part, to their presentations at the 1976 BERA conference, (28) where they raised the level of debate on contrasting research styles. In that same year this thesis formally began.

Direction was obtained from three sources: the ethnographic, case-study and evaluation literatures. The

general research model followed an historical/anthropological rather than agricultural/botanical pattern. Participants were valued, for instance, as research resources. And following Webb's notion of 'triangulation' (29) and, later, Adelman's concept of 'knowledgeable users' (30), the views and reactions of these 'insiders' were systematically sought and recorded.

The project archive data-base comprises audio, video and manuscript material, following Walker's ideas. (31) His recommendations on the conduct of educational case-studies corroborated the project's attention to the recording and analysis of all aspects of the action. The other major influence in this area was Stenhouse. (32) His detailed writings on the use of 'case records' in research was followed extensively. At the SERA conference in Glasgow in 1979 Stenhouse gave the keynote address. There he provided both the reasons for using this form of research and practical advice on how to store and present it. 'Authentication' he pointed out, 'requires a first record: the documents of the case.' (33)

The presence of two evaluation studies, each running alongside Learning Relations for a three year period, (34) provided both a stimulus to this study and access to the evaluation literature. That, in turn, affected the

evolution of this research. The interim findings were constantly fed back to participants, following the formative evaluation suggestions of Scriven. (35) The development plan was modelled on the progressive focussing idea designed by Parlett and Hamilton, (36) and following Stake's (37) ideas on 'portayal,' working papers were issued to enable outsiders to comment on the project as it unfolded. Finally, an influence on all these processes, and therefore Learning Relations, was Glaser and Strauss's notion about the 'discovery of grounded theory'. (38)

The decision to present the unfolding action in 'layman's language' (39) owes much to Shipman. A thesis is a contribution to the endless dialogue on education. It would be unprincipled to debar the parent audience from a full share in that dialogue by using 'insider' language.

Indeed, Shipman argued that such a medium of expression would also forfeit the attention of administrators and professional educators. Bruner had earlier made the same point, commenting on the ineffectiveness of research accounts which remain 'locked up in learned journals.' (40)

Above all, however, the style of presentation was shaped by Freire's writings. It had, therefore, to offer the readers the evidence from which to reach their own

conclusions. 'Liberating education' Freire asserts, 'consists in acts of cognition, not transferrals of information.' (41)

## APPENDIX NOTES

For additional references, see also NOTES to chapter 12.

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- 2 P.Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, London, 1972, 54.
- 3 Ibid., 148.
- 4 E.S.Schaefer, Summary of research on Parent-Focused Child Development Programs, St.Louis, Miss., 1975, 56.
- 5 Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 86.
- 6 E.Stones, An Introduction to Educational Psychology, London, 1966, 362.
- 7 E.Stones, Learning and Teaching, London, 1968.
- 8 Midwinter began to share his ideas locally before the EPA programme officially began. An important seminar for Learning Relations was held at Edge Hill College in 1973 when 'Priority' had begun to take over the EPA role in Liverpool.

- 9 Educational Priority, HMSO, 1972-75, vols 1-5.
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# DATA ARCHIVES

## Learning Relations

DOREEN GRANT

VOLUME 2

### APPENDICES

- 1 Discussion Transcripts
- 2 Interview Transcripts

Thesis submitted for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Education  
Faculty of Social Science  
University of Glasgow

September 1987

# Learning Relations

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DOREEN GRANT

## DISCUSSION TRANSCRIPTS

Thesis submitted for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Education  
Faculty of Social Science  
University of Glasgow

September 1986

DISCUSSION TRANSCRIPTS

001	9 September 1974
002	undated fragment
003	7 October 1974
004	7 October 1974
005	23 September 1974
006	30 September 1974
007	14 October 1974
008	21 October 1974
009	9 September 1974
010	9 September 1974
011	9 September 1974
012	16 September 1974
013	23 September 1974
014	30 September 1974
015	7 October 1974
016	7 October 1974
017	14 October 1974
018	14 October 1974
019	14 October 1974
020	21 October 1974
021	21 October 1974
022	28 October 1974
023	4 Novembr 1974
024	7 October 1974

025		7 October	1974
026		7 October	1974
027		14 October	1974
028		21 October	1974
029		28 October	1974
030		7 November	1974
031		11 May	1977
032		19 May	1977
033	Wed p.m.	16 March	1977
034	Wed p.m.	23 March	1977
035		21 September	1976
036	Wed a.m.	6 October	1976
037	Wed a.m.	13 October	1976
038	Wed p.m.	13 October	1976
039	Wed p.m.	13 October	1976
040	Thurs p.m.	14 October	1976
041	Wed p.m.	27 October	1976
042	Wed p.m.	3 November	1976
043	Wed p.m.	3 November	1976
044	Wed a.m.	3 November	1976
045	Wed a.m.	10 November	1976
046	Thurs	11 November	1976
047	Wed	17 November	1976
048	Thurs	18 November	1976
049	Wed	24 November	1976
050	Thurs	2 December	1976
051	Wed a.m.	8 December	1976

052		25 January	1977
053	Wed a.m.	2 February	1977
054	Wed a.m.	9 February	1977
055	Wed a.m.	16 February	1977
056	Wed p.m.	16 February	1977
057	Thurs p.m.	17 February	1977
058	Thurs p.m.	February	1977
059	Wed a.m.	February	1977
060	Tues eve.	1 March	1977
061	Wed a.m.	2 March	1977
062	Tues eve.	8 March	1977
063	Wed a.m.	16 March	1977
064	Wed p.m.	13 April	1977
065	Wed a.m.	11 May	1977
066	Wed	24 May	1977
067	Wed a.m.	25 May	1977
068	Wed a.m.	25 May	1977
069		1 June	1977
070		1 June	1977
071		6 June	1977
072		8 June	1977
073	Wed a.m.	14 September	1977
074	Wed a.m.	21 September	1977
075	Wed	28 September	1977
076	Wed a.m.	5 October	1977
077	Wed a.m.	12 October	1977
078	Wed p.m.	12 October	1977

079	Tues p.m.	2 November	1977
080	Wed a.m.	2 November	1977
081	Wed a.m.	15 November	1977
082	Wed a.m.	17 November	1976
083	Wed	23 November	1977
084		23 November	1977
085		30 November	1977
086		December	1977
087	Wed a.m.	11 January	1978
088	Tues p.m.	14 February	1978
089		15 February	1978
090	Mon p.m.	20 February	1978
091	Wed a.m.	21 February	1978
092	Tues p.m.	28 February	1978
093	Mon	20 March	1978
094	Wed a.m.	5 April	1978
095		10 April	1978
096	Wed	12 April	1978
097	Wed	26 April	1978
098	Wed	26 April	1978
099	Wed	3 May	1978
100	Wed	10 May	1978
101	Wed	10 May	1978
102	Thurs	11 May	1978
103	Wed	17 May	1978
104	Thurs	18 May	1978
105	Tues	30 May	1978

106	Thurs	8 June	1978
107		19 June	1978
108		5 December	1978
109		6 March	1979

008 (3)  
 101 (8)  
 110 (1)

DISCUSSION TRANSCRIPTS QUOTED IN THE TEXT

	<u>CHAPTER</u>		<u>CHAPTER</u>
001 (1ff&5)	12	086 (9&13)	8
002 (1)	2	088 (1&passim)	6
003 (1ff)	12	089 (1)	8
004 (1ff)	12	090 (9&11)	6
005 (1ff)	12	092 (1)	6
007	2	094 (1,2&passim)	6
014 (2)	2	099 (3)	8
015 (2 & <u>passim</u> & 5)		101 (8)	6
016 (1ff)	2	110 (?)	9
018 (1ff)	12	<u>INTERVIEW QUOTES</u>	
027 (1)	2	06 (1-15)	7
029 (5)	2	08 (1-9)	7
031 (1ff)	5		
035 (1ff)	4		
039 (5ff,7,14)	4		
041 (13ff)	4		
053 (12)	7		
057 (4ff)	6		
059 (12 & <u>passim</u> )	8		
061 (5)	6		
063 (5)	6		
067 (5&9)	7&8		
068 (4&7)	4		
070 (1)	7		
071 (1ff)	6		
077 (13)	4		
078 (1)	8		
085 (3ff)	8		

# Learning Relations DATA ARCHIVES

## Transcripts of Meetings

### INTRODUCTION

From 1974 until 1979 meetings with parents were regularly recorded on audiotape and transcribed immediately. The transcripts served two purposes, one was as material to aid the immediate reflection in the working process of plan, act, reflect. The second was as a long term collection of records to allow the more measured reflection over years which is recorded in this thesis. These two uses are illustrated accidentally by the scribbles and notes to be found mainly on the front pages of many individual sets of papers.

The transcripts are in two groups. Those relating to 1974 were originally collected in two family homes for an M.Ed. thesis focussing on the use and transfer of skills such as conditioning and reinforcing. They proved to have much richer and more thought provoking content and were kept as a basis for the present work. The second set 1976-79 were made at meetings set up in the Project flat and later in the Home and School Centre.

Selected here for the archives are major parts of those transcripts which refer directly or indirectly to the thesis and shorter records from other meetings for which there is no explanation in the text.

The names of participants in this study have been changed in the thesis for reasons of confidentiality. Since they are addressed by their real names in the videos, the equivalents for the principle speakers are listed below beginning with the thesis versions:-

<u>1974-1976</u>	<u>1976 - 1978</u>	<u>1979 - 1980</u>
Hettie - Helen	Anna - Alice	Ellen - Ann
Maisie - May	Donna - Dolly	
Peggy - Pat	Agnes - Ann	
Cathie - Chrissie	Miriam - Mary	
Maureen - Mary	Sheila - Susan	
Molly - Margaret	Tom - George	
Betty - Catherine	Dick )	
(a child)	Harry) - Sam	

Transcripts  
1-8

GOVAN BACKGROUND NOTES

These are records of spontaneous conversations which help to place the discussions in context. Unless otherwise indicated, they are all direct transcripts from tape recordings.

The two groups show a marked, though not a total, difference.

In Group 1 the speaker, on a number of occasions, is in command of the report, though not of the event reported. The story is told with cohesion and control.

In Group 2, the events dominate. The speakers report various facets of the current pressure without seeming to find a pattern or see a connection between the parts.

Group 1

1. May's Story: 'Pretty Willie : Repercussions from a knife-fight'.
2. Mary's Story: 'Suicide next door'.
3. Pat's Problem: 'A Tantrum reinforced'.
4. Chrissie's Problem: 'Paid off'.
5. 'T.V. Fire': A 'happening' during a discussion.

Group 2

6. Health pressures : 'The sick cannot profit from education'.
7. Social pressures : 'Feuds and Fights on the Stairhead'.
8. External pressures : 'Economic Priorities'

GROUP I

GOVAN BACKGROUND 1

September 9th 197

MAY'S STORY: 'Pretty Willie : Repercussions  
from a knife-fight'

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This transcript is from a recording made in May's home in Wine Alley where five of us meet for discussion. The rest of the group had heard the story, which rather inhibited May's flow as she now repeated it for Chrissie, a latecomer. Details from the earlier account are given at the end.

The story begins with a reminder to Chrissie of a well-known local event concerning a vicious gang member, known as "Pretty Willie". This young man of twenty-two lives with his parents in the flat above May's mother in Ibrox.

MAY: ... Pretty Willie - he's advertised plenty - he's in the Govan Team. My brother-in-law's nephew, (aged 19), was stabbed by him a fortnight ago. Stabbed there - (pointing to the lower abdomen). Well, his younger brother had a wee drink in him, and he had to go to their (Willie's parents) door. Whit for, I don't know. But anyway, my brother-in-law was with him, so that was O.K.

So last night, ma Ma (aged 53) was ready to go to the Bingo, and ma Maw's door got kicked in, and it was Pretty Willie and the boy Angus, kicked ma Ma's door in.

She went to the windae. They were making faces up at ma Ma at the windae. So ma Ma got a wee bit panicky, because we've got four boys in the hoose, you know, and they don't fight. They're no problem. (To the others, "Sure they're no?") They really canny (fight). And she's feart in case they go for them, you know!

So anyway, ma Ma must have worried about this all night. And ma Maw took a stroke this morning. She's ta'en a shock - (a heart attack) - at her work (school cleaning). They cairried her hame. I didn't know nothing about it tae I went in this morning - (to clean a school in a neighbouring district, Bellahouston Academy) - and a woman in

the work met me and told me.  
She says: "Your Ma took a wee turn".  
I says, "My Ma? She's never took anything like  
that in her life," I says. (Naw!)

And ma Maw's propped up on pillows. And she  
couldnae talk.

And they were telling us a' about it.  
I says, "That's terrible how they've got to get  
away wi' it." (Aye!)

You know, it's really nothing to dae wi' ma Maw!  
It's really because Cathie's man, ma brother-in-  
law, is up there, and they tend to think ----  
(think he's there) --- a' the time.  
(The brother-in-law's presence at Willie's door  
connected the stabbed boy with May's mother for  
the first time).

And it's really nothing to dae wi' ma Ma.

E: "Do they actually fight with knives?"

MAY: "Oh, they dae. Hatchets or anything at a'.  
It's the truth, isn't it, Pat?"

PAT: "Oh! Aye."

MARY: "They couldnae fight at a' wi' their bare hands.  
That's for certain..."

CHRISSIE: "There was a crowd looking for milk-bottles  
on Saturday night, tae fight."

MAY: "... They're cowards if they're on their own  
without weapons, aren't they, Chrissie?"

MAY: "Well, ma Ma must have ta'en the shock this  
morning, because .....

PAT: "Aye, worrying about it."

CHRISSIE: "I don't think she should worry!"

MAY: "Oh! well, see, when she got her door kicked,  
ma young sister, Cathie, she says, "Go for the  
Polis!" She says, "Naw, I'll gie them a wee  
warning. I don't like sending the polis to  
anyone's door, because they (the police) are  
unlucky people, you know," she says. "She's  
quite a --- quite a --- (hesitatingly) fair  
person, you know," she says, "I don't like  
daeing that."  
But anyway, ma Ma went up to tell--Just to "Tell  
your boy and his pal no' to kick ma door in

"again, Jeanie. It has naething to dae wi' me."  
The woman went jist a wee bit beyond it and  
started to say it wisnae her boy ... and such  
and such.

The whole scheme (housing estate) knows it was  
her boy that done it. Then her man interfered.  
So Cathie says, "You come doon the stairs, Maw.  
Never bother wae them. Jist leave them. (Aye!)  
Jist ignore them."

But it must have been working on her a' night.  
She took a wee stroke. She canny even talk.

May had given me further details in an earlier conversation.  
"Pretty Willie", she stated, was not Working Class. She  
then amplified this statement: "Working Class" emerged as  
a term of approval for respectable people who worked.  
(Perhaps equivalent to Josephine Klein's "Respectables").  
Pretty Willie and his friends were beneath this (perhaps  
Klein's "Roughs") because they did not work - having other  
ways of acquiring money.

There appeared to have been a premeditated attack on Pretty  
Willie - presumably by a rival gang. In May's words,  
"Pretty Willie was to get a 'doing' at Govan Cross.  
After it, his face was all ... kinda ... thon way. (May's  
hands fluttered expressively over her own face).  
Ma brother-in-law's nephew said to him, 'You're no sae  
pretty noo, are ye, Willie?'  
Quick as onything the knife was oot and struck him here,  
(lower abdomen) and ripped right across."

The language of this story is particularly interesting.  
There is great restraint in the description of the confron-  
tation on this page. 'I'll gie them a wee warning'.  
'Tell your boy ... it's naething to dae wi' me.'  
'The woman went just a wee bit beyond it'. A dignified  
account of an angry scene!

At a further point in conversation, May referred briefly  
to the castrating effect either of this attack or the sub-  
sequent hospital treatment. The boy was nineteen.  
Because of gang reprisals no charge can be made. Officially  
the boy was attacked by a "person unknown".

May also revealed that part of her mother's worry - leading  
to the stroke - was that the married members of her family  
would become implicated in the feud. If her daughters'  
husbands took up the fight, many families would become in-  
volved, as May is one of fourteen.

Another glimpse of accepted practice - from a totally differ-  
ent angle - comes from the description of events surrounding  
the mother's stroke.

No ambulance was sent for when her mother collapsed. Instead she was helped home - half carried - by the other woman. She was at this stage paralysed down one side and without speech. A daughter who had once begun work as an auxiliary nurse, but had given it up, took charge of her at home and said she would be "a' right wi' a wee rest." A doctor was sent for, but had not arrived at the time of the discussion-group meeting - some five hours later.

May's family belong, it would seem, to Klein's "respectables". Her four brothers, living in the flat below Pretty Willie do not fight, as May pointed out in her story. Her own home is in a "between the wars" slum clearance property, nick-named "Wine Alley". Though the general appearance is as disreputable as this name suggests, May has been rehoused here from old condemned property and has decorated her new house very tastefully. A large framed picture - a kind of popularised Gauguin - hangs over the fireplace. May's husband has replaced the coal-fire with a modern gas fire, which is set into a book case. This holds various ornaments, but no books. Afternoon tea is served on a coffee table at the end of the discussion each week.

Two children are of school age. Peter, aged five, is bribed with money to go to school. He has begun to demand more as he becomes increasingly reluctant to attend. Gina, aged seven, has severe stomach pains when it is school time. Though she claims to like school, she had been sent home on the morning of the above incident because of these pains. She was no longer in pain in the afternoon, but remained at home.

Gina demonstrated her reading ability, on request. She produced her school reader and began the following story:-

Rat-tat-tat was the sound all down the village street, first at one door, then at the next. Who could be knocking at the doors? It was the pedlar with his brown bag full of things to sell. Hair-pins, curtain-rings and reels of cotton. There were pretty things, too, like rolls of ribbon and glass beads .....

(Wide Range Readers)

Gina stuck at the word 'hair-pins' each time she tried to read this piece. 'Reels of cotton' (reel or bobbins of thread in Glasgow) also gave her trouble. The whole piece seemed unlikely to have much cognitive appeal.

Gina remained silently in the room for the whole discussion and all the details of May's story. During the discussion May - along with most of the others - stoutly declared that children should not be allowed to take part in conversation among adults. This was bad for the children. It made them "too old in the head". This was discussed with Gina present - but, in accordance with the dictum - no word was addressed to her.

MAUREEN: That man did hang himself. (9)

MAISIE: His daughter said it was a heart attack. T(2)

MAUREEN: Well, you know how it is. She'd want to cover up for him. But we have the same insurance man and he told me that he did hang himself.

MAISIE: (to me): This is the man in the next house to Maureen - through the wall.

MAUREEN: It happened last week. His daughter ran out

into the street saying her father had hanged himself. Then, later, she said it wasn't true.

He had had a heart attack. But that was just to cover up. Well, naturally, she wouldn't want people to know, would she?

MAISIE: What had happened?

MAUREEN: He'd just heard the result of the X-Ray at the hospital. They told him he had cancer. His wife died of cancer, so he .....

GOVAN BACKGROUND 3.

October 7th

PAT'S PROBLEM : A Tantrum Re-inforced

1974

During a discussion, Pat's three year-old daughter, Patricia, came in and stood quietly by her mother's knees, looking up at her.

- PAT: If it's the van, my purse isn't with me. It's in the house. (Tears quietly)  
 I haven't got my purse. (Tears noisily)  
 I HAVEN'T GOT MY PURSE! (Temper tears, very noisily)  
 NO! (continuation of temper tears)
- (Pat looked round for support, while attempting to appear unperturbed).  
 I'm doing what you do now, Mary. They get (money) in the morning - and that's them finished.
- MARY: (smiling securely). And 'he' gives them it at night and that's them. Morning and night, that's them. Because the more they get, the more they want.  
 (The house is now filled with Patricia's cries and tears).
- PAT: They think that every time that van comes roon' they've to get something!
- MARY: I know! Maybe she's a bit young to understand that.
- PATRICIA: (through her tears) Gimme ma wee half-pence.
- PAT: I haven't got your wee half-pence!
- MAY: (looking in her purse). It's ten-pence I've got!
- PAT: Don't gie her nothing! (To the wailing Patricia) It's in ma bed! You've had it. Nothing!  
 (Screams) Stop it!
- E. (To Patricia - who is in no way interrupted) What can we do about that? What can we do instead?
- MAY: (To her own daughter). Here, Catherine!  
 (Catherine - aged 4½ - who had been watching the whole proceedings silently, is given the ten-pence piece).

PAT: (Laughs with relief). See what I mean?  
(Tears quieten cautiously).  
Go and get sweeties off Catherine.  
Hurry up!

MAY: Catherine's got money! That's a good girl!  
(May escorts the two girls out of the house towards  
the van - a mobile shop - She teases Patricia)  
Oh! you're broken hearted!

MARY: You can't win, can ye?

PAT: (laughing nervously) No!

GROUP I

T4  
October 7th

GOVAN BACKGROUND 4.

CHRISSIE'S PROBLEM : PAID OFF

1974

---

One of the interesting aspects of these Govan Background sections is the restraint, the sensitivity in tone, which comes over so well on the tape. It is impossible to convey it in transcript. There is no means of knowing whether this is normal or caused by the presence of an outsider.

Chrissie works as a cleaner in the Children's Hospital. She arrived late and the conversation began quietly in the hall. Chrissie was evidently full of her trouble, yet anxious not to upset the discussion - to which she had bothered to come, though late.

CHRISSIE: I got ma books the day!

MAY: Oh! ye did not!

CHRISSIE: Ayel Three of us got paid off!

MAY: Oh! ye're kiddin', Chrissie!

MARY: Oh! ye didn't!

CHRISSIE: We're out at the weekend. Jean Lochlan and the other wan and me!

MARY: And you got paid off, Chrissie?

CHRISSIE: They'd more work done than us!

MARY: Was it last in, or first out, or what?

CHRISSIE: Naw! I'm in 'two years. They're only in a year.

MARY: And what is it? Did they no' explain how they work?

CHRISSIE: They'd more work done than us on Friday night.

MARY: Are you not all supposed to do a certain amount? You know, a certain ...

PAT: Ayel ye get so much to do.

MARY: And did you not do what you had to do?

CHRISSIE: Naw! I couldn't have.

MARY: Oh!

(SILENCE)

E. That's terrible!

MARY: It really is terrible.

CHRISSIE: (with an effort) I'll get another.

E. Will you get another job?

CHRISSIE: Oh! I'll need tae

MARY: Wi' seven weans! She'll need tae!  
(rueful laughter)

CHRISSIE: You get used to it! (The money)

MARY: Did you never hear any more about the super-  
market? No?

MAY: I'll need to get you a job beside me!  
(School-cleaning)

CHRISSIE: Ay! ye'll need tae!

MAY: I bet ye got a shock there. Did ye no'?

CHRISSIE: (pause) I thought they'd have paid the lot  
of us off.

MARY: Try the Southern (Hospital) - Chrissie. They're  
always looking for workers at the Southern.

MAY: How did three of you - How did just three  
of you?

CHRISSIE: They'd mair work done than us.

(The awkward pause which followed this tacit admission  
of blame for her own plight was interrupted by children.  
The discussion picked up again, and Chrissie's problem  
received no further mention).

T. 5  
GROUP I

GOVAN BACKGROUND 5.

September 23rd

T.V. FIRE

:

A HAPPENING

1974

---

The lesson for the day was the role of language in controlling behaviour. Luria and Vygotsky were about to be translated into the Scots vernacular - when a great flame shot up from the back of the television set!

As the group discussion had begun, May, who never switches the set off, lowered the sound. Almost immediately the picture disappeared. There were some comments on the problems May had already had with this recently hired black and white set. May indicated that we should go on with our discussion and leave her T.V. troubles aside. As we talked, the faulty set must have been over-heating. When the flame broke out there was already a fire of some size inside the television - though not showing exteriorly.

The T.V. set stood against the window in this ground-floor flat. The electricity was switched off and the curtains drawn out of the way. Someone ran to a neighbour who had a phone, to ring for the fire-brigade. A child was sent for sand. A man who happened to be coming down the stairs from the flat above was brought in to help.

It was obvious that the fire was confined to the set as yet, but might burn through to the table under it. So all leads were disconnected and, as May opened the window, the whole set was lifted out and lowered to the "conscripted" male-helper who had been sent outside to receive it. The fire blazed safely inside the set which now lay in the back-court amid a growing ring of fascinated viewers.

All the men from the two fire-engines now invaded the house. Eventually they went outside, and put out the fire in the box with a little hand extinguisher!

The crisis over, a whole series of disjointed events began simultaneously. The "conscript" gave advice about insurance claims. He turned out to be the local fire insurance agent! (His information was redundant, as the set belonged to the hire-company). The firemen brought the charred remains back into the house. The mothers discussed the safest place to put it out of the children's reach. A policeman tried to obtain exact details of what had happened.

All this time, May, the householder, worried about responsibility - would the hire-company believe her statement? - would they accept responsibility? The prospect of additional costs was obviously a major anxiety. Yet she kept trying

to make a joke about the programme she would miss that night.

The children's behaviour throughout the episode was interesting. Usually they are noisy during our discussions. Even if put out of the room to play, they demand attention in one way or another. As soon as there was real trouble, they went completely quiet, and "surfaced" only when the danger was over and relief was obvious. A quite unproved guess might be that serious trouble is quite well known in that setting and a learned response is "absolute quiet" to escape notice and so, perhaps, painful involvement.

The tea, which replaced the lesson in psycho-pedagogy was accompanied by an account of two other problems in that home in the past week. A chip-pan fire which had caused dense smoke, but no injury, and an attempted break-in at 3 a.m. May, now six months pregnant, managed to keep smiling. But she was obviously seriously un-nerved.

7.6.

GROUP II

GOVAN BACKGROUND 1.

September 30th

HEALTH PRESSURES

1974

PRIORITIES: THE SICK CANNOT PROFIT BY EDUCATION

---

This tape has, throughout it, background sounds of coughing.

HELEN: (Speaking of her 2½ year old daughter, Diane, who cannot speak). She's no' saying nothing. But I know myself, she's no' at herself the day. I know that.

E. (to Betty). And what's wrong with your two?

BETTY: He's got gastric enteritis. He hadn't been well all last week. He had a slight cold and I got the doctor and a prescription for him. But here he took the diarrhoea and vomiting and it went into gastric on Saturday during the night. So I called the doctor on Sunday morning. So he says, "We'll take him into Ruchill (hospital).

E. They took him into hospital?

BETTY: We were away up there yesterday, Joan and I.

E. How old is he?

BETTY? 14 months.

E. Oh! that's hard, isn't it?

BETTY? So, the result is that Margaret Mary - (her 8 year old spinal bifida and mentally handicapped daughter) - has to stay off and I've to watch the rest to see if anything happens to them, and if so, they're to be kept off.

JOAN: (Betty's 12 year old daughter) It's a good bit away, that Ruchill hospital.

HELEN: The doctor says he - (her 15 months old son) - has the swollen glances (glands) and he's got a heavy chill and it's going into the chest and that's why the glances are swelling. But he says the diarrhoea will really stop once I gie this medicine. I've to gie him a double dose, him and Diane. I've to give the two of

them it, you know. But I says, "Is there any chance that he's really that bad, he's got to be shifted? (Taken to hospital). He says, "No, but if it's getting worse, you can phone me back and we'll bring him in."

BETTY: Well, you see, with it being a smittelsome (infectious) thing, and us just across the landing - all in the one close - - -

HELEN: You see, I told him about me being in there - (Betty's flat) -

BETTY: Well, I told you to tell him -

HELEN: So he says, "Don't take the children next door. Keep them in the house. Don't take them outside. Keep them in all the time - - - See, I've been up all night! He's been vomiting rings round him!

BETTY: It goes round them all.

HELEN: I've no' been well myself - The way I feel today, I don't really feel I could take part in a discussion - I said that to Betty this morning. I don't really feel like myself today.

(Various expressions of concern, etc., then)

E. We'll try again next week.

(Later, about Patrick, the boy at ESN school)

HELEN: He's no' well. He's got a right cough, Patrick. (With pride) They'll not lie down! None of my children will lie down to anything. They'll not lie down! I offered to get medicine, to give him it too, but he won't do it!

All these children are extremely white and look undernourished.

T.T.

GROUP II

GOVAN BACKGROUND 2.

October 14th

1974

SOCIAL PRESSURES

FEUDS AND FIGHTS ON THE "STAIR-HEAD"

---

No group had assembled in Helen's house. There could be no discussion. Helen gave three different explanations. It was not possible to record the initial version of the story on tape. Though the microphone was not obtrusive, this taped account, prompted by questions, has not the vitality of the original.

(E. has the group's permission to tape all conversation in the house).

In the taped version the various elements are inter-woven. For the sake of clarity they have been separated out, where possible, in the transcript.

The background story was of inter-family quarrels over money and loans of money. This had been going on for some time. The discussion of the week before - the first full meeting there had been - had been made possible by a kind of truce which had been arranged for the sake of E. The interaction of the discussion - (Readiness Test I) had helped subsequent relationships until the following Saturday night. The "stair-head fight" to which the police had to be called was recounted graphically by Helen. According to her, the fight took place initially between Donna (a member of the discussion group), and Betty's eldest son (aged 18). Betty is also a discussion group member. Helen claimed to have put herself into it by offering to take Betty's 15 month old son and 8 year old spina-bifida daughter into her home for safety. This had brought down Betty's colourfully expressed wrath. Though Betty had apologised the following morning, explaining that she had been affected by drink, Helen - who was already aggrieved about the financial rows - refused to be placated.

There was a third story. This was an "official consumption" tale, explaining why the group had not met, and might not meet again. E. was instructed that, if the programme was to continue, this story only could be used as her basis for any re-negotiations with the group. This was a matter of meeting times, return of children from school, etc.

## TRANSCRIPT OF A STAIR-HEAD FIGHT

HELEN: ... Betty's son and Donna were fighting.  
Och! Ayel Hitting each other away!  
The police had to be brought in!

E. What kind of things were they throwing?

HELEN: Chairs and everything. You were terrified to come in that door in case you got something over the head. Well, quite the thing, I opened the door and asked, "I'll take the young children in." And she told me a mouthful and said, "Och! no!" she said, "It's none of your business." Well, neither it is ony o' ma business, I know that. But I was thinking of the children.

E. What were they fighting about?

HELEN: Och! I don't know. I never went into details. I never ask them anything. I keep to ma own self and I don't bother as long as they've naething to dae, like, tae masel'. That's what I'm concerned about. As to their own home, their life they can lead it the way they want to - go ahead. But I widnae hiv that. I definitely widnae hiv that ... People can drink. They'll sit and have a conversation. Next minute, before you know where you are, it could be a battle. You know, like maybe something being said, or something. I don't know what's happened. I never go in. You know! I never go in near them, - concerning that, you know!  
Whit I don't dae masel, I widnae, I couldnae - I've nae time for anybody like that somehow. I think too much of my own children to bother to have - you know! To go away and have a cairry-on, you know!

### THE BACKGROUND STORY : FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

Helen had been housed some time previously in the flat above her present one. The ceiling had fallen in and Helen and her family were moved. Helen was being asked to pay for electricity for the flat above, but said that the debt belonged to the workmen who moved in after her. She admitted that she was unable to pay the bill for the present flat's electricity (£37). She could not consider the bill from her previous home (£100). While Helen was giving her righteous account of the fight, someone came to the door about her electricity bills. Helen refused to see him.

HELEN: I'm no' daein' it! I don't intend to dae it! I definitely am no' going to dae it! I'm no' paying for a house that I'm no' getting the use in. Different here, I owe for in here. But no' for up there....

E. You were saying that your husband had been out of work?

HELEN: Ayel He was out of work, aye. Well, he got back to work. So it was a matter of "Could you lend me this?", "Could you lend me that?" I didn't mind even giving it for the children, but I think it's all for just to get drink. To be honest, I do! Well, I'm no' gonny encourage that. I'm no' doing it. Ma man's out trying to earn it for to keep his own children, and I've no' that much masel', as you know. But I do the best I can. I think of my children and my home. See Betty's no' bad. Betty gets help everywhere. But I don't.

E. Does her husband work?

HELEN: Ayel he works. He's working. But frae the Social Workers department, and God knows who - an' a' the rest o' them - a' helps Betty. I don't get no help off nobody.

### Quarrels about Loans

HELEN: ... So that was it. So I just says, "One word borrows another," and I says, "that's just it final.". Ma husband says to me, "If I get you giving money out again," he says, "you and I's going to finish up through it." Cause, after all, he's out trying to earn it for us. You'd be better without people like that coming in to you, if they're going to start that cairrying on. So I says, "I may have nothing much, but ..."

### This leads directly to the "OFFICIAL STATEMENT"

HELEN: So they says they don't want to continue. Well, I took it that's what they meant. She made it to be because of her children coming home from school. She thinks it's too difficult. And then making the tea and that at night time. Some men expect it ready for them when they come in. Ma man's no' like that, but some are.

PAT: I don't know whit to say.

HELEN: To bring in their chairs please. They're comin' in.

PAT: How many? Mrs. Barnes?

HELEN: Aye, well - see who is comin' in.

October 28th (continued) : Electricity. The problem of "hidden" expenditure

(Joan - Mrs. Barnes - arrived last).

JOAN: I'm sorry, I was asleep. I just came in from messages, and I switched on the two bars (of the electric fire) and sat down in front of it and fell asleep.

E. You have electric fires in the other houses then?"

BETTY: Aye. I got a bill in there. £37.00.

HELEN: Same as me.

E. For what?

BETTY: £37.00.

HELEN: That's what I'm paying.

BETTY: And you'll know how long I'm up here.

HELEN: I've got a bill for £100, for up the stair. (Helen had occupied the flat above until the ceiling fell in.) I'm no' payin' it. I don't intend to pay it. Because I was doon here within two years, and I've paid two bills since I was here. And it's been pretty heavy bills I've paid. £37.30. Remember I told you, Betty?

JOAN: I've only my fire a month.

BETTY: And it was £15 - and she is never in.

JOAN: I'm never in. And I've only the fire for a month and I'm £15.75.

BETTY: I think there's a mistake somewhere.

HELEN: When I was up the stair and a' there, I had the electric fire in the kitchen and it (the expense) went up like lightning, definitely did.

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This complex of three quite distinct tales indicates some of the difficulty involved in parent/teacher interaction. It is for the parents to choose how much of their affairs they will reveal to the outsider. Any one of these stories might have been presented in this case and the presence of the others would not have been guessed. A series of potential discussion groups in other areas of Govan had disappeared earlier, possibly through this kind of situation.

Because Helen gave her various - if apparently unconnected - reasons, it was possible to tackle realistically the task of rebuilding the group. In keeping with the conventions laid down by Helen, only the 'official' story was actually discussed in negotiations.

*[Faint, illegible text]*

*[Faint, illegible text]*

*[Faint, illegible text]*

*[Faint, illegible text]*

## GOVAN BACKGROUND 3.

EXTERNAL PRESSURES : ECONOMIC PRIORITIES

Helen's home has three rooms and a toilet. She has no bathroom, no hot water. One room is full of beds. It would appear that all the children sleep here, including the thirteen year old son, and the ten year old daughter. The parents have a bedroom. The kitchen serves as everything else. There are two old easy chairs, one of which often has to be propped up, two folding tables covered with plastic cloth, a kitchen cupboard with holes where some of the glass should be, and a sideboard without handles. It is opened by inserting a large kitchen knife. There is an old washing machine, a plain electric cooker and a rather new fridge. There are no more chairs in the house. Neighbours bring in their own, or stand. This may indicate that there has been a Warrant Sale.

A few statements about the way money is spent are gathered together here.

October 21st : The price of keeping an adolescent away from street gangs

HELEN: I told Andrew at the big school ... He wanted a bike. And I said, Well, if you do your lessons in the school, and say you come up on, you'll get the bike. So he done it. He got the bike. Well, after he got the bike - see he's got a tent in there and fishing rods - anything he wants, he gets it.

October 28th : Diane's untouchable doll, and the family's lack of chairs

HELEN: He bought her that for her birthday.  
(The gift is a doll dressed in period costume and packed in a plastic display box. Diane's third birthday had been on October 21st. The doll was on display on the sideboard.)

HELEN: He got it doon at - where Andy? Aye, Gourrock.  
(Diane sat fastened into a high pram without any playthings. She sucked a dummy.) Meanwhile, Pat had returned from summoning the neighbours to the discussion.

PAT: I don't know whit to say.

HELEN: To bring in their chairs please. They're comin' in.

PAT: How many? Mrs. Barnes?

HELEN: Aye, well - see who is comin' in.

October 28th (continued) : Electricity. The problem of "hidden" expenditure

(Joan - Mrs. Barnes - arrived last).

JOAN: I'm sorry, I was asleep. I just came in from messages, and I switched on the two bars (of the electric fire) and sat down in front of it and fell asleep.

E. You have electric fires in the other houses then?"

BETTY: Aye. I got a bill in there. £37.00.

HELEN: Same as me.

E. For what?

BETTY: £37.00.

HELEN: That's what I'm paying.

BETTY: And you'll know how long I'm up here.

HELEN: I've got a bill for £100, for up the stair. (Helen had occupied the flat above until the ceiling fell in.) I'm no' payin' it. I don't intend to pay it. Because I was doon here within two years, and I've paid two bills since I was here. And it's been pretty heavy bills I've paid. £37.30. Remember I told you, Betty?

JOAN: I've only my fire a month.

BETTY: And it was £15 - and she is never in.

JOAN: I'm never in. And I've only the fire for a month and I'm £15.75.

BETTY: I think there's a mistake somewhere.

HELEN: When I was up the stair and a' there, I had the electric fire in the kitchen and it (the expense) went up like lightning, definitely did.

You don't realise, wi' it going on a' day or a' night, it runs away wi' it, but it definitely does.

(Helen does not appear to see the contradiction in the two sets of underlined statements. In the second she accepts responsibility for the bill noted in the first.)

JOAN: I tell you. You sit frozen. And then you switch the two of them on.

HELEN: I don't know what they put the electric in for, in the first place. They'd be better leaving coal fires.

### November 11th : The inevitable Result

The camera team arrived to record this final discussion on V.T.R. to find that Helen was unable to arrange for this as planned. Her electricity had been cut off two days previously. While the film unit was being set up in Betty's flat, arrangements were discussed for E. to go and bring in a Social Worker if Helen would find this helpful. Helen agreed but went on to say that she had been in Court the day before for not paying rent and had agreed to give all that week's housekeeping money (£15) to arrears of rent. She therefore felt it would be useless discussing electricity as she could not begin to pay - and so have the electricity turned on - until the following week. She wondered where she was to obtain food. None of this was said with any suggestion that E. or any other member of the team should provide. Helen was in fact very embarrassed, not only by her own position but by the change of plans necessitated for E. Her contribution to the discussion, recorded on V.T.R. is all the more remarkable when these conditions are remembered. Only now and then do her troubles show in her words. But the contrast in her appearance on this and on an earlier occasion when the camera showed her at the window is very marked.

The educational effect on the children was demonstrated an hour or two later when E. returned with some food, etc. It was then only five o'clock. The house was in total darkness. Helen appeared at the door and in the dim light of the communal landing she could be seen with the three year old clinging to her on one side, the two year old at the other. Behind her, the E.S.N. boy and his twin peered out, and behind that again, the ten year old and thirteen year old moved like shadows. They would be imprisoned like that all night, as they had been for two nights past. As Helen opened her door to receive the box of food, her neighbours, alerted by the voices, opened their doors slightly, though they did not emerge. Nothing is private on a tenement 'stairhead'.

GROUP I

READINESS TEST 1.1

September 9th

B. REINFORCEMENT

1974

Each participant has a copy of a picture in which a rather official-looking school visitor poses with five pupils at a cookery lesson.  
The caption is "Well Done."

(The numbers 1, 1a, 1b, etc. refer to the discussion of this transcript given in the text.)

- E. 1. ... He seems to be saying "Well done" to the girl who is standing at the cooker. Supposing that was your little girl ... what would you expect to happen when she came home from school that night?
- PAT: 1a. It would be the first thing she would tell you. (Laughter in agreement)
- MAY: Aye.
- MARY: Exactly.
- CHRISSIE 1b. She would want to make the tea.
- E. Now, that's interesting. (to the others) Do you think she'd want to do it?
- CHRISSIE: She'd want to make the tea.
- MAY: (slowly - almost to herself) while Chrissie continues, Oh aye. Well done.
- CHRISSIE: ... He's saying to her, "That's well done." So he ... she'd want us to think the same thing.
- MAY: (slowly) Aye ... that's right ... so she wid.
- E. Do you think that? That she'd repeat it? That she'd want to do the same thing again for you?
- MARY: Aye ... definitely.
- MAY, PAT & CHRISSIE: Oh, aye. Well, she's getting praised for it ... That's right, and she'll ... expect that she can dae it.

17.  
MAY: 1c. ... and she'd expect to dae it at home and get praised also --- you know, in that line. That's right.

E. 2. Well now, they all seem to have cooked something. See they all have got something in their hands. Supposing he looked at them all, and he praised four of them, and left your daughter out. Never actually said anything. Would that make any difference to her future efforts at cookery?

MAY: Oh aye. I think so it wid.

MARY: It wouldn't ...

MAY: ... wouldn't encourage her much really.

MARY: He would need to say something, you know, to boost her morale.

E. Would it actually discourage her?

MAY: It a' depends, right enough. Maybe.

MARY: Depends on the wean.

PAT: Depends on their nature.

MARY: Depends on how ...

MAY: Depends on what their nature is.

PAT: I mean, some weans are funny that way.

MAY: Maybe they would try a wee bit mair to try to get it.

PAT: Aye. To get some praise.

MARY: Some couldn't care less and others ...

PAT: Aye, take it to heart an awful lot.

MAY: Aye, that's right.

E. 2x. I'd really like to hear everyone's views on the effect of praise and the lack of it - for you've all got interesting things to say there.

What were you saying just now, Mary?

MARY: I think praise is good. It encourages them.

E. And if they don't get it?

- MARY: I don't know - I don't think they're as interested then.
- E. You were saying something that was very interesting, I thought, May, about what you thought sometimes happened, when they didn't get praise.
- MAY: 2a. When they didnae get praised? Well, if mines didnae get praised, I don't think they would try it. (the cooking).
- MARY: They wouldnae bother.
- PAT: They wouldnae dae nothing about it.
- MAY: 2b. But Gina (7) she's the opposite from Peter (5) a' the gether. If she didnae get praised, she would try a wee bit harder. She would try to get it. But Peter wouldnae. He would let it go at that. Peter disnae care less.
- E. 2e. Do you think that really is - he doesn't care less?
- MAY: Well, I don't know if he doesn't care less, but he doesn't show much impression to me anyway.
- 2d. I don't know about school. If the teacher checks him, I don't know if he tries that wee bit harder.
- E. What about yours, Pat?
- PAT: 2c. Well, Alex (5½) you can say to him, "Oh well you're a big boy, you can get yoursel' ready." See when you say that to John?(3½) he just looks at you to say, "I don't care. I'm still no' gonny get ready."
- 2f. And he'll sit there till you make a move. He'll no gie in. I'll say, "But you're a big boy now."  
"Tut" (Pat imitates the child's manner).  
Just couldnae ...
- E. He doesn't take that as praise?
- PAT: Disnae bother.
- E. And can you ...

PAT: And yet the wee one. If you say to her, "Are you big?" She'll say, "I'm a big girl, look." And she's trying to put on the shoes herself. Yet he just couldnae ... he couldnae care less whether you got him ready or no' ...

MAY: Wee Peter's like that.

PAT: He'd still sit. 'Cos on Sunday, they were a' ready and everything and he was still sitting wi' his pyjamas on, and he wouldnae gie in and get ready. And I was just ... I was as determined as him. I wisnae getting him ready. I was going to make him get himself ready.

MAY: Aye.

PAT: But now.

MARY: Can he get himself ready but?

PAT: Aye, he can get himself ... just when he ... he just takes one of these turns that ... he just ... "I cannae dae it."

MARY: He's stubborn.

PAT: Aye, stubborn. He's no' gonny dae it.

MAY: Aye.

MARY: Just like everyone.  
(Laughter)

E. 3. Do you use praise as a way of getting them to do things?

PAT: 3a. Oh aye. It's the only way they'll dae it.

MARY: 3b. Sometimes praise. But other times ...  
(General agreement. Aye - sometimes).

MAY: Wee Peter. I go out of that way wi' Peter.

MARY: Mmmm ... quite the opposite of praise.

MAY: 3c. I'll tell him. "I'll gie you tenpence, fivpence ..."

PAT, MARY & CHRISSIE: Oh naw. I wouldnae bribe them wi' money. I wouldn't bribe them.  
Naw.

MAY: Well, that's whit I dae. Well see ... I'm in the wrong in that line. I shouldnae dae that ...

PAT: Aye, because they'd be expecting it a' the time.

MARY: Aye, that's right.

PAT: They'll be saying, "Och I'll no' dae that and she'll say, "I'll gie you money to dae it."

MARY: That's right.

PAT: I widnae dae that.

MAY: That's where I go wrong. I dae that.

PAT: 3f. Naw, I widnae. I end up leathering them.

MARY: (laughing) That's right. I would give them a "do".

PAT: ... and making them do it.

MAY: It a' depends what it is, right enough. (Interruption as Chrissie's son, Charles, brings a dart from the bedroom where most of the seven pre-school children are playing during this session. He hands it to May - the hostess.)

That's a good boy. That's dangerous. See that?

E. What do you think?

CHRISSIE: Well, Mary says theres no two kids exactly the same. They are all different. My oldest boy (15) if you - if he didnae get praised for things, he wouldnae let it bother him. But Teresa, she'd be worried sick.

MARY: (Whose eldest is 5) Maybe as they grow older - maybe praise doesnae bother them.

CHRISSIE: ... and wonder how to ...

MARY: Do you think so Chrissie?

CHRISSIE: Eh?

MARY: When they're older - praise - they know that - that's just ...

CHRISSIE: Naw, but see Teresa, she would worry herself sick if she didn't get praised.

MARY: Aye, that's true enough.

CHRISSIE: ... and she's thirteen, she's nearly fourteen. She would worry and say, "I wonder" (further interruptions from various children) ... She's different again.

3g. But our Pat's a funny boy. You've got to watch what you say to him. He takes an awful lot in. He's ten. You need to kinda praise him all the time. But the other ones are different - ye know?

E. So you're saying it is different with different children?  
(General agreement)

CHRISSIE: There's never two alike.

PAT: There's never two the same.

E. But you would use praise with them all? - to some extent?

MARY: To some extent ...

E. But you think they might grow out of it? - The need of praise?

MARY: Well, I think, as they grow older they know that praise is not ...

E. That praise is not honest? Are you really saying that insincere praise will not do? You know - praise just to ...

MARY: 3e. They know you've just said that to get them to ...

PAT: To get them to do something, ye know?

E. But what about real praise? You know, when you really are pleased with things? I mean, there are times ...

MARY: Well, mines is not old enough to know - ye know ...

3d. They don't know that praise is bribery.  
(laughter and agreement)

PAT: No. They think they're daeing something good.

E. But, is it not true that sometimes they are?

PAT: Oh aye.

MARY: Doing something good? Oh aye. You usually praise them right enough ... it's usually genuine, I think.

E. So you can use it either way? You can have genuine praise, when you really are thinking ...

PAT: But you can bribe them at the same time wi' it.  
(general agreement).

MARY: ... Encourage them to do more.

girl

10.11

There's that I said  
pleas'd!

is just for the sake of go to them ...

10.12

... only to see ...  
... in this way. That's  
I think.

10.13

It's an encouragement ...  
... to go to them.

10.14

... the children - it's ...

But what's the ...

... appeal, I think

## B. CLASSICAL CONDITIONING

1974

Each participant has an advertisement for Mannikin cigars. A picture of a girl takes up most of the space. The cigars are illustrated in one corner. The caption is "Sheer Pleasure".

This product was selected rather than one more likely to appeal to women so that they would not be distracted from the point of the discussion - the advert technique - by their interest in the commodity itself.

- E. The next picture has nothing to do with children. You'll be saying, what am I bringing this for. But it is very interesting.
- (Loud laughter. Oh aye. A mannequin. Something to do wi' adverts - bribery!)
- E. It is really aimed at your husbands, this one. But I wondered if you can see ...
1. If they are trying to sell cigars, why is the picture mainly taken up with that attractive girl?
- CHRISSIE: That's what I ask?  
(Laughter).
- MAY: 1a. Is that for the men to go to them ...?
- CHRISSIE: ... this is tae ...
- MAY: (continuing) Put it this way. That's what I think.
- CHRISSIE: It's to encourage ...
- MAY: ... the men to go to them.
- CHRISSIE: Aye. - The Mannikins - it's tae -
- E. But what's the connection?
- MARY: Sex appeal, I think.
- CHRISSIE: That's what I say.
- E. But there's no sex appeal in Mannikin cigars, is there?

CHRISSIE 1b. No, it's the women they go tae, no' the cigars.

E. So why do they put her to sell cigars?

MARY: Well, that's it.

E. Where's the connection?

MAY: (Struggling for words) Ehm ... ehm ...

MARY: 1d. Do you know why?

E. Oh aye.

MARY: Oh well. (laughter).

CHRISSIE: That's quite good.

MARY: 1e. As long as we're going to get an answer at the end of it.

CHRISSIE: 1b. Well, it says "Sheer Enjoyment", maybe that's..

MARY: They can take two meanings out of that, you see.

CHRISSIE: Aye, Sheer Enjoyment. Joy to look at her and ...

MAY: Aye.

E. Yes, it is very clever. All the adverts we watch on television ...

MARY: They are all like this.

MAY: There's two meanings to them, you know.

MARY: That's true.

E. Now, I wonder why? If you saw ...  
(A long factual account of Pavlov's experiments followed).

The conversation did not progress, though it continued. The remainder is not transcribed.

Two points are noted here for completeness, though they do not follow chronologically.

October 14th: During a section on informal discussion in between sessions, Chrissie referred back to this piece on classical conditioning which had been seen as a failure at the time.

CHRISSIE: I discuss it as well!

E. And do you feel that you have words in which to discuss ideas that you have always had?

CHRISSIE: Uh-huh! Aye! - Well, I was discussing, you know, the advert (Classical Conditioning) - Well, I was trying to explain it to Charlie (her husband). But he says, "Away you go! I don't know what you're talking about!" He couldnae see it. And then I was telling Isabel, and she could see it. "Awi", she says, "That right!"

(Since the Classical Conditioning Readiness Test did not seem to indicate the presence of constituent concepts, only a brief factual statement was made on the process and there was no follow up. It may not, therefore, have been classical conditioning that Chrissie was explaining. What is important here is her growing ability to express and manipulate abstract concepts, together with the consciousness of this ability).

E. But were you saying it to her after you'd said it to your husband?

CHRISSIE: He couldnae understand!

E. But do you think that your own skill - once you could see what he couldn't understand. Did that mean that the next time you tried to say it ...

MARY: You'd say it differently?

E. You'd be better at saying it.

November 4th: During the tea break of the final session Mary suddenly gave an accurate resumé of Pavlov's experiments. When questioned as to her source, she insisted that she had only known of Pavlov from the discussion on September 9th.

## A. ADULT/CHILD INTERACTION

1974

(The asterisks refer to the discussion of this transcript which follows).

E. has supplied each member of the discussion group with a picture showing two rather formal, though friendly-looking men facing two interested, but ill-at-ease children.

- E. Supposing those adults are talking a wee bit above the heads of the children, to start with - and they want to join in the conversation. What will they do? Will they adapt to join in or will they give up and go away?
- MARY: It depends how you're teaching them, I think. You know, if you're telling them that they're not supposed to butt in ...
- MAY: (Interrupting) ... They'd maybe go away then - and then, again, they maybe widnas, wi' a stranger.
- MARY: If they know they're going to get belted for it, they'll not bother their mother. They shouldn't, anyhow.
- CHRISSIE: That's right! They shouldn't be interrupting a conversation.
- MARY: In an adult's conversation.  
(GENERAL AGREEMENT "Aye", etc.)
- MARY: And yet, they're listening, because you can hear them amongst themselves some other time.
- PAT: Aye, they can tell you what happens.
- MAY: Aye! They can tell you if things go wrong! They can tell you that all right!
- MARY: You think they're not listening, at the same time.
- MAY: Aye!
- E. Do you ever bring them - children - into a conversation with strangers - adults. Or do you just leave them ...

MAY: No. No' really, I don't anyway.

PAT: I don't, I ...

MAY: I feel as if they're too auld in the heid ...

PAT: ... too old-fashioned - learn too quick and a' that.

E. If you let them join in? (General agreement).

E. So you would normally prefer them to stay out of a conversation with adults.

PAT: Oh! aye - if everybody's in ...

\* MARY: It depends what the conversation is about, but, you know ...

E. So you would say that there were some times when you would, in fact, join them in conversation? Or, on the whole is it ... (Interruption at the door).

MAY: (Returning to the discussion) - No, I widnae take the weans in to ... I've got a sister right enough, and she ---- her wee lassie's the same age as Gina ... in fact Gina's older than her ... and she talks to her as if she is a grown-up. You know ---- right enough ----

MARY: I think it depends on what the conversation is about ...

MAY: (Across the interruption) ... a wee bit kind of too old for her - you know.

PAT: Knows too much for her age!

MAY: Aye! far too much for her age.

MARY: I don't think you should include them in everything. But I don't think you should leave them out entirely.

\*\* PAT: Aye! All the time (hesitatingly)

MAY: Naw! Naw! (doubtfully). I wouldnae say that, right enough.

PAT: (doubtfully) ---- learn them about things ---- different.

MARY: That's the way I feel.

E. So, you, Mary, feel that you would join them in some conversations.

MARY: (with conviction) Aye! Depending on what the conversation was about.

E. And you, May. You would feel on the whole they shouldn't be in conversations?

MAY: (in agreement) Naw! I don't think so!

E. What about you, Pat?

Pat: Well, mine's too young anyway. (Alex 5½, John almost 4, and Patricia almost 3.)

E. So you wouldn't do that, no matter what it was about?

Pat: No! I think they're too young.

E. What about you?

CHRISSIE: Well ---- their age. It depends on their age. I've got one of 15, he can talk. He can have a conversation with us - you know, Charlie and I. But there are other younger ones. I don't think the wee ones. I wouldn't have them in it. (Chrissie has seven children, 15, 13, 10, etc.)

E. So, Gina's age. She's seven. You, Mary, would join her in some conversations?

MARY: Yes!

E. Nobody else would? Is that right? I just want to see what the picture is.

(Pat and Chrissie signify agreement).

MAY: I widnae. As I say, I've got a sister, she wid. You know, as Mary says, everyone is different!

## A. ADULT/CHILD INTERACTION

A. CONTENT

The content of this transcript is basic to the thesis being offered. The view proposed by Stones, that learning depends to a considerable extent on interaction with adults, is not actually denied. Instead, learning is not considered at all - except briefly and without conviction, when Pat murmurs, almost to herself, something about, "except when you learn them about things, that's different".

Adult conversations are taken to include matters "unsuitable" for children. Except for Mary, who is beginning to differentiate, children should never be included in adult conversation of any kind, but their bodily presence is not considered at all. This leads to the - (to me) - surprising situation in which children are not expected to comment on happenings. Their physical presence can be equated with absence, so long as they are not directly addressed. Their resulting ability to comment on the event is greeted with rather puzzled astonishment.

Almost by way of illustrating this, Gina, aged seven, was present throughout all the discussion transcribed here as well as the description of fear and violence reported elsewhere in the "Pretty Willie" story. She was never at any time invited to contribute, even when the conversation was about her. Nor did she seem to expect to participate actively at any time.

B. PATTERN

The transcript shows progression of thought. At the outset all opposed any form of adult/child interaction, following Mary's lead. This was based on child-rearing principles - good manners. It did not consider educational principles - learning.

The verbalisation of these ideas led to a modification of them on Mary's part, without any input from E. This is marked on the transcript \* "It depends what the conversation is about, but..." This was strengthened throughout the conversation until she reached her final convinced statement that she would have children participate in some conversations. "Depending on what the conversation was about."

The others were only beginning to explore the possibility of this at the point marked \*\* on the transcript. When



## B. RE-INFORCEMENT AND INSTRUMENTAL CONDITIONING

1974

Stimulus Material: Taped excerpts from Readiness Test I

Excerpt 1

Pat's talk of John refusing to co-operate; followed by a comment on the need to look at the position of the re-inforcement in relation to the action - Praising immediately after the good action. Pat has an answer to this!

Pat: You see oor Alex? He's doin' that weel at school. He's only been there a few weeks and he can do his numbers up to five. I says to him, "That's good! You can write your numbers!" Oh! and you should see ma wallpaper!  
(Laughter)

E. So, in fact, he didn't know what it was that was good!

PAT: I just says, "That's good", and away he went and done it in the room.

E. That's the next step, isn't it - because - - -

MAY: Aye, it is.

E. You didn't show him which bit of the thing he was doing was good. "That's good to do on paper!" We don't think about that, of course, most of us!  
(Laughing agreement).

CHRISSIE: Buy him a drawing book.

E. That's what I was saying about that fellow there. (The Inspector pictured praising one of five pupils). If he just said to that wee lassie, "Well done," you said she'd come home and want to make the tea. (Agreement). Well, that was fine if she realised that's what he was saying was good. But she might have thought it was the way she presented it - on a tray - - -

CHRISSIE: - - - on a tray.

E. And she might wait for you to make the tea - - -

CHRISSIE: - - - and then say the same thing.

E. And then say, "Mammy, you should set the table like this. The man said, - - -"

MAY: Aye! that's right.

E. That might be the thing she picked up. Isn't that right?

MARY: Uh-huh! You see what you want to see!

E. Aye! Unless somebody cues you. Now this is where this thing is clever. It's not only the timing of praise - straight after they've done it. It's saying to them what it was that was good, and I would have thought maybe this was the angle with your John. (Interruption by children). If you could be saying, "That's good that you can put your shoe on."

The next section is not given in detail. It consisted of a series of approximations by which the group tried to grapple with the idea of teaching by praising and cueing. Some of them were very wide of the mark.

CHRISSIE: I'll say to Charles, I'll say, "I bet you can't put your shoes on!"

(Dressing examples from the others).

CHRISSIE: I says to Theresa, "You couldnae go doon to the van for a loaf" - she's away doon! But see, if I was to say, "Go doon for a loaf?"

E. tries to bring the discussion back to shaping, by giving examples of behaviour modification in severely handicapped children.

MAY: I think you're right there!

MAY: I mean, some people will say, "I'll no' bother - I've no' long to go" and all that. And there are some that will dae things no matter whit they're asked.

E. I think there's a big difference in people.

MAY: Aye, in people. It's no' everyone that will take it that way.

E. You have to see what pleases them. But I think that something pleases all of us!

MAY: Ayel You're right there! Ayel

E. If you could find the thing that does please - It might be praise. It might be being able to do the thing - just being able to do it!

PAT: Ayel that's enough.

E. But they don't always know that they are able to do it, unless you say it to them. If you say to someone, "I didn't know you could do that," or "So, you can tie your shoe laces!" He maybe didn't know it was something special - or even notice that he'd done it.

MAY: Ayel You're right enough there. 'Cos, when I started this wee job - the weans - Peter, ma man, - he's got to put them oot in the morning - which he'd never done before. And I'll say to them, "Were ye good?" "Ayel smashin'". And I'll say to Peter at night, "How were the weans?" and he'll say, "Nae bother. They're nae bother at a'". Yet they'll gie me a' the bother!

Again, there are various contributions, not logically connected, but centring round the idea of a child's success in a task and the parent's pleasure. There was also further discussion on the father's role.

"Voice of authority!" He just says, "Right! Bed!" and they're away.

There was a rider to this that in some families it was the mother who had this power. There seemed to be a local example of this which was very well known.

Eventually there was a return to May's example of her husband's success in gaining co-operation from the children.

E. It was presumably your husband's pleasure with them, his relief, probably that they coped - if he's not sure how to do it - that gives them pleasure. They get a sense of "My Daddy was pleased with me." It mattered to them. So in some way, reward was there. I think rewards can be all kinds of things - if the reward comes straight on them doing it. Just you take that matter of your husband saying, "What do you put on?" and some of them saying, "It's this," and he's that pleased.

MAY: Ayel - That's true enough.

CHRISSIE: That's right!

E. Well, this gives them a great lift, doesn't it? And see, he's said it that minute. He's shown his pleasure the minute it happens. For it is so unusual for him to have to do it, that his pleasure is straight out - on the minute! So that's it done. No problems after that. And this is really - we're using this all the time.

MARY: They knew that May usually does this. Well, when she's not there, well ---

PAT AND  
CHRISSIE: They'll have to do it themselves.

MARY: She's not there. So they have to ---

E. But you could get it so that you didn't have to do it. You could get them so organised, if you wanted to.

MAY: Aye! exactly! And sometimes they'll no' dae it for us - they no' dae it!

E. Aye! because they think, you will do it for them.

MAY: Exactly.

PAT: Aye, they know.

E. Maybe you use the praise the other way. You use the praise too obviously for your own ends. Like, "You're a big boy. You can dress yourself." Which is using it before the thing you want.

MAY: Aye!

E. The thing is to keep using it after and you never reach the stage of having to tell them. - If you can look ahead and say, "I want them to start dressing themselves. I'll start watching

for any time of the day, he put my shoes on, or something. "You know how to put shoes on?" So he tries to put his own shoes on. "You can put your own shoes on! That's great!" So, it's part of him now. So you never have to get to the stage of a fight.

E. In the discussion last week, you were talking about praise as - what was it you called it just now?

CHRISSIE: Bribery!"

E. Bribery! You said that often enough it was genuine! You really do think the kid's doing the right thing. What's the balance between this praise as genuine praise and praise as bribery?  
I think you've got to look at that - to be honest - because otherwise you get to the stage of saying, "Och, it's no' fair!"  
(Laughter - "That's right!"

The rest of the section is not transcribed because there was no progress. E. gave an example from school of this ethical point. But the concept was too theoretically expressed, and was perhaps itself too theoretical.

The Section ended with:-

E. If you can praise straight after a child has done it and name what it was that you're praising - what bit of the thing you were praising - that is the learning process.

(Interruption as Pat takes a glass ash-tray from one of the year-old twins, saying, "Ta! Clever boy!" as he gives it up.)

E. What you're doing now is what I've got next on the tape. It is May doing just that, - praising when he does the right thing. That's what you were doing just now.

Excerpt - May saying "That a good boy! That's dangerous" to a child who brought to her a sharp dart he had found.

E. Last week your Charles came in with a dart and you said, "That's a good boy! that's dangerous!"

MAY: Ayel that's right!

- E. You see - Not just "That's a good boy!" which might have meant, "Bring everything in from that room."  
(Laughter - Agreement)
- MAY: Aye! true! He could have ta'en it that way, right enough.
- E. You told him why he was good, "That is dangerous".
- MAY: Aye!
- E. That's the clever point!
- MAY: Letting them know what they're clever at!
- E. What Pat was saying about the wee boy writing on the wall -
- PAT: Ye need to wallpaper the room.
- E. That's good if we can get a book for you to write in. I'd like to see it in a book.
- MAY: In a book - Aye! But you wouldnae think of saying that, right enough.
- PAT: Put it in a book, aye!
- MAY: You wouldnae think of saying that! I know I widnae.
- PAT: Naw! neither would I. I just ta'en it and said, "Oh! that's smashin', son!"
- MAY: I wouldnae think of saying, "That's smashing! Dae it in a book." It wouldnae come tae ye, in that sense.
- E. Once you see it as an idea - - -
- MAY: Aye! I know what you're talking about.
- E. That's the secret of those folk who can say to their weans, "Don't do that."
- MAY: And they don't say why?
- E. They don't have to - in front of you. They have already taught it - like this.
- MARY: Aye! They've already said it.
- E. They've already talked to the child - (The tape continues with various examples of young children used to interaction).

E. I'd really like to hear what you think of that idea of organising your praise and your children so that you train them through what you say to them. Do you think that's a possible process?

• MAY: I think it's a good thing. You mean checking them and at the same time telling them why you've checked them? Not just saying, "don't do that," and not saying why you're not doing it. Say "You're not allowed to touch that because you'll get burned." Say, if a wean was near the fire and you would say to him, "Don't go near that," and you don't say why. "You don't go near the fire because you'll get burned," - you know?

E. You think that's a good idea?

CHRISSIE: I think so!

PAT: Aye!

MAY: In a way it's right - though sometimes - - - -

E. That's one of the secrets of the whole process --

MARY AND CHRISSIE: -- To tell why.

E. And be willing to keep the conversation going.

MAY: You sometimes forget to say why, right enough!  
(Further interruption from children)

E. That - if you are going to correct them - is tremendously good. What about the use of praise, instead of having to correct? Is it possible to think ahead enough to do that? Or is it too much?

PAT: What do you mean?

CHRISSIE: To give praise?

E. Well, to think out, "It is time he was able to do something," instead of at the minute when you want it doing, say, "No, I'll try to remember for the rest of the week, I'll watch out for chances of praising him towards that.

(Further problems with children. Mary calls out her two-year old son's name very imperiously, to the amusement of the others.)

CHRISSIE: See the only thing sometimes? See, if Frances brings in a drawing and I say, "Oh! that's good" - and I was saying to myself, "What is it?"

PAT: Do you mind last week?

MAY: Ayel they all brought one home.

PAT: And I was saying, "That's smashing! Is it a house?" "Naw! It's an elephant." "Oh!", I says, "so it is".

MAY: That was good! I never thought of saying what it was.

(E. tries to give suggestions for the situation, including the use of the phrase - "... tell me about it" to introduce the topic of talking to children).

E. That was the point I was going to bring up. What would happen if she was praised, Chrissie said earlier, "She'd want to do it again." Pat said, "She'd tell me about it!" That - the second thing is what I'd like to go on about next time. What to do with their "talk". That's the thing I'd really like to go on to next week. But before we do that, by next week would everybody try something on shaping their behaviour with a wee bit of praise? So that you could give me an example? I'd love an example from each of you on my tape. An attempt - whether you managed it or not - whether you forgot to do it or not - But if everyone would take on something they fancied getting their child to do - even if it wasn't something important - just for the fun of it - like the man turning his pigeon round. Just say, "I'm going to see if it works!"

PAT: I'd need to try it with John. He's the only one.

E. If you're trying it out, try it with someone fairly easy. Because you're learning.

PAT: ... because he's hopeless.

E. Then he'd be a harder one to do it with.

PAT: He is! He doesnae take a telling, no matter what you say to him!

MAY: Catherine's the same!  
(Long contribution on John's lack of co-operation)

CHRISSIE: He's the middle one.

PAT: He's the middle one! He was just a baby when I had her. He really was.

MARY: Aye! He was only a year!

CHRISSIE: Aye! The second one. I think that's it. Our Theresa's like that.

(Further suggestion by E. on the use of praise for shaping).

PAT: You've to dae that when they go to the toilet at first. You've to say, "Oh! you're good. You can go to the toilet!" At first it was just the novelty, and they were in and out - and you had to keep saying it was good!

That's right!

So when we reinforced it with other things it was, I said, "Well, I do have success!"  
"Well, she says, 'at first it was just the novelty, and they were in and out - and you had to keep saying it was good!'"  
That we really had to reinforce to do anything we hadn't been doing, you see.

And then during this time I remember that I had said, "Oh! you're good. You can go to the toilet!"

Yes, well, it was just to praise them and say, "Oh! you're good. You can go to the toilet!"

That's right! I think that's the process. It was just to praise them and say, "Oh! you're good. You can go to the toilet!"

Yes, you see on the reinforcement of the saying "Oh! you're good. You can go to the toilet!"

## B. REINFORCEMENT AND INSTRUMENTAL CONDITIONING

1974

- E. I asked you to use praise immediately after they'd done something good - so that you were really praising them at the time. But it was something you wanted them to improve in. Did anyone do it? - No?  
(Vaguely - Aye!)
- E. I suggested that you should do something that was kind of planned, so ---
- MARY: Well, when you said that last week, Chrissie and I were saying, "What was it that we were supposed to do, you know?"
- MAY: That's right!
- MARY: So when we explained to each other what we thought it was, I said, "Well, I do that anyhow!"  
"Well, she says, "so do I!"  
That we really weren't going to do anything that we hadn't been doing, you know?  
That we were doing it anyhow.
- E. You were doing this use of praise after it happens? Not before you want it happening?
- MARY: No. Well, if they put on their shoes and socks, I'd say, "That's a good boy!"  
That's what you mean, isn't it?
- E. I mean to use that ---  
I do mean that: that's the process. But if you thought, "I want something a wee bit more than that - to learn the next stage. Instead of having to teach it, if you watched till he happened to do something that was nearly the next thing - supposing he could put his sock on (Aye!) and couldn't do anything with his shoes (Aye!)  
  
(E. goes on to describe a shaping sequence)
- MARY: You mean to say, when you praise them for one thing, they'll do more on their own next time.

The rest of this section of tape is taken up with further efforts to describe the concept of shaping.

The concept of reinforcement seem quite clear in the minds of Mary, and according to her, of Chrissie's (who was ill at home). May and Pat did not seem so clear about the point. They also have the least controlled children. No one seems to have grasped the concept of shaping. Two contributing factors may be poor teaching, and lack of some lower order concepts not identified. But there may also be an affective unwillingness to be so "cold-blooded" about their relationship with their children. This is a commonly expressed reaction in the literature to Skinner and behaviour modification.

(This session ended here because of a fire which broke out in the T.V. set.)

[The following text is extremely faint and largely illegible, appearing to be a transcript of a session. It contains several lines of text, including the words "The other was", "said", and "the reason for", but the rest is too light to transcribe accurately.]

Notes written from transcript because of 11 yrs. transcription 26 over - no sequenced talk.

GROUP I

TEACHING SESSION

September 30th

A & C. LANGUAGE AND CONTROL

1974

Power of Words: 1) in re-inforcement; 2) as cues; 3) for control

Stimulus 1: Introduction

Two captions from newspapers were presented for discussion. One showed the effect of spoken evidence on a court decision in a murder trial. (A nurse who was accused of killing old patients). The other was of the Japanese gunmen in Belgium, who were talked into surrendering.

1) Words in reinforcement

Discussion of parents' own use of words a reinforcement, using earlier discussion material.

INPUT: Words are powerful. Personal use of the power of praise.

RESPONSE: Agreement - with some amazement - that children find sufficient reward in words.

Stimulus 2

2) Words as cues

Two pictures from magazines, each with a dominant theme and a very minor background detail. One was cued by words to highlight this detail. The other was not.

RESPONSE: The participants had been asked to look at each picture and then say what they remembered seeing there. There was no mention of background detail in the un-cued picture, though later one said she had noticed it, but had not thought it worth noting. The background detail from the cued picture was mentioned by all.

An interesting lead for future discussion was given by Mary who said, "You've not to say what you're looking at." When the reason for this was queried, she replied that she had presumed it couldn't be said aloud while trying to remember, as that would make it too easy. (Programme 5.42 "It has been observed experimentally that a subject faced with a difficult problem tends to use speech to help him to direct his problem-solving activity".)

TIF

INPUT: Verbal Cues make minor items important.

3) Words for control

Brief explanation of how control could be transferred to a child by transferring the words of control.

Stimulus : A paper-tearing lesson given to Gina (7) and Catherine (4)

Previously Catherine (4) had been in trouble. The discussion had been interrupted while May, her mother, tried unsuccessfully to bring her in from the street. "Giving me a showing up, running away from me in the street." Now Catherine was ambivalent about trying the paper tearing task. With the support of Gina she did try, but she rolled on the floor with her face in her hands - quite silently - when she made a mistake. Eventually, with reinforcement and cues, she succeeded and was very pleased with her second attempt.

One child per mother was now brought in and each mother taught the paper-folding and tearing.

May would have taken over the child's work if others had not cautioned her to use words. She found it very hard to be confined to verbal directions.

Mary, too, would have liked to do it, when requested urgently by her 4 year-old son. But she is very anxious to find out what these "new" educational ideas are, and what they will achieve. So, with evident effort, she not only restrained her hands, but moved from telling to questioning - at the second round of the exercise. Her effort to learn was rather neatly summed up in her somewhat anguished cry to her 4 year-old son, "I'm not allowed to do it!"

All the children were very quiet, controlled, busy, - and pleased. Catherine moved on from her earlier position very rapidly. Once she had confidence, she became inventive. A tear which was accidentally too long, resulted in the central hole being elongated. Catherine recognised in this a fish shape and began to show it round. Her mother, bothered about the two dogs which had come into the room, paid no attention and Catherine left the paper down. When E. asked May to notice the fish, Catherine lifted it up again and came round to her mother. "That's nice," said May, without looking. (She was busy by then providing tea). Catherine went out without another word - and without looking at the paper again herself.

One of Mary's sons made his into a mask, but his invention was not allowed by Mary at the time, though by the following week she was reporting his later creation of masks.

Chrissie had been late. She followed what to do, but not the fact that words were the central issue. Initially, she did not speak to her little girl, merely demonstrating in a step-by-step fashion. This was successful as far as the paper-tearing was concerned, but had missed the control point. It was difficult to keep track of these four "students" at the same time. Though Chrissie was eventually converted to using words, it is unlikely that she understood their importance.

In a longer series of discussions, it might have been useful to ask mothers to do this task in different ways - pure discovery, pure verbalisation, and guided discovery using verbal cues. In this way they might have seen both the optimum conditions for learning and the subtler point of transfer of control through words. This last point is connected with the relatively permanent nature of learning, and will be referred to gradually throughout the series.

A final point. The mothers discussed the unhelpfulness of their laughter at Catherine's earlier poor attempts. This discussion was not addressed to her, but went on in her presence.

REVIEW

October 7th

## C. LANGUAGE AND CONTROL - Discussed

1974

E. Pat, do you remember saying last week - you were quite amazed to think that children would take a word as a reward. Do you remember, you were saying that it suddenly dawned on you that a child will take, "That's a good boy" as something great. He has suddenly found out that your words saying, "Good boy" matter to him. It's as important to him as if you'd given him something. Isn't it?

PAT: - - - Something ... Aye!

E. I also thought we might look at what we did last week. You know that when we taught that wee lesson to everybody? Now, what you were saying a few minutes ago was great. You'll have to say it all over again as it wasn't on that tape. (Anyone who listens to the tape will hear the mothers helping E. along with her explanations, by echoing phrases here and there, and voicing agreement sounds. For clarity's sake, these have been left out of the transcript.) You were telling me what happened after last week's lesson. Who tried it again in your house, May?

MAY: My three of them done it.

E. And one of them hadn't been here before. (interruption) Peter wasn't in (discussion about Peter's absence.)

MAY: (reflectively) What happened then?

E. How did he learn?

MAY: They were sitting here and all of a sudden, Gina --

E. Catherine? I thought it was Catherine - - -

MAY: Aye! Catherine. She taen the paper and she started daeing it. And Gina says, "I'll show you how - what we were getting taught the day." And Peter done it. And here, he couldnae dae it! So it ended in a fight, right away!

E. But he was able to do it in the end?

MAY: Then he seemed to do it in the end. Aye, that's right.

E. Now, can you remember any of those steps? Because there was something I wanted to point out about what you were doing that was really, you know - it's the whole thing about education that was wrapped up in that wee bit you were doing.

MAY: Mm... I wisnae paying much attention. But I knew whit they were daeing.

E. The way they were teaching each other? How did you know? By what they were saying? Were they telling him how to do it?

MAY: Aye! Gina was telling Peter how to dae it ...

E. Putting it into words?

MAY: She was saying, "You watch me. This is how to dae it." Just the way you were telling the kids. She was just following your words, more or less, you know.

E. Was she? This was what I was trying to show you. Remember Chrissie wasn't in at the beginning of last week?

MAY: That's right!

E. And I talked of what I was trying to do. And I demonstrated it. Then everybody else took it on. I noticed (to Mary) that you wouldn't do it for Garry (aged 4). Do you remember, he was saying, "Do it for me," and you were saying, "No, I've not to do it for you. You've to do it! (Laughter). Instead of taking it from him and doing it, you somehow made him do it. Now, how. Can you remember what you did?

MARY: (hesitantly) Well, was he not watching Charles (aged 5)? No?

MAY: No, he was standing by you. Mind, I was wi' Charles?

PAT: No. He was wi' you. Charles was over here.

MAY: Aye! that's right! For mind, I was daeing it wi' Catherine and Doreen says, "Don't show her!"

PAT: Don't dae it!

MAY: And I was keeping on daeing it!

PAT: Ayel You kept saying, "Wait, and I'll dae it."  
(Laughter)

MAY: That's right!

E. It's tempting to do it for them, isn't it? (Ayel)

MARY: It's not just that - - -

PAT: You feel as if they're no' getting on quick enough.

MARY: For you! Ayel!

PAT: Know what I mean? See in the morning, getting ready? Alex's sitting. "Och! wait and I'll tie they laces." He's no quick enough - too much in a hurry!! (General agreement)

E. But then, you've got to keep doing it. Haven't you?

PAT: They depend on you! They just sit there - waiting on you to come!

MARY: They depend on you, then, - - -

MAY: At that rate, you shouldnae do it for them.

PAT: No, I know!

E. What I was trying to say was that I was doing something with Catherine which was very - - - organised. We'd had a carry-on with Catherine before, out in the street.

MAY: That's right! (Catherine had run away from her mother who had complained of her, "Gie'ing me a showing-up in the street.")

MARY: I says to Garry, "You can do it!" He thought at first he couldnae dae it and we were going to take a hand, remember? He was going to go into a mood and we said the rest could d@ it, so if the rest could do it, he could do it, he could do it! Is this what this is?

E. Yes, one of the things was - - -

MARY: Praise.

E. Yes, that was one of the important things. I thought that you all did that. You all used praise every time.

repeated  
- how corrected myself

MAY: That's right!

E. You (Pat) were teaching it to - - - -

PAT: Alex!

E. Alex. And every step he did of it, you were saying, "That's good!"

PAT: "That's good!" Aye!

E. See? So we were all using praise, to teach. Not just before we wanted them to do something else. But as they did a step, they knew what it was they could do, because you had - sort of - put a label on it.

PAT: Uh-huh! That's it.

E. As if to say - "That's the thing you can do!"

MARY: That was making them go further on then. That was giving them that encouragement.

E. That was a real use of praise, because, we all said before - we praised them, but I've been trying to suggest that you could really use it --- think about using it.

PAT: So that they'd dae something else.

E. - - - and where to put it straight after they had done the right thing. You said what it was that they could do right, actually naming it. This is the thing I want to move on to today. This is what I was doing with Catherine. I don't know if you noticed. I was saying to Catherine, "Fold the paper over" - I wasn't just saying, "Do that". I wish Chrissie was here. Because Chrissie wasn't here for that, and she was saying to her wee one, "Do this".

MARY: That's right!

E. Now, I don't think, unless she picked it up from yours, that her little one will have gone on doing it. (Uh-Huh! Ate!)

PAT: Just forget about it when she went out!

MARY: Didn't know the basic ----

E. If you say, "Do this" - now, on that tape, when I take this back - and I haven't the paper there ----

PAT: You won't know what you're talking about.

E. I won't know what "this" is. (Well! that's right.)

E. But if I was saying, "Fold the paper," it wouldn't matter if you didn't have the paper with you. (That's right! Uh-huh!)

E. A child could say that to himself. That's why Gina was able to teach Peter.

MAY: Aye! Here's Chrissie nool

MARY: I hope she says the right thing!

E. It won't really matter. We'll just see what came of it!

(Govan Background 7 has been extracted from here)

E. You know that little paper-cutting thing we were doing last week? Who were you teaching? Was it Frances?

CHRISSIE: Uh-huh! Frances!

E. Did she do it any more at home?

CHRISSIE: Uh-huh!

E. Did she?

CHRISSIE: All night!

E. Did she?

MARY: Ah ha! You were saying she - - -

CHRISSIE: Frances was at it all night!

MAY: That's what she was wanting to know!

CHRISSIE: Aye. All the paper. She was tearing them a' up. "Daddy, have you read that paper?". He's going, "No! How!" "'Cos, gie me it after you," and she was making up the wee things.

PAT: Mine's never thought of it till Saturday night.

CHRISSIE: No. They did it - - -

MAY: No. They done it that night, that day.

PAT: John (4) and Alex (5) came in. And of course she (3) had to go and get a bit, and John came in. See papers!?

CHRISSIE: Ah! weel. Ye see Charles doing it as well.

E. You weren't in at the beginning of last week's session, were you! Remember, when I was talking about this!

When you were teaching it to Frances, I remember someone at some stage, saying to you, "You've to tell them what to do. You've not to do it." Do you remember that?

CHRISSIE: Uh-huh!

E. Can you remember about how you told them?

CHRISSIE: Well, I just says just to fold it and fold it again.

E. Oh! you did in fact say that!

CHRISSIE: I did.

E. Oh! this it whay it did transfer then. What I was trying to say just now, Chrissie, was that, if you don't actually tell them what it is that you want them to do - If you just say, "Do that" - Is that what you were doing at the beginning?

CHRISSIE: Uh-huh! Just - - -

E. Just saying, "Do that"?

CHRISSIE: Uh-huh! "Do that."

E. And then someone said, "Say what to do," and you began saying, "Fold it."

CHRISSIE: Tell them to fold it.

E. Aye! That's what makes the difference - - -

MAY: Aye! well, so it does, when you think of it.

E. - - - Whether they'll remember it again. If you just say "that", - well! they have no picture in their head of what "that" is.

CHRISSIE: That's right!

E. But if you say, "Fold it," then they've got a word that tells them what to do. And this is what I was trying to show you. If you name what they're doing as they do it. Now, I don't know if you noticed Catherine afterwards? When she had done it once and I was naming the parts,

the next time I didn't name them. I asked her to name them. On one occasion she did this (demonstrating a fold in the paper-tearing exercise) and immediately pressed down the fold. Do you remember I immediately said to her ---

PAT: "That's good!"

E. "That's good!" But I also made her say what she was doing. Instead of just saying that was good, I said, "What was it you remembered to do?" She went on rubbing it, and I said, "You pressed down the fold, didn't you?" - To try to get her to get the words in her mind. Now this was what I was really trying to do. I was trying to transfer the control of doing the thing to her. Do you remember what she was like at the beginning?

PAT: Ayel She widnae dae it at a'

E. Do you remember?

MAY: Ayel That's right.

PAT: 'Cos she couldnae tear it.

E. And yet she changed from that to being not only able to do it. She actually moved on to something. I was very impressed by her, because once she had done it a few times, she ---

MARY: She was mair thingimed in it (competent).

E. She tore the corner off unevenly on one occasion. But by this time she knew, and she had control of it. So when she did it unevenly she was in a position to open it, look at the tear, and decide it was like something. (To Catherine) What did you say your tear was like? Can you remember?

PAT: Was it a horse or something?

(Chorus) - A fish!

E. She tore it out and she got the longer shape.

MAY: That's right! So she done!

E. And she said, "I've got a fish!" But you see, that's what we are trying to do in the school. We're trying to show them, so that they have power over the thing. They not only can do it. They know they can do it. That's the difference.

MAY: Oh! I see.

E. They know they can do it. They can put it into words for themselves. They can tell themselves. So they haven't lost it.

MAY: That's true.

E. And then, once they can do that, they can start inventing. They can start being creative on the thing. It's not just that she tore it accidentally the wrong way. That's what she did at the beginning. That's what she was rolling on the floor about at the beginning.

PAT: Aye! When she halved it in two.

E. But later she was able to create. Now the ability to put it into words gives them self-control. And this is really what makes all the difference between you controlling them, and them being able to control themselves. So I wanted to go on today to see what you thought - - -

(Interruption by children. Uproar from Catherine who wanted to go to the swimming baths with older children, out of school because of a Teachers' Strike.)

*[Faint, illegible text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

## D. CONCEPT LEARNING AND LANGUAGE

1974

(Mary had to go out of the room as this discussion began. Her return is noted in the text.)

- E. I was wondering, supposing you were on one of these "Tele" programmes, and someone like Hughie Green was offering you - was going to give you money if you could do something. I'm going to write down what you tell me. I wonder if you could describe a black-pudding to someone who had never seen one?
- MAY: Describe a black-pudding!
- PAT: It's black!
- CHRISSIE: --- long!
- MAY: Round!
- PAT: It's got wee white bits in it.
- MARY: Ayel - and it's kind of nippy - spicy, rather, isn't it! (Pause)
- E. Long, round, spicy, black, - what else? (Pause)
- MAY: That's all - - - - Wait a minute - - - -
- PAT: It's got a skin on it.
- CHRISSIE: Oblong.  
(Chrissie seems here to be referring to the very long cylinder shape now more common than that of the horse-shoe or circle shape which was traditional in Glasgow. She is concentrating on the new, and so dominant aspect of the stimulus, the greatly increased length, and has set aside the equally obvious but unchanged feature of roundness, perhaps because she has no word for the total shape.) This is followed by a puzzled silence, which Pat tries to bridge.)
- PAT: Ye can get wee ones - - -
- CHRISSIE: Ye can get the oblong ones.

MAY: I've only seen one kind!  
CHRISSIE: Ye can get the round kind!  
MAY: The ring - the ring!  
PAT: The circle - and ye - - - -  
CHRISSIE: Ye can get the oblong as well!  
PAT: Just a long - - - -

(Mary re-enters the room)

E. Mary, I've just asked everyone to describe a black pudding to someone who'd never seen one!  
MARY: A black pudding!  
E. How would you tell someone what a black pudding was? (Pause)  
MARY: Well, - - - -  
E. What would you begin with?  
CHRISSIE: Describe it! Just describe it!  
MARY: I was going to say it was like sliced sausage only it's black.  
E. That's the first example we've been given that --  
MARY: - - - for people that know sliced sausages.  
E. But at least you've said "sausage". I was looking at all the other ones. Supposing someone said, "What's a black-putting?", and you said, "It's long, round, spicy, black, and has a skin." Only the word, "spicy", suggests it is something to eat. Up till now we don't know what you're talking about. It could have been a walking-stick!  
MARY: True enough!  
PAT AND CHRISSIE: True enough!  
E. Now, this is the kind of problem children have. They don't know what things are! And if you don't give them words, if they've got to have the thing there as well - - -  
MARY: You could say in two words as much as you could say in half an hour - sort of - - -

E. Yes, you can find words, if you stop to think - and try to name what the thing actually is. It is quite a hard thing to do. But it makes a big difference.

MARY: "It is something for eating." You would need to say that for a start. (Laughter).

E. You've got to start by presuming that they know nothing about it! I had a friend up from Devon recently, and we were killing ourselves laughing, because she had passed through Glasgow and - - - -

MARY: - - - and she'd never seen one - - - -

E. It was a building this time. She had never seen a tenement building before. You know the way you come in from London Road? She had never seen buildings like this in her life before and she was trying to describe "a close." Now, come on, tell somebody in Devon what a close is like!

MARY: A close?

E. - - - and watch this time. You've only given them the word "close". They don't know it is part of a building.

MARY: Well, it is a lot of houses all built together - only the opening's - - - -

PAT: There's an opening in the front.

MARY: And an opening in the back. - A lot of families live - ye know - instead of one opening for one family, there's maybe six or more families living up a close.

PAT: Oh! in the old tinamints, there's plenty!

MARY: I know your point! For when I say at home, "a close", they don't know what I'm talking about.

E. So you're putting in the point of what else is in it. There are stairs in it. That's given me a lot more than our black pudding. Some-one who had never heard of a close, would have a much better picture from: "There are a lot of houses together. There is an open entrance in the front for many families and it leads to stairs." It is a much better picture, isn't it, than your "long, round, black, spicy ---- (Laughter). That didn't give a picture.

E. I thought we might spend the last few minutes trying to tell someone younger than Catherine - for she knows all about colour. How would you set about teaching an idea like colour? You wouldn't do it all at one go. What would you do?

CHRISSIE: Colour?

MARY: It comes gradually, doesn't it?

PAT: It does - I mean you start - - -

MARY: You can't expect them to be learning colours all at the one time.

PAT: They start asking themselves.

E. So what do you do?

PAT: They start looking at a book, and they say, What - - - John doesn't say "colour ----"

PAT: No. I know what he's talking about when he says that. It's the colour he's after, but I can't think of the name of it the noo - we'll just say "colour". He'll say, "And what colour's that?" and "what colour's that?" and then he remembers maybe one of them and he'll say, "Is that one yellow?" and "What colour is that one again? Ye've tae tell him, till gradually he remembers. He's got an idea.

E. So you give him examples of colour? (General agreement). Supposing we take the one that you've just said, - yellow. Now does he ever point to something that's not yellow and say, "Is that yellow?"

PAT: (unwillingly) Aye, right enough.

E. Now, how do you explain it? What do you say to him? Do you just say that it's not?

PAT: It's no'. That's a different colour, another colour - and tell him what it is.

E. So you've got to give him examples and you've got to show him non-examples?

PAT: Uh-huh!

E. You've got to show them both, before they've got the picture. Is that right? What were you saying?

PAT: He's got a habit - see, going along the street - the motors, "What colour's that motor?"

MARY: That's right!

PAT: "What colour's that motor?" You keep telling him. When he comes back again, he'll remember whit colour.

MARY: He'll remember those colours better than something in the house.

E. So he learns them, by being given examples and then by being given non-examples. Is that right? Which is the kind of thing I was trying to do there. (Concepts of black-pudding and of close). What about teaching other ideas? Long and short. Do you ever think of those. Do they need to learn those?

MARY: There's a good example of that in Play-School. I think it is great.

CHRISSIE: Ay! That's the tele.

MARY: They tell them - that's long and short.

PAT: Take a long step! Take a short step! I mean, they tell them what they're daeing.

CHRISSIE: I like that myself. I watch it every day.

E. Do you watch those things? That's the beginning of Maths.

CHRISSIE: They dae it along with the man. They dae what he does!

PAT: They watch him. See, they dae it first, and then they say, "We'll do it again," and ---

MARY: Did any of you see that programme last night? It was late on. It must have been twelve. - It was after twelve when it finished. (Chorus of "No!") It was education for pre-school. I had just you (E.) in mind when I was watching. They showed you a teacher and she was great at everything - showing them swimming. Play-School, you know. She was really great. Did you not see it, May? And she's got a bad back as well.

MAY: When was that?

MARY: It was late last night. Nearly twelve it was on. It was great. It was something like this --

MAY: I was sleeping then!

CHRISSIE: So was I.

E. Well, at the time you've got to get up in the morning, May, I don't wonder.  
(May is up at 5 to go out school-cleaning).

CHRISSIE: We're early bedders.

E. What I was trying to show you was why they do those things. So that when you listen to those programmes you'll maybe do more of this yourself. I'm trying to see how you teach ideas. That's really what I'm looking for at the minute. How do you teach an idea of something to children? (E. tries to move the discussion on to the teaching of shape.)  
... If she is beginning to notice shape, this is a big help. Now, how would you teach it?

MAY: By showing them.

CHRISSIE: And giving the name of the shape. "That's round like a ball."

MAY: "That's square like a box" - and "that's shaped like a diamond."

E. See that thing you're saying now, Chrissie? That's what I'd like to finish with. How would you teach a child an idea like, "Round things roll." What would you do?

MARY: Give them an example.

CHRISSIE: Say, "It's smooth". "It's round, it's smooth - and that's how it can roll."

E. You would give examples. You would get things. What things would you get for him to show it? You were just giving different kinds of "rounds" just now! It was interesting, that.

CHRISSIE: Well, a round ball. That's smooth, that can roll itself. But the likes of that (a circular ashtray of fancily cut glass)

MAY: That's round! That won't roll!

CHRISSIE: That couldnae. That wouldnae go the same. That's got edges.

E. So you would show them -

PAT: All round, Aye!

E. And how would you teach "roll"? How would you teach an idea like rolling?

PAT: You would need to - - -

MARY: You would just need to show them.

CHRISSIE: You would roll the ball and say, "That rolls. That's fine!"

## D. CONCEPT LEARNING AND LANGUAGE

1974

Recapitulation on the naming process in the Paper Tearing Exercise.

(Mary was absent from this session.)

CHRISSIE: - - - When you're describing a thing, like last week - - -

MARY: That's right, I was telling my sister about the black pudding.

CHRISSIE: That was a laugh! "He" was in stitches.

MARY: I was telling her as well. Well, it could have been a walking stick.

CHRISSIE: That's right!

MARY: Nobody said it was for eating.

CHRISSIE: - - - that it was to eat.

MARY: But when I thought about it - - - If you were at school and you were writing an essay on that, the first thing you would say is that it is for eating. That, you would have said it when you were younger. Why didn't we say it now? (Awareness that the teacher did not "share a similar contextual history"? Bernstein, Open University, Language in Education, Page 104). You would have said it at school! I know I would anyhow. That's the first thing you would have said.

PAT: - - - It's for eating.

E. But you presume the people you're talking to - - -

MARY: - - - Know.

PAT: Know it's for eating.

MARY: Although you said they didn't. You said they didn't know what it was. But we presumed they did.

E. This use of words so that they really describe a thing when the thing isn't there is the

E. (continued)

"money" your children need for school. If they haven't got it, they can't "buy" their education. They can't get it. Because they can't follow what the teacher's on about. It's like building bricks. He can do different things with them.

(This led to a decision to try teaching a concept by sharing an experience with a child and making a special effort to put the experience into words as they proceeded. Growing peas in a jam-jar was chosen. The mothers had never heard of it before - so it was a new experience for all.)

parents. Great interest in the...  
...with a...

...was a great deal of...  
...of the... with...

parents.

...to you... you...  
...you... I think, if you...  
...this... I don't help...  
...people want to know...  
...we... advice?  
...cup...  
...to...  
...decision...  
...things...  
...in...  
...and what...  
...useful...  
...you?

I think you learn a lot of school...  
...also...  
...school...  
...and...

718.

GROUP I

BACKGROUND EXPLORATION

October 14th

A. MOTHERS' VIEWS ABOUT THEMSELVES AND THEIR OWN SCHOOLING

1974

(May was absent from this session)

1. Parent's own experience of education - reflection in the light of concept discussed, particularly reinforcement and verbalised concepts. Opportunity here for E. to offer reinforcement now on manifest teaching strengths in each parent.
2. Importance of words to express knowledge. Bruner from Open University Language in Education, Page 166.
3. Power of Parents. Great influence of the home contrasted with school.

Because there was a great deal of marginally useful talk, only sections of the tape were transcribed.

Transcript

E. ... It's up to you how much you care to say about yourselves. But, I think, if you could show me - This is where I need help really. I don't know what people want to know from teachers. What use are we to adults? I know something about how to cope with kids. But really, it's a new world to us to try to see what an adult wants, anyway! Because we might be looking for different things out of life. One of the things I'd like to look back at is your own education - and what you think you got out of it. How useful was your education to you?

MARY: I think you learn a lot at school. But you also pick up an awful lot after you leave school, too.

E. What kind of things?

MARY: Nearly everything! I don't know - - - I think you pick up things to do - and information in your head.

E. How about you? Did you feel successful at school, Pat?

PAT: Well! I passed. I got there and nae mair!  
(I.Q.?)

E. How did you feel?

PAT: Well, I took a commercial course. But I don't see much - - - after I left school I worked at it for a wee while, and I didnae seem to be getting anywhere. So I just fell away from it. It wasnae really much use to me.

E. Job-wise, you mean!

PAT: Ayel Job-wise!

E. And what about you, Chrissie?

CHRISSIE: Ah well! I wasnae very bright at school. I got a Secondary School (place). *(This was shown in another discuss to be in the lowest gra*  
(Before Comprehensive Schools were the norm, there were three grades of Secondary Schools).  
But what I worked at didnae need a Secondary education ... They - (the teachers) - took more time with the brighter ones.

MARY: Ayel the more willing you are to get on, the better you'll get on!

E. I think this is very true. This is something I want to come back on. I think the point that Mary's just made is vitally important, because it makes all the difference to the children. The more willing they are to get something or other, the more likely they are to get it. If you haven't got a desire for it.

MARY: I'm awful inquisitive anyhow. If I go to the hospital and I'm going with anything I have to know the this and the that, the ins and outs of what it's about. Everything about it, you know! But a lot of people say, "I wouldn't like to ask," you know. But I just ask!

(Some further conversation about Mary's rheusus negative blood group.)

E. What about you Pat? How do you feel school treated you? You say the course itself wasn't very good. But how did you feel in school? Successful or unsuccessful?

PAT: Well! It a' depends. Well, see wi' arithmetic, anything like that? I could dae a' that. I was - I felt I was - getting on there. See

PAT (continued)

like history and geography? I didnae - I just didnae have a clue! I couldnae mind dates, or nothing like that. I just hadnae - it got that I just had nae interest in it.

E. How did you feel sitting in a classroom like that? How did you feel the teacher thought of you?

PAT: That I was a dim-wit! (nervous laughter)

E. That he thought badly of you? This itself kept you from bothering?

PAT: I jist didnae bother wi' they teachers.

E. The effect of praise on your life and the lack of praise is really quite tremendous! How did you know that you were good at arithmetic? You knew eventually because you got a sum right. But at some stage before you were getting it right, someone must have been saying to you ---

PAT: Aye! I must have got encouragement.

E. Now, you (Chrissie) would say, that somewhere in school people were not saying that to you?

CHRISSIE: Aye! Well! They didn't.

E. Did that make you rebellious? Or did it just make you quiet?

CHRISSIE: Very quiet! I was very quiet.

PAT: So was I quiet, - very shy.

CHRISSIE: I wasnae the type to talk. I wasnae much of a talker, and I think the teachers just sort of said, "Och! well, that - - -"

PAT: "You've had it!"

CHRISSIE: I was very quiet in school.

MARY: Sometimes if you rebel it would be better, maybe.

CHRISSIE: Aye! that's right.

MARY: If you could say what you wanted to say instead of just taking it all.

E. So you were counted a good pupil, then? A well-behaved pupil, were you?

CHRISSIE: Oh! aye! - No' very bright, but - - -!

E. There's a man called Bruner who has written a book that I have just been reading. He was saying "What is significant about the growth of the mind of a child is to what degree it depends not on his capacity" - everyone has a lot more brains<sup>o</sup> than they use - "not on his capacity, but on the unlocking of the capacity by techniques." Now, we've all got a lot more capacity than anyone has unlocked. I was really trying to see if you were going to tell me that - If you are aware of a capacity that nobody unlocked at school - but has come unlocked by other means.

(Further information from Chrissie on her school allocation and the effect of not being allowed to go to the Senior Secondary School).

CHRISSIE: ... Aye! I'm not as daft as I look.

(E. goes on to give examples of difficulties which can be experienced in manipulating concepts.)

May, absent for this session later gave a long and moving description of her own schooling - unfortunately unrecorded. She was very conscious of revealing something kept hidden until now. She had been moved from the primary to the Special (E.S.N.) School. She felt totally inadequate before her own children, all of whom, she felt were much cleverer than herself. (Her eldest is 7 years old.)

T 19

GROUP I

TEACHING SESSION

October 14th

A. HOME / SCHOOL INFLUENCES IN LEARNING

1974

- 
- E. Do you see that thing they were learning last week? (Paper-tearing taught by the mothers on September 30th and discussed on October 7th). I went home and I couldn't get past that! All of them had done so much of it at home. That silly bit of paper!
- MARY: They're still doing it! I was up in Veronica's this morning coming from the Southern (Hospital). She's my sister. She's got two just the same age. He (Garry, aged 4) was showing Sean - that's his cousin - how to do it. Before you know, the place was covered with papers. You should hear Veronica! She didn't know what it was that they were doing. She just thought there were tearing up bits of paper.
- E. Charles? -(Garry's 5 year old brother who happened to be in the room at the moment) Do you do any of these things in school? Do you ever make things in school with paper? (Head-shake). Do you ever make things with plasticine in school? (unenthusiastic nod) - Do you ever make things to go on the wall? Or draw things?
- CHARLES: I made a boat.
- E. Did you? And did you come home and show anybody else how to make it?
- CHARLES: You canny take it home.
- E. No! but did you try it out again at home? (Puzzled look, and no reply).
- E. Now, you see - - -
- MARY: (Charles' Mother) Did you draw a wee boat when you came home?
- CHARLES: (after a pause) I drew one on the window.
- MARY: In the condensation!
- CHRISSIE: Aye! that's right. That's what they dael
- MARY: He never has a pen out of his hand since he started school.

E. But what I am trying to say is that that has not impressed him as much as the paper-tearing, because you taught him that.

CHARLES: (Who has never interrupted any discussion before) Get me a pen and paper and I'll make a boat.

E. Now that we're talking about it here! Right! If it's talked about in the house - it matters. He's on about it now! (Charles continues to fuss his mother).

PAT: Aye! now it's "Can he make it?"

E. I must say, Charles, you proved - - - -

MARY: - - - proved your point!

E. Proved my point very well. If a thing is talked about in the home, it matters. (Laughter)

MARY: There you are! Proof!

E. If it is only talked about in the school, it can stay there!

CHARLES: Mammy, give me a pen and paper!

T 20.

GROUP I

TEACHING SESSION

October 21st

A & D. PRINCIPLE BUILDING : EXPERIMENTS AT HOME

1974

E. Everybody said that sometimes the teacher's words didn't teach them anything, on some occasions. You very nicely blamed yourselves. But I would have said that, whoever's fault it was, the fact was that the teacher was pouring out words but they weren't telling you anything. Was that what it came to?

(General agreement).

So, words themselves don't necessarily teach. It needs more than words.

But, remember that "black pudding" session we did? We found that if we didn't name things, you couldn't teach either. There is a use of words that is important.

I thought today we would try to look at what it is to do with words.

Remember the famous lesson with bits of paper? One of the things that proved - I think it proved it very well - (recap on the reaction of Charles to the school lesson on boat-making once his mother began discussing it). His mother said that this thing mattered - so it mattered. What parents say at home matters. It matters so much more than anything we could say. If we happen to be saying the same things - which is the whole point of what I'm doing here - if the parents and the teachers are saying the same things, then the kids are going to get on.

The other thing from the paper-learning lesson was, not only did you do it with them, but the use you made of words in it. That's what I thought we might go on to today. Do you remember I kept going on about that? It wasn't enough to say to them, "Do that". You had to use the names of things.

MAY: Names - aye. Whit they wanted to make really.

E. You had to say "fold it" - "press it".

MAY: That's right.

E. I want to try and show you what those names did for the children. They gave them a principle, a central idea of how to cope with a bit of paper. So they could do other things on the same principle as that.

(To May) Your's began doing it - Catherine began doing it.

(To Mary) and yours.  
Remember Catherine began saying she'd got a fish out of it?

MAY: That's right.

E. Once she'd got a principle, a central idea that you fold the paper and make things by tearing out parts - then she could expand on it.  
And your's, Mary, went on doing ....

MARY: The mask?

E. Making a mask out of it.  
Didn't you both (Pat and Chrissie) say that yours taught them to other people?

CHRISSIE: Aye, they were showing the others.

PAT: Oh aye. The newspaper a' ower the place.

MAY: Oh aye, that's right. Mines were the same and a' - showing wee Peter. Wee Peter couldnae dae it. So he kind of lost the heid and that caused a fight.

E. But in the end, they did teach him?

MAY: But the end up, Gina was trying to tell him how to dae it. Whit to dae. And once he got it, he was a' right.

E. She wasn't just showing him.

MAY: No, she was telling him.

E. So once he'd got the principle as well, once he'd got the central idea, it was his and he could get on with it. Now, that's really what I'm trying to say. If you could see that to teach somebody that thing, they've got to experience it. They've got to get something - and at the same time, they need a set of words. Once they've got a set of words they can ....  
(interruption)

E. I wonder if anyone tried planting peas?

(May, who had not been at the last meeting, but had had a report, had not tried. "I forgot about mine." Pat said nothing. Chrissie had allowed too much water to be added and the peas had not grown. Mary had been most successful. She had about a dozen peas growing well in wet paper at the bottom of a jam jar. E. had brought beans growing in a jar, plus a supply of dried beans for further planting).

MAY: (looking at E's). The beans grew!

PAT: Mary's has "thing".

MAY: Aye Mary, gaun you and get yours.

MARY: Aye, mines came up.

CHRISSIE: Mines is drooned. They were pouring watter on it.  
(discussion on how to set up the experiment. Mary returns with hers).

MARY: (diffidently) I never took as much bother but, as you.

(She had gone to a great deal of trouble. The end product was differently arranged from E's but the actual peas were showing much better growth than E's beans).

E. They're tremendous.  
What did your children think of them?

MARY: To be honest, I've got more questions out of, you know, other things, than I got from them. The only thing, Charles said one of them was like a three.

E. But did he plant them?

MARY: No, he didn't plant them.

E. Ah well, what about letting them do the planting?

MAY: See, if you let them dae it.

CHRISSIE: Mines havenae even came up.

MAY: I forgot all about it.

E. Yours might have been too wet.

CHRISSIE: Aye, well see Charles? "I'll water them" (demonstrates over-watering). They were floatin'.

MAY: Peter ruined ma plant the same way.

E. I think they could learn from that?

CHRISSIE: Aye. That's whit I said, "That's too much. You don't drink as much water as that."

E. Especially if you show him this (successful attempts).

MAY: As you say, if you let them dae it themselves. Then they'd be mair ... wanting ... you tell them ...

E. Aye, we're back at this business of paper tearing. If you do it for them, they've learned nothing.  
(General agreement).  
(Right enough. Aye, etc.)

E. They've got to do it.

MARY: I thought it was just to see what questions they would ask when they seen that?

E. Aye, that of itself is interesting to see. Do they ask questions if you do it? They don't really. They've got to ...

MAY: I think if they done it themselves they would dae it.

PAT: (looking at the pea shoots and indicating her surprise at their height) Whit? Jack and the Beanstalk?

CHRISSIE: It'll grow up to the ceiling.

MAY: That's amazing. I couldnae get away ... I says, "That's ..."

PAT: I've never seen that.

MAY: Neither have I.

MAY: That's good that.

(Further discussion on how to arrange the peas and beans for best viewing).

MAY: I never did it, right enough. I think wee Peter would be quite ... you know ... taken on wi' that. Want to know the questions. But I never did it right enough.

E. I think it has certainly got to be their interest. They've got to say, "Why does it do this?"  
(Aye!)  
They won't want to know if somebody else has ...

MAY: Done it? Aye.

E. What I really wanted to go on to say, that it really is a central idea of how anything grows. You know (Pat) You were talking about books, encyclopaedia and things like that. Well, I was wondering, if we could get something growing in each house, to teach the principle of growth. Beans, peas ...  
(Interruption by children during which Patricia (Pat's 3 year old daughter) joined her mother and looked questioningly at the jar of growing beans to which E was pointing).

E. What about that, Patricia? Would you like to grow some of these?  
Eh? (No answer).

PAT: Patricia's no' going to talk today.

E. I picked it up because she was looking at it. (To Patricia) Are you going to grow some? If I give you some beans, will you grow them? Eh? I think I'll give you some of my beans - and you make Jack and the Beanstalk. Would you like some?  
(To Pat) I won't give them to her now, or she'll eat them. (laughter)  
Not that it would do her harm.  
(further interruption from children).

PATRICIA: I want them. (the beans).  
(to Pat)

PAT: But you don't eat them.

PATRICIA: Want them.  
(to E.)

E. You want them. Oh, you can have them.

(further interruption. Mary, "That's your wean (Mary's 15 month old son) in ma fridge and that's a' the eggs he's broken." (in an understanding tone) Cathie's weans do that in ma maw's. They do the same. They've nae sense. (Apologetically) Mary, "He can't reach my own."  
"How many eggs is that I owe you?", etc.)

E. (To Pat) See all those things you were saying about teaching colour? You've got a whole set of things on my tapes - all those things you were doing from the cars. This is terribly important to their being able to learn at school - that they're used to learning an idea.

When you were saying about yourself, that you didn't remember dates - remember you said that? Well, I would think that was because someone was offering you - dates - not attached to anything - not attached to an idea.

PAT: Uh-huh. Just a lot of ...

E. This is what we cannot learn. Children can't learn. We can't learn. You can't learn unless you've got a central idea that can grow like a plant in your mind. You know, it can put out shoots in different directions, add things on to your central idea.

But, if you've got no central idea, then it is just a whole lot of bits of information - and you just let them all go again. It is like trying to juggle with them - and you give up. This is why I'm trying to use the idea of a plant. If you can let them grow something - anything - so that they see how a plant works, then they can pick up a thing in a book - like trees and the seeds they come from.

MARY: Want to know how they grew?

E. Aye. They would know. They could be able to do that themselves. I see you put that in the soil and get that. There is no connection to look at, between say, an acorn and an oak tree.

CHRISIE: No.

E. You wouldn't know, looking at them, that one grew from the other. You need the experience of growth. You need two things. An experience and you need the words. You need somebody saying "It's because you plant it and a shoot comes out and a root comes out. That's how a plant 'works'." But it is not enough

E. (Continued)

just to say it. They've got to have done it. Those gorgeous peas of yours. They're tremendous.

CHRISSIE: So they are. They're great.

(General sounds of approval)

I never thought. Them just lying there.

MAY: I never even thought of trying that, in case they wouldnae turn out likely. I was amazed.

E. If they do that themselves.

MAY: I think they'd have mair ... "thingmy" (interest?)

E. The whole thing is not just to have that piece of information. But to use that as a central idea from which you could start saying, "That's how that plant grew". "That's how the trees grew."

Jack and the Beanstalk - that's what they're talking about in the story. That they threw these beans out and they grew. The children can see the joke then, of beans that could grow so high. They can see it is funny and it is magic, (etc.)

This is the centre of any learning. If they have a central piece of information, a principle or a central idea. Then new information grows out of that. I wondered if you could think of any other ideas you could teach them. When you asked me last week. You said, "Give us a suggestion." I racked my brains before I came to that.

PAT: That's what I mean.

MARY: That's what I was saying to Patricia this morning. Sometimes when you rack your brains for something like that, they don't ask a question, you know? But something simple, like you never thought they would ask questions about -

MAY: That's how Gina goes sometimes and a'

MARY: They're contrary - on wee simple things. But you never - well, I never got any satisfaction out of that.

E. I do think you are right. It's because they don't ask the question. I do think you've got to wait till something comes up, if possible.

MARY: That's right. Till he asks.

E. But it may be possible to encourage it to come up. If you leave children just to ask for themselves, then they grow at their own rate.

MARY: That's the thing. Aye.

E. But education is the process of speeding the growth. What we're trying to say in education is that the world's been going all these thousands of years. It's a pity if they have all to start again, as if they were cavemen. That's the process of education. "We'll speed up knowledge."  
It's no use saying, "Wait till they want it."

MARY: I'm not saying that.

E. There's a happy medium isn't there? You can offer it too early.

MARY: Aye.

E. And you can offer it when they don't want to know.  
(Interruption, laughter about the children).  
I would like to see if we could think of other principles, other basic ideas that we could teach them, that a whole lot of things would grow out of.

MARY: Like planting things for them?

E. Well, the only one we've thought of at the minute is planting.

MAY: Buy them a proper plant? Buy them the likes of that?

E. Aye, bulbs would be very good.

MARY: Last year they had one that flowered and they never bothered about that. But they were used to it, you see.

PAT: Aye, used to it.

E. What about going to the shop with them (details of bulb growing, keeping in the dark, etc.)

MARY:

GROUP I

T 21

TEACHING SESSION

October 21st

A & D. PRINCIPLE BUILDING : HOME / SCHOOL LINKS

1974

- 
- MARY: (Referring back to peas and beans)  
I dare say if you planted them out in the back where nobody would find them, they would grow up. (more on this).
- E. What about things like shapes and sizes? What about their maths training? You know, you were saying that on television they teach them this by "Take a short step. Take a long step."  
(General chorus of "aye".)
- CHRISSIE: Aye. Playschool.
- E. What other kind of maths training do they get like that? See, maybe you never think of that as maths, but that's the beginning of maths.  
(Pause)  
Are there any other things about shapes and sizes and weights that you could be doing?
- CHRISSIE: Well, know how they're learning their numbers? Well, Charles says, "An eight - two snakes". And he can dae a three as well. This is how the teacher must -
- MAY: Is that the way the teacher teaches them?
- CHRISSIE: It must be.
- E. This is number?
- CHRISSIE: That's numbers.
- E. But, you know, now they're doing maths a lot lower down the school. You know how we used to do arithmetic all the way up and then maybe, eventually, some did geometry and algebra.
- MARY: I don't think we did that.
- PAT: Aye, I did.
- E. Now modern maths, they start it right away at the infants. That's what they're doing with their "long step - short step".
- MAY: They get mair at school than we ever got.  
(General chorus of agreement.)

E. And they start them right away.

MAY: That's whit I'm saying. They dae.

CHRISSIE: They get languages in school. French.

E. Do they?

CHRISSIE: In the primary. You know, like Gerard, he's eleven and he gets French.

E. But your basic problem is, if they don't see something to attach it to, they'll let it go again.  
You know how I was talking last week about those lectures that are going on? (The lectures were on the implications for Glasgow of "Born to Fail" - the title was not given to this discussion group, merely some of the contents of the report).

Some children are never going to get as much out of school as others, not because they haven't the intelligence -

MAY: That's funny, you saying that. I've got this niece, and see the school? - I canny mind the name of the school she's in - she diesnae get hauf as much as oor kids get.

E. Is that right?

MAY: She canny read the same. She canny "thingmy" the same as Gina. She's the same age as Gina - mind I was telling you (Mary) that Ellen was gonny try and take her oot the school and pit her doon at my mammy's school (the school May's mother cleans) across the road frae her. She disnae get hauf as much as oor kids get.

E. But you see -

MAY: They seem to be awful slow.

E. Whether you can transfer from one school to another, I don't know. But what you can do at home to help them - that is what parents really want to know. What can we be doing about it.

MAY: Aye, you could maybe. (General agreement)

E. The idea of showing them that things have sense. There is a meaning to things.

MAY: That's right.

E. There is a central idea somewhere in everything, that if you know that - you can make sense of all the other things that go with it.

Now, as long as she's just trying to learn, as if it was all a kind of magic process - she'll learn nothing.

MARY: You need an interest.

MAY: Aye, ye should know -

E. As long as they just see numbers as having no particular meaning, but if you're doing things in the house and saying, "How many cups do we need?", so that the 3 that he's got isn't just that figure ---

PAT: He knows what it means.

E. --- It is also three things. Once he knows what it means, as you say, this is so different.

CHRISSIE: Aye, well that's right, because he asked me for three pence and I gave him a two pence and a one pence.

MARY: That won't do. (laughter)

CHRISSIE: He says, "One two three"(demonstrates a third empty place). I went "Oh aye". So I'd to gie him three single pence.

E. He would eventually ... you could be teaching him that bit.

PAT: ... that it still makes three. Aye.

E. It is quite complicated.

MARY: I know.

CHRISSIE: Aye. I've been for about five minutes up there.

PAT: See if you're giving them (her three children) twopence? I must have three two pences. Well, Alex's no' bad noo. He'll take the two one pences. He realises. But try giving John two one pences and telling him that's two pence.

CHRISSIE: No.

MAY: A big penny.

PAT: A big one's two pence. I'm saying, "But that's two."

CHRISSIE: "Naw its noi"

E. I think they could do that with other things. If they could find that two matches - that's a "two". You can tie them together with an elastic band or something and say, "There's one Two".

E. They were all good examples about the two pence.

MAY: A big pence.

PAT: John's saying, "That's no a big pence."

E. If you could do it with other things, so that they did not feel you were "doing" them. With money they feel you're doing them.

MAY: They do it wi' wee halves and a'. If I gie Peter a couple of wee halves - ye go to your purse and say, "That's a shilling". They don't look at it as a shilling. They don't take it.

CHRISSIE: Frances takes maybe, four halfpence for two pence. Then Charles, I gie him a big penny - he calls it a big penny. Then he'll say, "She's got mair than me." She's trying to tell him that's two pence.

E. They can't actually do that (long description of some of Piaget's studies).

PAT: ... the wee plate the same. It's a deeper one. "I don't want that" - and there's nae difference in it. It just hauds the same as the big plate - only -

E. One's flat and the other is deep.

PAT: She's trying to t.....

E. There are a whole lot of things they can't do in school 'till they get past that. All the things about weights and measure they cannot get, because -

MARY: Do you think if we teach ours, say, here now. If we say, bring them on further. When they go to school and they're all in the one class, they're still going to get kept at the same level as the other ones.

E. No, I don't think so. It depends how the school teaches. If it teaches them in groups, which it usually does in the infants, then the child

E. (continued)

goes on at his own rate. Maybe not, at their own individual rate, but they are put into a group.

CHRISSIE: The school does have groups.

PAT: That's right. They're all split up the noo, because Alex. says a' the desks got shifted.

MAY: Are they getting split up?

PAT: Uh-huh! They're still in the same class.

MAY: Aye.

PAT: But, know how they were a' sitting the gither? Well, they're no' a' sitting the gither noo.

MAY: Oh. They're a' away frae one another?

PAT: A' the desks are shifted. Aye.

MAY: Well, they'll have mair interest in their work.

E. This will mean that everyone who's able to read the same kind of book can work together.

MARY: Will they not get kept there until the other crowd pulls up?

E. There will be some already there - there will be some children as yours -

MAY: I'm not saying - I don't know what category they're in. But, we'll say, if we're going to teach ours - us four who are here - better than the ones who are at school, are ours not going to be further forward?

E. Yes.

MARY: They are?

E. They are, because, you do a lot of this accidentally, anyway. Some of the things I'm talking about -

MARY: Aye. You do it accidentally anyway.

E. And so some people will already be doing it with their children. Some people will know about what to do. And some people will never think of talking to their children. So the class is going to be spread out anyway. Your children

E. (continued)

are going to find their place in it. They might as well find that place among people who know how to take in the information in school.

It might not put them all that much ahead in school. I'm not trying to sort of "cram" them. I'm just saying they're able to understand what lessons are for - which will mean that later on they'll --

MAY: --- take a better interest.

E. --- be better interested. They'll want to know. They'll be seeking information. And much later on, when they get, say to Secondary School, they'll be in a position - when teachers start taking the pressure off and saying, "you learn if you want to learn", some kids just give up at that stage.

MAY: Some kids are not - just don't have -

PAT: They don't want to learn. That's it finished.

E. Well the child who has gone through all school with a sense of - "this has got something to do with me. It's not just her job. It's my job" goes on with that.

(Chrissie leads a discussion on the teacher's strike and the effect on her son who would like to get an "O" level in woodwork to become an apprentice joiner).

Well, Chrissie, supposing he missed a lot of school, if we stopped and said, "What could you do yourself, to help him think about his work?"

CHRISSIE: Oh gosh. I don't know anything about joinery. (laughter)

E. This is it, you don't know. I wouldn't know anything about joinery either. But the sort of thing I've been trying to say today this is the kind of thing a parent can do all the way along. Try to get the child to explain the work in words. You know, if he starts saying, "Well you put the thing ..." you say, "I don't know what that "thing" is, tell me what you mean by "thing". He's got to explain it. Maybe he's starting to talk about T. squares or whatever they measure with -

CHRISSIE: Maths? Aye that was his highest mark, maths.

E. And I suppose he's doing technical drawing?

CHRISSIE: That's right.

E. I haven't a notion of what those things are about. But you can make him know what they're about by making him explain them - like our black pudding.

CHRISSIE: Aye. That's right enough.

E. If you start saying, "Tell me, who doesn't know anything about it, what it's about." Then he'll organise it in his head.

MARY: But you don't know yourself? How can you?

E. But he'll know when he's able to tell you.

CHRISSIE: Aye - well -

MARY: But what do you want him to explain?

E. Supposing you said, "What is it you're not able to get today?" What would the teacher be teaching you? What has he taught you?

CHRISSIE: Aye. In maths an' that?

E. And supposing you just pick up any of the ideas he talks about and you say, "What is it?" You know, the names of things like a drawing board or a T. square. What is a drawing board? How do you use it? If he can put it into words he is in fact, organising it in his own head and is beginning to say, "I can't tell that, I don't know what that thing is. So he goes back and looks it up in the book. So he gets the thing better and better in his own mind. Of course, you've got to try and understand what he's saying.

MARY: Aye. That's what I mean.

E. But you don't have to know it beforehand.

MARY: You need to know about it.

E. I don't think you need to know it beforehand. You know, if someone is telling you something you've never heard before - as long as they can say it clearly and as long as you go on looking as if you want to know - then they'll go on -

MARY: But you need to know what questions to ask him regarding it.

E. Well, that's what I'm trying to work at here. If you can look and say, "What's the core idea?" Like with these (the peas and beans) what we really want to know is, why does a dead looking thing like that grow shoots out of it? What is it? What do we mean by a seed? Now I don't know that I could put that into words, except that it has got some life principle in it and it has a food supply too, inside it.

MARY: It puts you off eating them.  
(laughter).  
Me anyhow.

CHRISSIE: They could be an ornament now (Mary's sprouting peas.)

MARY: I should have washed the glass and I could have left them sitting there.

MAY: It's good how that went though, isn't it?

E. Oh it's great.

CHRISSIE: Mine's is nowhere near that.

PAT: Mine's is still peas.

MAY: I never done it wi' mine.

E. It really is worth doing that, because, as you say, even we, ourselves are amazed to see life grow out of something.

(further interruption from the children)

If you (Chrissie) can start to look for what is the central idea in being a joiner. It is something to do with maths, something to do with wood (...) You don't need to know yourself. What are the central things about wood, shape and design. Something about maths to be able to measure -

CHRISSIE: He uses one of them things (demonstrating a pair of compasses). You know, wi' the spike on it and ye turn it.

E. Well, just to make him tell you what that's about, means that he is beginning to see its connection with the subject. I bet you he'll say - I don't know. I never thought about why we use it - we just use it.  
(General agreement)

E. To pressurize him to say why he uses it makes him organise his thinking.

What I'm trying to show you is a storage method. How do you store ideas in your head?

If you store them simply you get in such a mess that you can't cope with them.

MARY: You give them up.

E. But if they store them like a plant with all its branches, then they can go along one branch, then another.

GROUP I

T 22

PRE-TEACHING SESSION

October 28th

A. INTRODUCTION TO WRITTEN SOURCES ON PARENT/CHILD INTERACTION

1974

Weekend supplement articles on intelligence and environment and on home activities for children were shared out and discussed. The context in which activities are proposed in these articles presume a particular way of life which is too far removed from that of the participants to allow the articles to make much impact. For example:-

BAKING

There is not enough recorded conversation to make a full report. It seems worth while allowing the mothers to provide their own comment, however, on their attitude to home-baking, in contrast to the Pre-School suggestions made by Brian Jackson in his "Observer" Articles, September 1974.

Chrissie and Pat have said that they never bake. They amend this, commenting that they would use a commercial cake-mix.

.... Aye! I would add an egg!

E. You wouldn't actually bake?

MARY: I would bake.

CHRISSIE: I canny, but - nothing turns out that I dae. Nothing!

MARY: Well, over in Ireland we bake rather than buy.

PAT: You can bake!

Also discussed was the booklet 'Unequal Britain' which shows life and educational chances for people divided by the Registrar General's classification. There was a good deal of interest in the relationship shown between poor reading and size of family / father's occupation. This idea was a very disturbing one to some of the participants. Unfortunately the fragmentary nature of this session did not allow a clear tape recording.

GROUP I

TEACHING AND FINAL REVIEW  
(This session was videotaped)

November 4th

MANIPULATION OF COMPLEX CONCEPTS: 1. Concrete  
2. Abstract

1474

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Stimulus material : Ship repairing illustration

E. (to Chrissie) What exactly does your husband do there?

CHRISSIE: Well, see this here, this scaffolding? Well, he builds this up, you know, up to the boat to repair it. That's what he does. He puts them up for the men to repair the boat.

E. Would he talk about that to the children?

CHRISSIE: Well, they know what he does. Mind you were saying what a daddy is?

(Cross talk going on all through this from the parents looking at another book).

CHRISSIE: Well, I says to Charles, "What's a daddy?" He says, "A working man that works on a boat." Well, that's just because, I think - you know -

E. His daddy does that.

CHRISSIE: His daddy does.

E. I wondered, if you had this sort of book, would you - would that cause the dads to talk to them? You know, books showing the sort of thing parents do? What does your husband do, Mary?

MARY: He's in the building trade.

E. So, if it was a book showing building?

MARY: They know he does that anyway. Because any time they pass a building with a crane or anything, they'll automatically think he works there.

E. (to May and Pat) Could I just stop you for a minute and ask you about that?  
Is that what your husband does?

PAT: Aye. Mine works beside Chrissie's. Aye.

MAY: That's right.

E. And so he does this?

PAT: Staging. Aye.

E. Staging. Is that what that's called?

PAT: Aye.

CHRISSIE: Staging.

E. Garry? (who has come to look at the book) Oh! It's not your daddy. It's your daddy, John. Come on, John. (laughter).

MAY: He's wanting to know whit it is. He want to see.

PAT: He wants to know.

E. Well, come on, John, come and look at it.

MAY: Garry. Go an' see! He wants to see.

MARY: He's too shy now.

E. I just wondered how much you can get - you said your husband often talks to them about things like encyclopedias.

PAT: Uh-huh.

E. Well, would this kind of book give him something that he could be showing - discussing with the children? Would he bother?

PAT: Oh aye! He reads a' the books wi' them. Aye. He explains everything. I've no' got patience for that. But he sits and explains everything. If they say, 'Whit's this for?' he'll tell them whit it's for; and, 'Whit's that for?! See, I've no' got the patience! I'll just say, 'Ach, that's just for -' and that's that.

E. But he'd talk?

PAT: He talks. He explains everything.

. . .

#### LEARNING AND TEACHING

Stimulus material: Make and Play - a book for parents and children

E. What about that book you've got there?

MAY: Aye. That's quite a good book.

PAT: That's quite a good one because that's showing them how to make things.

MAY: That's showing them how to dae a' them.

PAT: How to cut them oot.

MAY: That's good.

E. (to the others) Did you see them?  
I wondered if we looked just at one of these and we tried to go through why -  
First of all, do children like doing this sort of thing, do you think?

MAY: Aye, Gina would take that. (General agreement)  
Gina would take that.

E. They would like doing this kind of - making things like this?

MAY: Aye.

E. How would you set about helping them to make it?  
(pause)  
Supposing we took that one - 'Sneaky the Snake'. He's made of egg boxes, so anyone could do that.

PAT: Do that - aye.

E. Who could read that text - the words there?  
(May - None of us!) Eh? Which of your children could?

PAT: Nane o' mine could read it!

MARY: Mine, the oldest is five, so he couldn't read it.

CHRISSIE: Frances, the wee one that is six and a half could read it.

MAY: Gina could maybe read some o' it, but maybe widnae be able to read it a'.

E. So how would they be able to do it then? How would they be able to make that thing?

MAY: You'd need to show them.

PAT: You'd need tae sit and read it tae them.

CHRISSIE: You'd need tae help them.

MARY: But they sometimes could follow ---

PAT: Follow the pictures.

MAY: Aye - follow the picture.

MARY: As well.

E. Do you remember those things we were saying about you helping them?

MAY: Showing them.

E. Now what about the parents' job in this? If you made that (the figure illustrated) with them, would that make any difference to their interest in it?

MAY: Do you mean, they would want to know if they had made it, or if you had made it? Put it that way?

E. Yes - Or supposing you worked with them. Would that -? You know, the teachers do these things in school, you see.

MAY: That's right.

PAT: Aye, but they're mair interested when you dae it, eh?

MAY: Aye.

E. Do you feel that? They're more interested when the parents do it?

MARY: I feel they are more interested when they do it themselves.

PAT: Aye - but if they canny make it themselves.

MARY: You know that false-face (mask) they made at Hallowe'en? (general reaction of interest and agreement).

E. Did they make that themselves?

MARY: They made a false-face and it was good. It was great!

PAT: The teacher cut it out and they painted it and put on ears and things - and that was him quite happy.

MARY: He (Garry) came home in the huff because the teacher instead of cutting out the eyes, she cut out the ears and he said she was stupid, because she didn't know what -- (laughter and further description of these masks and the parents collaboration in improving them. Chrissie described doing most of the mask for her son.)

E. Did you do it for him. What about those things we were talking about earlier on, about the importance of the children doing it? You said that just now. How important is it for a child to do things themselves?

PAT: Well, they think they're grown up and a' that. They think they're a lot older. 'I made that myself' and show it to everybody.

MAY: Aye, that's true.

E. And yet they do need you. What you were saying just now - They need you because they can't read the text. What's your job?

MARY: Once you show them, that's it. They want to do it themselves. That's what I think.

MAY: Just the same as thon time you were showing them wi' the papers. Mind? Just the same way.  
(This gave a lead-in to the section on Concept Learning and Language. The opportunity was taken although all the points had not been covered from the previous section.)

E. Aye. I've got one of these here today. This thing? (holding up a child's paper tearing exercise.)

MAY: Mind? A' the kids were a' in that day and you were showing them and as you left them they done it a' theirsel'.

E. Yes, but why? Remember I was trying to show you that I was doing something particular in it that made it possible for them to do it themselves?

PAT & MARY: You were telling them.

MAY: What way they were to go.

PAT: Telling them exactly how to dae it.

CHRISSIE: How they were to go: 'Press. Cut the bits out'.

E. And what difference did that make to their ability to do it? This is really what I was interested in.

PAT: Well, they remembered it all. It was in their head. They knew how to fold it and cut it and -

E. Was it in their heads because it was put into words?

MAY: Words. (general agreement)

E. This is what I was trying to do and this is what I think you would get. Your job would be here.

MARY: Words.

E. If you gave them the words, they wouldn't need the book - to keep copying from the book.

MAY: Oh, I see. Aye.

E. Do you see that? They would have, in fact, the words in their heads.

PAT: In their heads. (general agreement)

E. And this would make the difference in storage for them. They would be able to store the ideas in their heads, and that's really what I hoped we would get out of it - We did get out of that!

We also got the fact that the parents did it, rather than the school. You were just saying the false-faces they made in school were very important to them.  
(Agreement)

But if the things you did at home -

PAT: Aye - They're more important than the teachers.

E. Yes!

PAT: Than what she makes.

E. --- because they go on and on, if you take it up. So if you take up a thing they do in school - you're both working on the same thing - How does that work?

MARY: That's better - you know - they're getting it from both angles then, you know. They should be better.

E. Well, I would have thought so. If you're both working on it, they get it from both sides.

But what about their ability to invent things - to go on from there? Where does that come from? Do you remember Catherine, when she was doing that paper tearing? She'd turned it into a fish - and Garry made it into a false-face.

First of all I taught them how to do this, didn't I? How did they come to be able to invent?

MAY: On their ain?

PAT: Imagination!

CHRISSIE: Well, it was the shape - Catherine - the shape in the middle.

(A general effort was made to describe Catherine's action)

E. So first of all she knew how to do it? She had the control. What I was really looking for was to see if you thought what I think, that she had control over the idea because she had the words. And because she had that, she could go on and add --

PAT: things herself. (Agreement)

E. --- more things to it. It seems to me that that's what we were trying to do last week when we were talking about the power of words. Remember we were trying to look for central principles when we grew those beans and peas? Did any more grow, by the way?

PAT: Naw! Mines fell oot the windae!  
(Laughter)

MARY: Mines are away out over the jar now. They just kept growing.

E. Did they really go on growing?

MARY: Right over the jar!

E. You must get them in for us and let us see them.

CHRISSIE: Mines is nothing.

MAY: Wee Peter pit too much watter in his.

MARY: But I never bothered with them.

PAT: Well, I had mines on the window sill in the scullery. Mind last week it was dead windy, last Sunday? When I went to get them on Monday, they werense there! They must have flew out the windae.  
(Laughter)

So, I've had it! I don't know what like they are growing. I'll need tae away oot the back and see!

MARY: Peas next year!

PAT: Butter beans it is and a' (more on this).

E. We were trying to look at that from a point of view, not just of growing beans and peas.

MAY: So they'd ask how they grew?

PAT: To see what questions they asked?

MAY: A' the things they would ask.

E. But I was hoping they would lead on to their asking questions in a particular line.  
(Pause)

MARY: They do, I think.  
(Pause)

E. You know, if they saw those beans and peas growing, what might they ask in connection with that?

PAT: Well, they want to know how everything grows. It's only natural. They want - 'How did that grow? How did this grow?'

MAY: Where does that come from, more or less.

PAT: Aye.

E. So, they're getting a central idea, then? They see an organisation. That they grow. This was really what I hoped to get out of that. Now, I suggested last week, just before I left, that we might try to teach them more of this fact - that everything is organised, everything has a pattern - by asking them to put something into a group of some sort. Say, maybe something about their daddy?

PAT: Aye, mammy and daddy, you said. See what happens.

MAY: Working - if they done the same work.

CHRISSIE: Aye, that's what I was telling you. Charles says, 'A daddy is a working man'. I says 'Where does he work?' 'On the boats'. I says, 'Where else?' 'Drives big motors and paints'. I says, 'Could a mammy dse that?' 'Naw!' That was terrible! I couldnae work on a boat or paint or drive a lorry!

E. So this was a daddy's job. Did anyone else do any more of that?

MAY: I was asking oor weans, but Cathie's, ma sister's wee boy, he says his daddy can dae the same as his mammy because his mammy is at work, his daddy can bath the babies, jist the same as his mammy does it.

(laughter)

That's true enough. Aye, he does. Cathie does go out to work at night and her man's got to bath the twins. And he says his daddy can dae that, the same as his mammy.

E. Which is good! He's doing a logical piece of thinking.

MAY: Aye. He says his daddy can dae the same as his mammy's daeing. He can make the tea when his mammy's no' in.

E. Mammy might not be able to do daddy's job, but daddy ---

PAT: --- can dae mammy's job!  
(laughing agreement)

PAT: His started off wi' school.

(This whole tale was punctuated by laughing comments from the others)

'He' (Pat's husband) was sitting at table wi' Alex's reading book and he (John, aged 3) says, 'How can you read that?' And he says, 'Cos I went to school.' 'Did you go to school?' - to John, big John. And he says, 'Aye, I went to school when I was a wee boy.' He goes, 'Did you go to school, mammy?' 'Aye'. He couldnae get over that! That we had a' been wee and we had went -. Oh, whit questions! He was going a' night! 'Did so-and-so go to school? - So-and-so?' I'm saying, 'Aye, we a' went to school'.

E. Come here John, will you come and tell us about this? Who went to school? This is the one you're talking about, isn't it? Ask him, Pat!

PAT: Who a' went to school? Johnny?  
(no answer)

MAY: Naw! They're no' so keen on talking when there's somebody there. When there's naebody here they'll talk a' night.

E. Did your daddy go to school? No?

CHRISSIE: He's too shy.

(Interruption as Mary goes to see to her 4 year old son who is outside and Mark her 15 month old becomes the centre of interest for the others.)

LEARNING, THINKING AND MEANING : RELATIONSHIP

Introduction : A long section on the complex concept - Bingo.

E. See last week, Chrissie? You were talking about Bingo, weren't you? Saying you'd won something at Bingo.

CHRISSIE: Aye, that's right.

E. I began thinking after that, what's Bingo? Supposing, you know, - like we did with the black pudding. (This had been an exercise in verbalising a concept by naming its salient features).  
(laughter)

PAT: Here we go!

E. And we did with a 'close'?  
(agreement)

E. Remember we tried to say, supposing somebody had never seen it, what would you do. How would you describe it to them? Now, supposing someone had never seen Bingo, and wasn't going to see it - their whole idea of Bingo was going to come from you. Now I'm going to get a bit of paper and pencil and see if you can tell me what we mean by Bingo.

(Mary returns)

Mary, we're trying to talk about Bingo, trying to see if we could describe it to somebody who'd never been.

MARY: To somebody who'd never been to Bingo?

PAT: Have you been Mary?

MARY: Oh, I've been.

PAT: I just thought maybe you'd never been.

MARY: (laughing) Did you think I didn't know?

PAT: I didn't think you'd ever been.

CHRISSIE: There's a man. You call him a Caller.

PAT: It's a place of entertainment, first!

E. Ah, see! That's ---

PAT: I remembered!

E. Do you see? Pat came up with - Do you remember when we did the black pudding and the close, we discovered at the end that we hadn't said ---  
(Chorus, 'What it was!')

So Pat has come up with, 'It's a place of entertainment'.

MARY: 'There is a man', Chrissie says!  
Well, he could be a coalman!

CHRISSIE: Ay! A caller tae! (In some areas coal merchant still call out to attract attention). It could have been a coalman!

E. So, we've got that, first of all. What happens after that?  
(pause)

CHRISSIE: Well, he has balls with numbers - the caller - numbers on it; and they rotate in a basket. And he picks a number out, and there's a board in front of him with a lot of numbers the same -

PAT: As the numbers on the ball.

E. Oh, I'm lost already!

PAT: One to ninety.

CHRISSIE: Wi' slots, one to ninety.

PAT: --- and every ball he picks up -

E. What is one to ninety?

CHRISSIE The balls, the numbers.  
and PAT:

PAT: A wee ball, wi' a number on it. So if the number comes oot No.1, he puts that in the box.

CHRISSIE: No.1. If you've got No.1 on your card, you mark it.

MARY: When you go in the door, you get a book.

E. You never told me I had a card!  
(laughter)

MARY: It's the same. When you go in the door you get a book with a lot of numbers on each page.

PAT: Oh, we're great! Aren't we?

CHRISSIE: It must be aboriginies we're talking tae!  
(laughter)

E. Thank you!

CHRISSIE: I mean, that's logical - you've got a card wi' numbers on it.  
(laughter)

E. Right. Now, he's putting these into boxes, is it?

PAT: Aye. Wee holes.

CHRISSIE: Slots. Aye. Slots for the same number.  
(pause)

PAT: And if he shouts the number you've got in the book, you mark it off.

E. You didn't tell me he shouted numbers at all.

CHRISSIE: A CALLER! That's what a 'caller' is! He shouts numbers!

E. You didn't tell me that.  
So he shouts numbers. Which numbers?

CHRISSIE: (with increasing heat) Whatever numbers he takes oot!

E. Do you see -

MARY: Do you really not know, or are you kidding on?

E. Of course I know!

CHRISSIE: Do you no' know?

E. Of course I do.  
(laughter)

CHRISSIE: You'd think it was an Indian or something we're talking to.

E. I'm just saying you're supposed to be talking to -

MARY: /..

MARY: She's illiterate! She doesn't know!  
(Laughter. Long further section on how to play Bingo, including details of how to claim a prize. The presence of other participants, the use of the word 'House')

E. Right. I think I could play Bingo now!

PAT: No' wi' the way we were describing it. I don't think you could!

E. Well. Let's see.  
There are a whole lot of separate things there, aren't there?

MARY: Aye. You've to put them together.

E. That's just the point, Mary. Could we just look at that? I could maybe understand that a caller's doing something. I could understand - you've told me now - that he play with balls; that he calls out numbers; that you have a card. But what's the connection between your card and his calling?  
It is quite difficult for someone to understand that. Is that not --- If you took someone to Bingo for the first time, do they find that difficult?

PAT: First time I went it wisnae --

CHRISSIE: Oh, I got bored! I couldnae go!

MAY: Aye. I'm the same an a'. It's only a couple of games.

PAT: I thought it would be harder than it was to follow.  
(Description of procedure, etc.)

E. But the connection between his balls and your cards?  
You've got to understand that when you go into the hall, haven't you? You've got to see a relationship between those two ideas. You've got two ideas there, haven't you? Of him playing ---

PAT: Balls.

E. With balls and calling numbers - and you sitting with a card. Those are really two quite separate things which they have put together to make a game.  
(Pause)

T24

GROUP II

READINESS TEST 1.1

October 7th

B. REINFORCEMENT

1974

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Because of the responses to negative conditioning, no questions were asked on instrumental conditioning.

Stimulus : Picture of Inspector with five pupils.  
Caption - "Well Done!" (as Group I)

E. I just want to hear your ideas of what you think is happening in these pictures, and from that I may see how you think I should work - so that I can plan my session after that.

I think that is somebody like a school inspector and he's in a classroom. You can see he's saying to that wee girl, "Well done!" If that was your wee girl, what would you expect when she came home from school that night?

HELEN: She'd start telling you all bout it.

BETTY: Explaining everything that they'd done. You know, what they were making. It looks like a cookery class of some kind.

E. Yes, and this is what you'd expect, is it? - That she'd be telling you?  
Would every one think that?

BETTY: They'd be that engrossed. They'd be that excited, trying to explain to you. I mean, after all, it's the first time. I suppose - taking it would be the first time they've had a lesson like this - they've never done it before and they more or less would be all over you. You wouldn't get much time to say anything yourself. They'd be explaining every detail - the way they made it and what they made.

E. But what about the man's comments? Supposing someone said to your daughter - supposing he picked her out and said, "Well done!"

JOAN: I reckon she's be so thrilled she would never stop telling you about it, "... and it was 'Well done!' for me, Mum."

E. So she would talk a lot about it.

BETTY: She would want you to be proud.

E. Now, would anything more come of it than that? Is that all she would do? Just talk about it? (Pause) Would it have any further effect?

HELEN: No. (slowly) I wouldn't say there wouldn't be any further effect. I would think when she got that praise, "Well done!" ---

BETTY: She'd be wanting to do it in the house.

JOAN: She'd have to do it in the house and show you a' there. That's what I think - and do it better!

DONNA: And let you see she is good.

BETTY: ...."and don't you help me. Just let me do it myself, and you watch what I'm doing - and I'll learn you!"

JOAN: "Well done!" was really enough for her. She thought she'd done something terrific!

E. You're saying that praise itself is a reward.

JOAN: It is a reward! - and it will help them. That's my opinion.

E. It's my opinion as well! I'm very interested in hearing that it is your opinion.

JOAN: I would think, "Well done!" - well, "You see what I can do? I can do even better than that."

E. And she would want to do it at home, then? Transfer it to the home?

JOAN: Oh aye! Show her father and mother and brothers and sisters, "See what I can do!"

BETTY: And even get to the extent that she'd be learning the younger ones - below her. Well, the likes of, say, someone a year younger, "Well, I think you're nearly old enough to know these things. When you go into the next class, you'll know beforehand."

E. Now, look at the wee girl in that corner. See, there's a wee girl nearly off the page. Supposing he missed her, never saw her. Supposing that was your wee girl, and he never said anything to that one.

HELEN: Aye, but she's still ----

E. How would that effect her?

T 25.

GROUP II

READINESS TEST 1.2

October 7th

B. CLASSICAL CONDITIONING

1974

Stimulus : An advertisement for Mannikin cigars  
(as group I.)

- E. Now, this last one has nothing to do with children, you'll be saying. But it is a most interesting thing. There is a piece of teaching in this. Tell me, what's the connection? They're trying to sell mannikin cigars. What's the girl doing taking up most of the picture?  
(Pause)
- BETTY: That's an ordinary advert, isn't it? I can't see anything ---
- E. It is just an ordinary advert!  
Why is the girl there when it's cigars they're trying to sell?
- HELEN: Is that grapes she's on her shoulder? I think it's the grapes they're selling more than cigars.
- BETTY: She's in a bathing suit, isn't she?
- E. Yes! She's sitting in the sea - or sand - I think.
- HELEN: I canny --- (puzzled laughter)
- E. It must be a good way of selling something, or they wouldn't be doing it.
- BETTY: Maybe they're making out that women - these girls - like cigars - like the smell of cigars like, ye know. Could be! Personally, I don't.
- E. So you don't in fact, see any particular connection between them?
- JOAN: (whose eyes remained glued to the advert throughout this part of the discussion - even when she spoke).  
I just think it is a good advertisement.
- E. But why is it a good advert? That's just what I want to know, Joan! It's a good advert. Now tell me why! (Pause)  
Why will a man buy mannikin cigars because ---
- BETTY: Because he thinks he'll get a nice girl along with it?

**E.** He thinks he'll get someone along with it?  
**BETTY:** Girls like that go for it?  
**HELEN:** ---- cigars  
**JOAN:** It's a good advertisement.  
**E.** Any other connections?

GROUP II

T 26.

READINESS TEST 1.3

October 7th

A. ADULT/CHILD INTERACTION

1974

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Stimulus : Picture of formal adults and ill-at-ease children (as Group I.)

- E. Again, I want you to look at it and say whatever comes into your head that you think it is about.
- HELEN: Two men discussing something - as if the one that was holding something was discussing it with the other, to see what he'd maybe think of it. That's what I think. As if he's asking what does he think of it.  
'Pause)
- E. And what about the children?
- HELEN: The children are looking up as if expecting - as much as to say, "What is that he's got in his hand?"
- E. Now, do you think they'll find it easy to talk to each other - those children and those men?
- HELEN: I would think ----
- BETTY: Not really, I don't think
- E. You think they might not?
- BETTY: It seems like a glass of water, or something.
- HELEN: It's as if the children are encouraged ---
- JOAN: What is the man holding in his hand?
- E. --- but they're a wee bit shy of talking to him - Do you think?
- BETTY: Well, they're not so much shy like - They're interested, wonder what's going on. They're not quite sure of what they're discussing. But, they're interested, ye know?
- E. Now, supposing those were your children, what would you do about that? Would you show them how to join in that conversation? Or would you tell them to come away, it wasn't for them? What would you do?

BETTY: Ah well! It's no' nice for to let them listen to other people's conversation, ye know, in the first place. But ... kids always do it. Ye know what I mean? But I don't think I would try to get them into the conversation. I think ----

HELEN: Well, they don't really always do it. It's just that they happen to be there at the time you're talking about something. It's not that children - as you say, - "They're always there." But it's just that they're always with you, and they happen to be there when you're talking about something.

E. But would you ----

BETTY: But this happens apart from yourself. This happens even with strangers. Kids do be inclined, if they hear people - conversation in the street or that. I know mines do it. But you know, I don't suppose they're really nosey or anything. But they're just interested in what's going on round about.

E. What about - if you thought that was something interesting for them to know about - this glass that is in his hand. Would you join them in the conversation, or would you think they were better left out of an adult conversation?

HELEN: Really, if it had anything to do with them, I think the children should. They're there, in a way, I think. The man's looking down at them in a sort of a way, ye know! As if he was asking them "What do you think it is I've got?"

(A visitor, Betty's sister, was present at this session, and contributed an opinion at this point).

E. What did you say just now?

VISITOR: I wouldn't let them join in someone else's conversation.

E. You wouldn't.

VISITOR: If it had nothing to do with them, I mean. I'd take them away altogether.

E. But, supposing you know the two men. I'm not talking about two strangers. Is there any occasion? I'm really just interested in how much you think children should join in an adult conversation. How much interaction should there be between children and adults.

(JOAN: Depends on the adults - I wouldn't.  
(BETTY: Depends on what it is.

E. You wouldn't let them join in.

BETTY: Well, most of the time you wouldn't. But there's things that you do - inclined to discuss with the kids there. Questions is the same. They're inclined to be inquisitive and they want to know this and they want to know that. Especially if you're using words, - as you say - they don't get in school.

E. Yes?

BETTY: They prefer the simple words, you know. If somebody uses a word out of the ordinary for them, they'll say, "What does that mean," you know, and you've got to explain.

(Betty herself uses old Scots words which are rarely heard in ordinary conversation in Glasgow. They are unlikely to be known by many modern Scots, e.g. "Brace" = mantelpiece; "Smittlesome" = infectious).

BETTY: Well, you've automatically to let them into the conversation, you know, to explain that this one said ----

E. So you would do that?

BETTY: Oh, you would do it to an extent. Yes.

E. How do you feel about that, Joan? I haven't heard you yet.

JOAN: (slowly - after looking intently at the picture). You see the wee one with her hand up to her mouth like that? To me, that's like something she's frightened of. (Pause --- then further comment on the factual content of the picture.)

E. Do you see I've written down what I was suggesting the children were saying to themselves?

BETTY: "What will I say?"  
It could even be that they've took that glass of water from the children, and they're - the wee ones - kind of frightened to be caught with it. Like as if it's in school or something, ye know? And they're kind of - her hands are up as much as to say, "What am I gonna say? Should I tell the truth - or should I just - em - make up something? And the other one's just looking on.

E. I would like to know how much you think children should be in a conversation with adults? How important it is and how useful it is?

BETTY: Oh, I think it is quite important that they should be - ye know - most of the time. But there's certain things that you don't discuss with children, you know?

E. Is there any age limit? Is there any stage when they're too young to be in it, or ---

HELEN: Well, the way I look at it is, when a boy's about 14 or 15 years old, I don't think it is very nice for a young boy like that just to stand and listen to adults talking about things that don't concern him. That's the way I look at it.

E. He's too old, then?

HELEN: Aye, he's too old for that.

E. And you wouldn't join him in, just as if he was an adult?

HELEN: Oh, yes, if it was something to be brought into, that's different. But, as I say, wi' him being that age, he'd be that big and feeling, "I shouldn't be here at all. I shouldn't be standing here for that matter." The likes of a younger child, as Betty says herself, they're always wanting to see what's going on ---

BETTY: A kid always wants to be made older than they really are - any kid does. They like to feel important. And if you let them into a conversation, they'll say, "Well, I'm old enough to hear those things," ye know! "Well, I should learn to understand what ---?"

HELEN: Take today, for instance, - Just look at it this way. There's my boy, he's 13 now. Now the likes of him being here today. He thinks he's too big to be here - and yet it would be good for him to be here. He could be asked to do them. (Comment on the picture) He might have the answers; he might not have the answers. But he'd still feel he shouldn't be here.

E. So, there's an in-between age when they can't come in on conversations.

HELEN: Aye. Well, that's the way I see it.

BETTY: Well, there's they kids here.

(Betty's son of 5 and the visitor's pre-school child, both of whom had been very still and silent throughout. This may not have been their normal behaviour. There was a tension present which is noted at the

end of the transcript. A tension of which E. knew nothing until the following week.)

**BETTY:** They're in the conversation - well, they're here with us. But they're no' interested. They're no bothered. You know, there's certain stages when they begin to pick up (Piaget!) You know, they've got to go through each stage, each phrase (sic!) The likes of them is no' interested. The likes of Anne or George, or - (to Helen) your lassie - your girl or boy - Well, I mean, they want to know what's going on. You know what I mean? Where a wee one's no' got much tae --- they just want to make a nuisance, and so on. They go through these phrases theirsel'. It's no' as if you can bring them into a conversation like that because they haven't a clue what you're talking about, really, at that stage.

E. How do you feel about it, Joan?

**JOAN:** Och well! I'm of the older generation and I never believed that children, even 10, 11 or 12, I never believed they should be in adult conversation. I never allowed mine.

E. You would perhaps let them be present in the room, but they weren't allowed to talk? Or you put them out of the room? How did you organise it?

**JOAN:** It would really depend on what you were talking about. If it was something I thought --- (Pause) --- they were too young to hear about, I'd put them out then.

E. But supposing you thought the subject would not harm them, would you still have left them out of the conversation, and expect them to be quiet in the room?

**JOAN:** Yes. Unless they were spoken to - then I'd expect them to answer as normal. But not to shove their nose in and join in the conversation - unless they were asked.

**BETTY:** But there are things that kids do automatically. They don't stop to think - they just butt in - whether they're wanted or no'. They butt in. There's no child going, I don't think, that disnae dae ---

**HELEN:** You can always warn them, just the same.

**BETTY:** Och! aye! That's what mine do anyway. If they're in the house, they'll ask a question on something you're talking on.

JOAN: Among yourselves, Betty. That's a different thing entirely.

BETTY: But you, Joan, would see it differently if it was a case of joining them in a conversation with their own parents?

JOAN: Oh! entirely differently - with their own parents. What I mean when I say they've to wait to they're spoken to is, that's if you have visitors in.  
Oh, no! not with your own parents. They join in whenever they like. You know very well yourself, your parents don't need to speak to you before you answer them.

. . .

E. had had a series of false starts with this group, but on this occasion everyone was assembled and ready to take part in this, the first real session. The atmosphere seemed friendly and the participants interested. The following week's account of a stair-head fight on the Saturday between the sessions, also hinted at an unexpected background to the above session. In recounting disagreements about borrowing, Helen said, "But I didn't let it make any difference to last week's." Some of the comments on the presence of children when adults are talking should be read in the light of these heated conversations!

## BACKGROUND EXPLORATION

October 14th

## A COMMENT ON DISCUSSIONS

1974

There is a pressure coming from the discussions themselves - although expressed in an ingratiating manner, this transcript of attitudes to the session (there has only been one complete discussion)-shows a cautious appreciation countered by an awareness of a burden in having tied themselves to a series of conversations on such unaccustomed topics.

HELEN: I wanted to go on, because I really liked - you know! - I liked the wee subject. I would have liked to have - because it wisnae that long we had to go till it was finished. Really we hadnae that long to go and that was it all done. I fairly enjoyed the wee conversation, don't get me wrong. I really did. I fairly enjoyed it.

See Betty's no' talking to Donna, and I can't bring folk into the house in case there's ony cairry on in here, 'cause I'd just say to Donna, "Oot ye go, and that's it!"

I was disappointed in Betty. Betty fairly kept the subject going on as well as me. I'm disappointed at the cairry on too, because I mean, we were getting on that well, really. Well, I asked Betty when I was in. She says, "Well, I would like to keep the .... I says, "Well, be honest," I says, "What did you think of the conversation?" "Well," says she, "I liked it!" I says, "So did I like it," I says, "but what you could do is, could you not come in next week?"

Donna's mother, (Joan of the discussion group), she's in next door just now, in Betty's house. She doesn't keep well. She takes they pheno-barbitones, and she's no' at herself. But Donna, I don't know where she is!

(Donna is a tall sullen looking girl of twenty. She is always barefoot, though none of these houses have any carpets at all.)

T 28.

GROUP II

TEACHING SESSION

October 21st

1974

B. USE OF REINFORCEMENT

(as a preliminary step toward instrumental conditioning)

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Only Mrs. Barnes (Joan) and Mrs. McKenzie (Helen) were present. Helen has only two chairs, E. occupied one, and Helen sat on the arm of Joan's chair throughout the discussion - having declined Joan's invitation to go into her house and borrow a chair.

Readiness Test I had conveyed the impression that Helen's views on negative re-inforcement were entirely centred on Diane, the child who does not speak. A further discussion on Diane's special case was therefore offered and completed before the general topic, transcribed here, was resumed.

E. "... I felt you were so busy thinking of Diane last week, but now, if we looked at another of your children, you'd see another point of view. I was thinking of your Mary, the oldest one."

HELEN: Aye, Mary. Aye.

E. She's good at school, isn't she?

HELEN: Oh, she's clever, Uh-huh.

E. Now, if she's in class and they've all done something and they've all - as far as they can see - got it right, and somebody says to another child, "That's what I wanted," and then walks past Mary ---

HELEN: Well, she'd feel guilty.

E. She'd feel in some way --

HELEN: She'd feel, she'd feel --

E. Mine wasn't as good. Even if it is sitting there - as good.

HELEN: Mary's come and told me that a few times. You're right there. Because she's done her subject that they've been asked to do, and Mary, she can write, she's a good writer - but the teacher said she can do it, but her work wasn't perfect that day she asked her to do it, and she just went past her that day. And she did feel it,

HELEN: (Continued)

because she told me when she came in. She says, "Why did she do that, mammy?" I says, "Well, you can't be doing the right thing the right way." That's the only way I could get it made out of it. You've got the answer there. You're trying to make it out right. But your work is not the way she wants it to be. You've got to...

E. Well, look at it this way. Let's look at that from home. I think we often just forget to praise. You think of something they do in the house. We just take it for granted.

JOAN: That's right. That's quite correct.

E. And sometimes that happens in school as well. The teacher says, "Oh, aye, that's what I wanted. That's right." And she moves straight on - and she never thinks. But the praise would have made her want to do it more. Do you remember what you said - or somebody said -

HELEN: That's funny you should say that. There's last night. I didnae dae it purposely. I just went to see what John would do. Now John and Diane, John's only two and Diane's three (three on the day of this discussion). I was standing over here and took Diane and put my arms round her and said, "Are you mammy's wee girl?" and John looked at me and he looked at Diane and Diane was that chuffed (pleased) with the idea of me putting my arms round her and saying, "You're ma wee girl." "Where's ma golden boy?" - and he came in, and you know, he was greetin' (crying) because he thought I wasn't paying attention to him like I was doing to Diane.

JOAN: (To Diane) That's right.

HELEN: A younger baby needs more attention than the other weans.

JOAN: That's right.

HELEN: She (Diane) has got the rest of the children to help her whereas he hasnae.

E. And that word of praise ...

HELEN: It just proves it. I seen it wi' ma own eyes. I've seen it.

E. What I wanted to move on to today was to say that you can actually use that to teach them.

GROUP II

READINESS TEST 2 AND TEACHING SESSION

October 28th

D. CONCEPT LEARNING AND LANGUAGE

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An advert for craft material showing a boy before and after trying a piece of handwork. Caption: 'Ten minutes from now he'll be enjoying a new skill'.

E. The other weeks we've been talking about praising children - how much praise helped. Now this week, I thought we would try and see what else helps. I want you to look first of all at the boy's face in both pictures. Tell me what you think of the difference.

BETTY: Well, he's looking for something to do in this one, more or less, I think. Here he's found something to do and he's quite taken on with it, making something and he's quite -

E. He's making something -

BETTY: Making something, and it's his own invention, more or less.

E. Now, I wonder if it is his own invention? Read the notice and see what it says, "Ten minutes from now he'll be enjoying a new skill." So they're suggesting that it is a skill - suggesting to the teacher that it is a skill he's got. And what has she had to give him to get the skill?

HELEN: String?

E. Whatever the stuff is - it is straws, I think.

BETTY: Is it straws?

E. Straws he is plaiting. It is some kind -

BETTY: Oh ay!

E. It is some kind of long - maybe coloured - straws.

HELEN: It is maybe flex he is working with.

E. Yes, it is like flex. They are called art straws. I don't know what they're made of.

BETTY: And he's a' taken on with this job.

E. Isn't he?

BETTY: Aye.

E. Now, you were suggesting that he invented some of that himself?

BETTY: Well, in his own mind, he wid.

E. This is quite possible. But, do you think he'd maybe need a start - somebody to tell him. After all, straws are things that are lying around all the time often in schools - or bits of paper lying around in houses. People don't necessarily pick them up and do these patterns.

BETTY: No.

E. What would make him start? That's quite a complicated thing he's got there.

HELEN: Uh-huh.

E. What would start him?

BETTY: Maybe seeing somebody else doing it or being shown how to do it. See if he can - trying his own skill out to see how far he can do it without -

E. Do you think he would need to be shown something or other? Either that or something like it?

BETTY: Oh aye! It looks quite complicated I think.

E. What do you think, Helen?

HELEN: It's as if he's doing it in his own mind, to try and do it for himself, the way he thinks, or he's doing it the right way.

E. It seems as if in that other second picture that he knows that he's doing it the right way. As if he's got an idea he's doing it.

E. So in between those two pictures something has happened?

BETTY: He's watching someone else doing it?

E. Maybe somebody else is doing it?

BETTY: -- And he's all intent on it.

E. Now, I notice you keep suggesting that it is just somebody doing it. Now what about words? Do you think anybody has said anything? (Pause)

- 70 -

HELEN: Try and do it?

E. What do you think, Joan? Do you think anyone has told him anything there?

BETTY: I think as if well, "If you can do it, make a good job of it, I think I could attempt it myself."

E. So, he's learning ....

JOAN: I really think, this picture here (first) he's watching something, someone doing it and it's in his mind, "I could do that too."

E. Aye? And the next one?

JOAN: I think he's making quite a success of it, and you can see that in his face.

E. Yes, you can see it in his face, can't you?

BETTY: You can see it. Aye.

JOAN: You can see that in his face. He's making a success of it.

E. Now - so we're talking about children being successful at something then, and how do they become successful - and one of the things you're suggesting is, he has seen an idea and he's maybe seen how - it is shown to him and he's tried it himself, put his own skill into it. Are these the things you've suggested.  
(General agreement).

E. Now, I would like to add one more thing to that. I think somebody has put the idea into words for him. And I'll tell you why I think that there are words in it. If you like to try this out with the children sometime - if they just see something to do and they try doing it, they're never sure they've gained confidence in it until they've done it a whole lot of times.

BETTY: -- lot of times.

E. But, if you can put words to it, so that they can store the words in their head --

JOAN: Yes.

E. Then that gives him confidence.

BETTY: They'll get it right.

JOAN: I think that too.

E. You think that too?

JOAN: Yes.

BETTY: That's what I say.

E. This is something that makes a big difference. (John (aged 2) began to cry. Pat wheeled his pram out of the kitchen into the bedroom shared by the five children. He was given instructions to allow John to run about. "He can't be bothered sitting in his pram," Helen said with some amazement.)

JOAN: Confidence is half the battle.

E. Yes, I'm trying to say that, if you want to give your children confidence in being able to do things, one of the important things is that they can express the thing in words.

BETTY: True.

E. Because this gives them tremendous confidence. Now, I thought we would try a wee test of ourselves. It is actually quite tricky to put a thing into words. So, supposing Hughie Green, or somebody like that, said to you on television, "Now, I'll give you money if you can put into words to somebody that lives in Devon, and has never seen a black pudding - what is a black pudding?" Now, come on, tell me what a black pudding is, and I'll write it down.

BETTY: A black pudding is meal and blood and liver, is it?

E. Anything else?

JOAN: It is made of blood. I know that. Not so much meal.  
(Pause)

E. What else have you to tell me?

JOAN: I think flour; blood from the sheep.

BETTY: I couldnae tell you what it is made of, but I know that it's good.

E. Now, what's your person in Devon getting out of it so far? They've got meal and blood, maybe liver.

JOAN: It's from the sheep. That I know.

E. What is yours Helen? You are trying to tell somebody in from Devon what you mean by a black pudding.

HELEN: You can fry it or boil it?  
(Pause)

BETTY: There's quite a lot of people don't like black pudding.  
(Pause)

E. So it is a matter of personal taste.

JOAN: Actually, my mother made black pudding in Benbecula, when they killed a sheep.

E. Do you come from Benbecula?

JOAN: My father came from Benbecula, my mother came from Islay.

E. If I read out what you've said there: "Meal, blood, liver (sheep), fry it or boil it. It is a matter of personal taste." You've never said what it looks like. Supposing somebody looked in a shop window --

BETTY: That's right.

E. --- saying, "Well, I want a black pudding then." They could look --

HELEN: I see that.

E. --- and they could say, "What is it?" "Which of these things is it?" Do you see how hard it is?

BETTY: Well, it is either round or long isn't it.

E. You haven't said --

BETTY: --- the colour of it?

E. Yes. You said, "black" but the word "pudding" could mean custard. So we are presuming the person can see the thing, really. Aren't we?

BETTY: Uh-huh.

E. When we describe a thing, we're very often presuming that the person we're talking to ---

BETTY: Knows.

E. Can see it. And you're just saying, "Well I know what that thing there is made of. But we are talking about that thing there. We can all see the black pudding.

BETTY: We know what it is.  
(General agreement).

E. Now, this is the difficult thing. To try to tell somebody who can't see the thing there, all about it. What it is made of, but also what it looks like - so that they would recognize it if they met it. It is very hard to do. Now you've thought of that, do me another one.

I have a friend who comes up from Devon - that's why I was saying Devon. In Devon they haven't got housing like ours. This friend came into Glasgow by the London Road. You know how terrible some of the housing is there?

(General agreement).

She was saying, "There were dark entry-ways". She was trying to describe a close. She'd never seen a close before.

(Surprise, "OH", etc.)

Supposing you were trying to tell someone from Devon - that had never seen our housing at all - now remember what was wrong with that one, that we were really expecting the person to have seen the black pudding. Give me "a close".

BETTY: Well, a close, I would say, is a dark entrance, a wall on either side - rather narrow. A certain length and then you get to the stairs - continue right through.

HELEN: Well, I think they would see it - to my mind - they'd never seen one before - it would look funny to the likes of them.

BETTY: Oh aye, it must.

E. But supposing they were writing back to someone in Devon that isn't seeing it? You are writing to someone who has not come out of Devon. You have to put it in its setting. "A dark entrance".

JOAN Like an alleyway.

E. Like an alleyway. Yes. So you're giving them an example They would know an alley, maybe.  
(Pause)  
But you haven't said it is in a building?

BETTY: Neither we have.

JOAN: Building.

E. See how difficult it is? Up till now. "A dark entrance, narrow, certain length, like an alleyway." But that could be outside, all of that.

JOAN: Uh-huh.

BETTY: It's in a building.

HELEN: They're no' a' built the same way though. There's one at the back here and it goes right through to the back and then there are stairs up - from the back.

E. But they have some things in common. Now what have they got in common? That it wouldn't be a close unless it had those characteristics?

JOAN: Stairs.

HELEN: Stairs, some have gas light, some have electric.

BETTY: They are all off the main road.

E. That's a thing they've all got to be or it is not a close?

BETTY: Oh aye.

E. What I'm trying to look for is this. If you are trying to explain things to children, you really have got to use words that say what the thing is - so that it is that thing, and nothing else.

(General agreement. "Uh-huh. Aye.")

E. We found that hard with the black puddings. We found it hard with the close. Yet this is what the teacher is doing all the time. Now if your child can't follow it, because he's not used to this kind of talk, he finds school difficult.

(Uh-huh, etc.)

If they don't get this kind of talk at home, they are bored by school - because the teacher talks like this all the time. What America is like - things like that - things that are not here. If they are not used to that - they give up.

(E. continues giving examples - but doing all the talking).

*Video transcription  
with references*

*4 tapes made  
(6/3/64) 31 + 34 accidentally  
mistaken for  
1976*

**30.**

GROUP II

TEACHING AND FINAL REVIEW

November 7th

MANIPULATION OF COMPLEX CONCEPTS : 1. Concrete  
2. Abstract

1974

- E. Remember we were talking about how we could encourage children to learn by using praise. Did you think any more about that? Did you try that any more?
- BETTY: No, I never thought about it.
- HELEN: Well, I found something out today, wi' Thomas passing that doctor (E.S.N. nine-year-old re-examined) I was thinking before I went in, "Now, if you can do it for the doctor, you might get back to your own school." I says, "now, the only thing wrong wi' you Tommy, you know that, is your reading." I says, "If you can pass that, that's you away to the big school." So he's quite all chuffed up (pleased). He passed everything he was asked and he came to the reading. So he read the line and the doctor, said, "Yes, I think maybe he could pass for the big school, but I'd like to keep him here for just a wee while yet tae he's right." So he came oot and he says, "What do you think of that? There you are, I passed." He thinks he's going to the big school, I says, "Oh, not yet, Tommy. You'll need to wait till ..." "Do you think I done it? Do you think I done it alright?" Well, I mean, that was praise.
- E. Yes, so the fact that someone said he was doing well -
- HELEN: Doing well, You see?
- E. Do you think that will make him work harder?
- HELEN: Oh, I think so. I think it wid. Aye. For to get in --
- E. What about you, Donna? Do you remember we talked about this before and you said, "Well, if people aren't doing the thing well, what is the point of getting praised?"
- BETTY: Mind it?
- E. We were talking about school praise. Do you not remember that? I asked you what would happen if people didn't get praised and you seemed to think that it wasn't all that important.

DONNA: Because if they're gonny do it well, they'll do it well, whether they get praised or not.

E. Do you still feel that? Does praise make no difference to people's learning?

DONNA: They might be quite pleased being praised. But if you're gonny do it well, you'll do it well, whether you get praised or not.

E. You don't see it as encouraging then, someone to do it again?

DONNA: Not really.

E. No?  
(To Joan, Donna's mother who is almost blind).  
What about the use of words? You were telling me about the black pudding.

JOAN: Yes.

E. Remember last week we were doing this thing on the black pudding and we were saying, "How do you make a black pudding?" We were trying to put it into - naming all the bits of it and naming so that somebody --

You weren't here for this Donna. We were trying to see if we could describe something to someone who couldn't see it. So that we were using words to describe it - that they could imagine it.

Now, we had a great argument as to what exactly went into a black pudding. What were you telling me?

JOAN: Eh. Liver. It's not liver. Liver goes into the haggis, chopped liver, but not into the black pudding.  
(laughter)

E. How did you find out?

JOAN: It just came to me. Just came to me. I was sitting here and it just came to me.

BETTY: I was thinking and a' about it. My husband came in from work. Mrs. Barnes was sitting there and I says, "If somebody asked you what a black pudding was, what would you say."  
He says, "Well it's made o' this and it's made o' that." You know? Just the way we had answered it in there. We never stopped to think -

JOAN: Think, Aye.

BETTY: -- whether it was - what it actually looked like. The shape it came in, you know? He just said exactly as we had said ---

E. He did the same thing, did he? And did you say to him --

BETTY: I tried to explain and he went, "Oh, ye wouldnae think o' that really. Because automatically you just say --

JOAN: Uh-huh. Well, I just thought - it came into ma head - now I said, liver. Well, haggis you put chopped liver. But you don't put liver in black pudding.

E. So at least we've got the ingredients right.  
(laughter)

I thought we'd look at some books. I brought some books from school, for small children. Because they're trying to do this all the time in school. I don't mean trying to tell you how to make black pudding.

(laughter)

They don't try that in school. But trying to get the small children to know different ideas. I thought if we looked at the books - I've got them with me here and I'll give you one each (children's books each concentrating on a small group of concepts - shapes, size, etc.)

If we looked at them and said, "How do they set about teaching an idea?" Just have a week look at them, will you?

(General discussion on the books. Helen's book on shapes illustrated the concept "round" by a variety of objects, including a plate which might have been thought to have food or merely a dark pattern on it. The electricity has been cut off in Helen's home for two days now, with little likelihood of an immediate return. Food cannot therefore be cooked easily. Diane, the three year old girl who cannot speak glanced occasionally without much interest at the book).

Helen's comment therefore would seem to reflect her own preoccupation rather than the child's.

HELEN: Diane's looking at the dinners. That's what she's thinking about, a hot dinner.

(The impossibility of concentration on items of academic interest in such situation of distress is discussed elsewhere. Helen manages to join the conversation

HELEN: (Continued)

remarkably well in the circumstances, but the relevance of some of her remarks has to be judged against this economic and social background).

E. (Talking about the books in general)

I wonder if you could see a pattern in them? A way they were trying to teach the thing? What's yours about, Betty?

BETTY: Mines big and little. You know about big cars and so on. It's actually expressing a child's view. You know of seeing like - things as they are. Like, his father's chair is bigger than his and his mother's out with the pram wi' the baby in it - and the wee girl wi' her doll and pram. She feels as if she's more of an adult as well, if she's got the same.

E. Why do they keep repeating different pictures, like a big and little pram, a big and little chair? Why do they keep doing a number of the same idea?

(pause)

BETTY: Well, it's more or less to learn the child for years to come and all, in a way. They feel kind of grown up, I think. It's like a responsibility too to them when they're out.

E. To do what?

BETTY: You know, the wee girl with her doll and pram, to take care on roads and all that and how to look after the baby out in a pram and all that.

(Betty is expressing a concept of big and little concerned with a little child learning how to behave when big. The book is concerned with mathematical concepts of size. In the classroom this is likely to be the only concept of big and little which is acceptable. The teacher and author have "agreed" to place this concept within the larger maths concept. But Betty's interpretation is valid too, on the pages she is at present viewing.)

E. Yours (Helen) is on different shapes. Now how does it teach them? How does this book try to teach the idea?

HELEN: To know the kind of shapes, whether they're small or big, or - you know? Then the traffic lights itself. They know the shapes of them, the round and the coloured, you know really. When they're to start and stop and how to go.

And this shows them their plate with their dinner - nice and hot.

HELEN: (Continued)

It's got them understanding the clocks and that, to let them know the different things.

E. But it is particularly trying to teach shape, isn't it?

HELEN: Shape. Uh-huh.

E. So what shape would that page be trying to ---

HELEN: Well, this is a clock. They know a clock's round and they know the numbers. This bit here (the fingers) must go round and stop at a certain thing for them to know the times - what the time-it should be.

Likes o' Diane. You say to her, "Whit's that?" She'll know that's a knife and fork and she'll say, "dinner". (Diane cannot speak). Then, that's a cup.

See, this is a sort of children's - see this is a kind of book likes of this wee one (Diane) would get starting school, to show her how shapes and sizes and like, colours. And how to dae things, and what things are, really.

E. But why do they keep repeating a whole lot of different things of a round shape, not just leaving them that one? (a circle). Why does it give them all the bicycle and the cup and all the other things?

HELEN: No, to let them know how a bicycle can go. It goes on two wheels, a child knows that, and it's round. Well, the likes o' this, well, there's a balloon. Well they know - There's the beads -

E. And why do they give a whole lot of examples?

HELEN: Well, to let them understand what different things are really for. That's what I think.

Really, whit - now the beads, they know they're for counting, and the balloons for putting up, like they go into the air.

And the fish (a goldfish in a circular bowl) they know the fish is in a bowl. That's a different thing a' the gither. You see?

(At this point, Joan is brought into the conversation, but as she cannot see the pictures the talk is not relevant to the teaching exercise).

E. What about Donna? What does yours look like?

DONNA: It's about hair.

E. So it is trying to teach them something about hair?  
How does it do it?

DONNA: It is showing hair styles through the ages, and how to wash your hair, and that.

(Donna gives a description of the concept exemplified without straying on to other issues, such as the nationalities in the examples. Is there a connection between this response and the fact that her concept was concrete "hair" while the others were abstract "shapes", "size"?)

E. So - But there's one basic idea in the book then, about hair? Then it is showing you all these different things about it?

Is there a basic idea in your book? (Betty)

BETTY: Oh aye. Its - well, as the book says, small and big.  
Well, big and little.  
It's showing a child the different stages in life of different things I would say.

(Note that this definition would fit a biology text book. The book given is based on an assumption that the adult using it with a child will be trying to teach maths. It is therefore geared to consumers working within a particular educational convention.)

And they learn a great deal through it, really, you know. They see a - you know - they've got their own wee way o' thinking things. You know? And they think, if an adult can do it, well I can too. There's a purpose in doing it, and if I can do it myself, well, it's more tae me than anything else.

E. They can do their own - ?

BETTY: I think that's more the idea.

E. And is there some basic idea in your book?  
(Helen's shapes)

HELEN: Uh-huh. Well, the likes of the blackboard is showing in a book (page illustrating rectangles) Well, they see these things in a classroom and they get to know what it's for and how to work it - what they must do on a blackboard.

Or there's a school bag. They take them school bags to school. They know they do these things.

HELEN: (Continued)

That's what I think. It's a good idea really that they've got the books like that for them - children - they'll be able to know what they're for - what they do with them.

(decision taken to concentrate the whole group on one book).

E. This one says, "Shapes" and it is trying to teach the children this quite simple idea - it seems to us - that there are round things, that some round things are round like a plate and some are round like a ball and some are round like a pencil. When you stop and think, there are really three different kinds of "round".

HELEN: That's true. Aye.

E. We, perhaps, don't notice that children have got to learn that.

JOAN: That's right.

E. And these things about squares and oblongs - these straight sided figures. To try and teach it they give them all kinds of examples. As Helen was saying, these about balloons and about school bags and blackboards and - . The children, as Helen says, pick up all kinds of things about school with that, while they're at it. But the object of the book is to teach one idea.

HELEN: How to do it - how it should be done.

E. No - well, I don't suppose they've got to do anything with it -

I suppose they will start doing things, yes, once they've seen them in books.

But what the things are first of all, what the difference in shapes are. What is a square? What is an oblong? That blackboard's shape they're talking about there. And, as you say, once they know what the things are they'll do them - they'll make shapes of the same type themselves.

(Pause)

Well, that's what the teacher is doing in school - trying to teach ideas by giving a whole lot of examples of the one idea.

BETTY: Simple - in a very simple way.

E. Yes.

HELEN: (Puzzled) In the simplest possible way they can do it.

E. But it is the repetition of ideas, different ideas, but they've all got the same message.

All those ones on traffic lights and wheels and balloons have all got one message. They've got a whole lot of other messages as well, but there's one they've got in common. You can see there's one message in common. Can you perhaps suggest what it is? Traffic lights and wheels and balloons, I'm trying to say, have one message that all of these things have got.

HELEN: Stop. It's telling them when to go on. That's what I think. Really stop and start.

E. I suppose it is so simple you don't see what it is.

BETTY: I think I'll be needing to go back to school myself.

E. They're just trying to teach them what we mean by "round".

(Sounds of surprise and disbelief)

They're just trying to teach the idea of roundness.

HELEN: But a child from they are starting ages for school, they know, they see the moon and the stars and all this. They know they're round.

E. So they're already getting examples?

HELEN: They know. They know that when they get things in the house - now there's a clock, that's round too - they know these things are round.

BETTY: But not all clocks are round.

HELEN: No, no' them all.

BETTY: A kid sees a clock that's not round, they're going to say, "I thought you said a clock is round?"

HELEN: Well, a plate, it's round, a saucer, balls. They know they're a' different sizes and different shapes.

BETTY: That they're all for a purpose.

HELEN: A purpose - something you've got to do with them.

E.

So they're getting examples at home?

Now see, you're saying Helen what I'm really after - that the home can link up with the school so much. There are so many things going on at home and if you know that with small children the school is really trying to teach them this idea of roundness then you can pick it up at home and just use words to push that idea. Did you notice that was round? And that? And that was round.

HELEN:

Oh, they get to know things before they go to school. You try and show them this. There's a case. They know that's a case. They must take their books in a case or in a bag. You get children at 5 years old knows that. It's the first thing they'll ask for is a schoolbag when they start school. They know they must get a book in that bag for to come home with. That encourages them when they go to school with their bag. They're that delighted that day when they come home, "I've got a school book. I've got a school book." You know? They're showing you what they got.

E.

Really keen to use what they've got?

HELEN:

Aye. So the mother really tries to help them before they go to school. The mother really does gie - does a lot of help for them, the children, in a way.

E.

I think this is important.

BETTY:

In the house especially, when there's more than one child in a family. Take ma wee ones for instance, John Frances. We could be sitting here sitting there and the door's open, and I say, "Close the door." He'll walk over. He knows that there the door is and knows what it looks like. And that's him from just over a year. It's the way he is now - to pick up -

HELEN:

They pick up things from you.

BETTY:

They automatically know themselves.

JOAN:

He's only 15 months just now and I've seen that child lifting a pen and piece of paper and trying to write, same as ---

E.

Is that right?

JOAN:

--- same as the big ones do. 15 months old he is.

HELEN: He(John, aged 2) does this as well. He disnae write a lot on it. They're just scribbles you know. They think they're writing. In their imagination they think they're writing.

JOAN: But then they've got - the idea's going to them what it's for, what the paper and pen's for.

HELEN: And what a book's for. The first time John'll do his nut to see what it is - and yet it looks a lot of colours to him. He disnae understand what's there. The likes of Diane, being 3, you'd think she'd understand. She know the colours and that that's there. She thinks the very same as John. She knows the colours are there. She doesnae really know what they're for.

BETTY: I find wi' children, younger - under school age - ma other ones that are at school, even Andrew - he's only 6, well Henry and Andrew, can be watching something on television, right? And Andrew will say, "What's that?" And Henry will say, "Well it's such-a-thing. Now, when you go into ma class and that, you'll get it. It's quite simple to know. It's - you do such-a-thing with it."

He starts describing it all to Andrew and in his own wee way of telling things. Andrew understands better than if the teacher was telling them.

E. Yes, because the two children understand each other - as people.

BETTY: They understand each other and they can talk to one another. They communicate better I think -

HELEN: Oh, they definitely do. They definitely do.

BETTY: --- really than you do with them. The children seem to communicate better together.

E. But I think you communicate better with them than a teacher ever could.

BETTY: Oh aye, right enough.

E. Because you know them so much better and that's why we're keen that the parents and the school are working together. For, if we were trying to do the same thing, you doing it at home --- Now it is not a matter of teaching the school lessons. But a matter of teaching the children interesting things outside of school in the same way as they learn things in school. That's

E. (Continued)

really what I'm trying to do today. - To try to discuss with you the way things are taught in school. What the teacher is trying to do and how she sets about it, to see if you can use that same way at home, and the children would be used to it. Now, the thing we did with the black pudding and the clove. I was trying to show you that's the kind of expression the teacher uses when she's talking about America or geography or anything else. She's trying to describe something that's not there, and so she's got to use words very carefully. And if you could do this at home, if you could use words very clearly to describe things, and keep on saying to yourself, "Now, supposing I wasn't showing them this thing - am I saying it well enough, clearly enough - "

BETTY: So that they can get a vivid picture in their own minds.

HELEN: -- minds. That's right enough about that.

E. Yes. Because then they can store the idea in their own minds, you see, in words.

BETTY: Well, I was coming down the road the other day there, cutting through the park way (about a mile away) know how the leaves are all off the trees and that in November? Clearing up the leaves and that. Ma Andrew (aged 6) couldn't understand why. He was up the park in the summer when the place was full of trees - trees were all in bloom - and this was November and they were just pure bare. I says, "Well, this is winter time." "But they weren't like that when I came up the last time."

You see? Then when you put it down to them; in the summer it's that warm, he's up the park in the pool playing. In the winter it's too cold to go to the park. Not many people go to play in a park.

He began to get the picture hisself. He says, "Oh, I see what you mean. Right." You know? He just couldnae understand at the beginning how the trees were bare. Last time he'd seen them they were all full.

(Note might be made here for students that teachers might not realise that a six-year-old could see trees so rarely that he was completely without experience of autumn, leaf-fall, etc., unless the school engineered an opportunity for him.)

E. That was great that he could see this whole idea of summer and winter.

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BETTY: Summer and winter. It is warm in the summer and cold in the winter. You know, and the leaves start to come back in the spring. Well, he got a vivid picture hisself.

E. Oh, that's great.  
See if we could do something together now on this?  
I just brought these old cornflakes boxes along - just to give us something to look at - for I do think you need a picture to look at.  
If you look at a thing like cornflakes. Now they come from maize which grows in America. And they are on our tables, and you know, the children could get a whole lesson out of that, especially here. I was thinking of those ships outside your window - and the cornflakes on the table.

HELEN: Uh-huh.

BETTY: And the ships bringing cornflakes from America?

E. How would you try to explain to your children -? I'll take my pencil and paper again and we'll try writing down how we could explain to children anything at all about those cornflakes on the table - and see if we can express it in words.

BETTY: Like explain to children? Well, you say, "There's a bowl of cornflakes." Well mine, they think nothing of it. Now, have you to say now, "Do you know what these flakes - where they come from? What they're made of?"  
Now maize, it's growing. You grow maize, don't you? And it's collected in, harvested in, put through machinery work and so on, till it processes into flakes. And they are bulked or whatever you call it, and sent over to us. They come all the way - and all that. You know, from America.

E. Now, what about how they come? Anything about the journey?

DONNA: Well, you can see them coming, because the cornflakes and that are unloaded from the ships.

E. Is that right? Do they actually come off these ships here?

BETTY: Aye - Not here. Not so much here.

E. But they see the same idea?

BETTY: Oh yes.

E. Aye, you see? This is what I was thinking. If you could use what they can see to describe something they can't see. What do they see coming off these ships - or happening to these ships.

HELEN: Well the boat that comes from Belfast used to bring cattle over. They used to be taken off the ships down there.

E. Is that right?

HELEN: Uh-huh. For the market.

E. So they know that ships carry things?

BETTY: Aye. They carry cargo.

JOAN: Aye - they know.

E. But do the children know that?  
(Chorus of aye, yes)

E. Well, how do you know they know it?

BETTY: Well, they've told me.

E. This is it. I'm trying to talk about the words they use.

BETTY: I was standing at the window there one night and there was a big - a particular ship was in. It was a big ship and the wee tugs - you know? It has two wee tug boats at either end of it and they pull it. So I went and says to Henry (aged 8), "Now, see those two wee ships at each side?" He says, "They're not ships. They're wee tugs." He says, "and they're used to bring the big ships in, or take it out. Did you not know that?" This was him telling me and I thought I was gonny tell him something. But he was one step ahead.

E. How old is he?

BETTY: He's eight.

E. Oh, that's great. Now what do they know about cargo?

JOAN: Well they know when it's a whisky cargo. They know when it's that cargo.

(Laughter)

JOAN: (Continued)

Oh aye, they hear a lot round about the corners. They hear there's a whisky boat in. You know they hear that quite common.

E. Don't tell me they bring the whisky into Glasgow? I thought they took it from us.

BETTY: You know what fascinates me?

JOAN: -- Oh, it might be. It might be going out, I don't know. But you'll know when there's a whisky boat in the dock.

BETTY: What fascinates ma kids is the foreigners that come over here. They will say, "There's such-a-ship in and I don't know whether they're French or Spanish or whit they are." You know? The kids are fascinated to see them and hear them going up and down. They always pass up and down here and frequent these two public houses here straight from the dock. They're more interested in the people that are working on them - frae different countries you know?

E. Yes, there's a lot you could do with that isn't there? Getting them -

BETTY: Well, I know I've seen them here saying, "Well they're dressed like this - they're not exactly coloured, right dark, they're between", and they're asking what nationality they are, which is a thing I don't know. You know even to listen to them speaking, I wouldn't - You know, some countries, aye but -

HELEN: But a child really thinks that when you're asking questions like that, that you should know - when you can't. You know how they're different - as Betty says, they've different ways o' coming in and they ask different questions and that - well as I say myself - Betty says - they ask you and you canny tell them because you don't know yourself really. They are foreign - different ones come in really. I've heard different people -

E. But what would you do about it, if you don't know the answer? How do you cope with that - when you don't know?

BETTY: I just say, "Well they're foreign of some kind, you know, they're from some foreign country."

E. Is there a library near here?

HELEN: Uh-huh.

DONNA: By the park.

E. Oh, the park? Elderpark is a long way away. So it is not very near here at all then?

BETTY: No, but the kids can still go to it from school. Joan does that.

E. Oh, because your children go to school up there?  
I was just thinking maybe you could encourage them to go up there and get a book. You know, if you could share the looking for knowledge with them, instead of them expecting you to know everything. I think the teachers have long given up that game of trying to pretend they know it all. We would - at least I think most teachers - would say, "Well, we'd better look it up." You know, a joint effort. We'd better look it up. You bring the book home and we'll do it between us. And in this way they go to the library and get a book on people of different lands and if you discussed it with them at home, then you would learn and they would learn.

BETTY: -- learn as well. True enough.

E. How would that make them learn more - if you discussed it with them?

HELEN: It would let them understand whit they really are. Whit it's about really. Whit kind of - if they are foreign or - whit they are, you know? If they ask you then, "Whit are they people coming off the boat? You could tell them if you knew them then.

E. What does this mean to the child if you look up the book with them?

BETTY: If you're reading it and say for instance, you're sitting wi' a library book a child's got there. There's a lot of words in a library book that kids of different ages don't understand. Now, if you're reading that to them and you stop and say, "Now this word here, I better think of something more appropriate that they can understand." So you'd need to translate it in your own way to them - to get to it, and then they might understand what it was about.

E. Which means that the meaning of the book would come over to them?

BETTY: -- would come across clearer, because they're sitting reading words out a library book - now it's not all easy words that's in these books.

JOAN: They don't understand.

BETTY: The kids - they could maybe read it, maybe read the words, but not actually know the meaning of it. You'd need to translate it into your own -

E. But what about their interest? Do you think they would be more interested in a book if you took it with them?

BETTY: Oh yes.

E. Does that make any difference if you read it with them and look at it with them?

HELEN: Well, with little children, they like to get these things done for thirselves'. There's children go to the library theirselves'. They've got libraries in school too the now. Different classes get different libraries that they go and see what kind of book you want to do and that. That's just their books in the libraries. I think the books are really there to learn them, to help them, the questions that they want to know, that they're there to look up and find out what it is about.

E. Donna, what do you think? Does it matter if somebody works with you, if an adult works with you at school or home?

DONNA: When I was at school I didnae like the teacher - I mean, I'd get all flustered - frightened, I wouldnae get it right, you know. I would rather have done it myself.

E. What about your parents' interest? What about your mum's interest?

DONNA: Well - eh - ma mother and ma big sisters and ma brothers - they helped us wi' our homework.

E. But did you like it? What I'm trying to see is, when you were little, did you like it if your mother took an interest in what you brought home from school?

DONNA: (unenthusiastically) eh - yes.

E. (To Joan - Donna's mother) What do you think about taking an interest in school work?

JOAN: Maybe she liked it, but she never showed. Because Donna was one you always had to force to do her homework.

*Transcript for type  
made by Kathy*

10031 -  
Kathleen  
Counsell  
10/04  
63/04  
T.  
35.

21st September, 1976

First Mothers Meeting

*- of Kathy's group.*

Seven mothers attended, despite the appalling weather conditions. Only three were on time, however, the rest wandered in between 5 and 15 minutes late.

I was not at all happy with the setting for the group - the hall was too big and institutionalised (even though they identified with it). Sound carried badly and the noise of the children, whilst not excessive, echoed around.

Our setting out of the chairs was also poor - the circle was too big, and therefore communication across it was limited. It also enabled the kiddies to play in the middle of the group, which was an added distraction.

Doreen's introduction was good, warm and informal, despite one difficult moment when two non-Moorpark mothers asked why the meetings had not been extended to them. The initial activity went down well - all participated enthusiastically and were relaxed in giving back the information to the whole group. Tea followed - possibly a little mistimed, because not all the groups continued with relevant discussion then.

Mrs. McLaughlin was particularly good in the group situation and quite perceptive re mother/child interaction. Towards the end of the feed-back session I began to feel uneasy - were we fading into a 'wishy-washy-ness' - should we have introduced more material - or was that in fact enough for an introductory session?

As a follow up activity the mothers promised to try one particular response - either positive or negative, through a conditioning situation. I wasn't sure, however, that all of them - particularly the two by me - really understood what was required. Even those who did were very sceptical as to the possibility of it succeeding. They seemed, however, quite happy with the idea of the groups, and the possibility of both 'receiving advice' (their words) and exchanging ideas concerning the teaching of young children.

Each /

21.9.76. First Mothers' Meeting

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Each promised to bring more mothers along with them next Tuesday,

Perhaps I am being over anxious expecting too much in terms of content and feedback, especially for an initial session. Certainly the mothers seemed to enjoy it.

I will need, however, to give much more care to the preparation and structured content of the following meetings in order to retain any interest that has been created.

KR/JA  
6.10.76.

S E E Govan Project

Session I Group ....

Wednesday a.m.

6th October 1976

The use of praise for reinforcement and conditioning.  
Attempt to find entry behaviour at the level of knowledge  
and of practice

Present: Mrs. Margaret McGilp.  
Jean Drummond.  
Grace Morrison.  
Eleanor Dalziel.

*(File Mrs McGilp  
of the school story  
in CL 5)*

36.

- D. Right, well what I thought we could tackle this morning is a set of slides. Just 2 or 3 slides of the Tenants' Hall - that competition we were doing here just for the fun of looking at them first of all and then we'll go back and look at what we learn from them. Just look at them and see what you think about that.  
(various comments about arrangement of projector, viewing, etc.)

The wee boy in the corner, who is he, does anyone know? I think that must be his model. Somebody is doing it and he is left standing there.

(Series of slides, identifying various children and noting the robot making details. None of the group had taken part. Two of them, Jean and Grace live outside Moorpark, but they could all identify various people in the slides).

- D. I want to look at something that I think is kind of important. I want to hear if it really seems important in the home to do this - I want to look at one of these pictures and try and think out how you could change the situation for the better.

That wee boy I was pointing out in the corner - he doesn't look too happy, does he?

General murmur of 'No'.

Jean He doesn't look too interested.

- D. I'd like you to try and ... I've got some ideas of what I think might be happening there and what I think might change that. But I'd like to hear your ideas first of all. How could you make him more interested?
- E. Probably looking at something he's interested in - whatever he's looking at.
- J. To me it looks as if his mother is

- G. They're doing it, they're doing it.
- J. His mother is doing more than him.  
They should be letting him do more.
- G.(?) They should be letting him do it himself.
- J. Yes.
- D. Yes, it looks more like that anyway.
- J. As though she has sort of took over.
- G. She's ... and we're apt to do that.
- J. I do that myself.
- G.(laughing) We all do it I think.
- J. Yes, (indistinuishable).
- G. ... and take over. I think this is why.
- D. I wonder why she took over?  
Why do you take over?
- G. We ~~get~~ fun out of it too, I suppose.
- M(?) and we want them to think that they're learning right.
- J. We forget it is supposed to be all their own work.
- G. We do, we do forget.
- D. What do you ~~th~~ink, Eleanor?  
You were saying you thought he was interested.
- E. I think he is interested in something he's looking at.  
He's maybe - maybe he'd like to try ~~hims~~ herself.
- D. Uhuh?
- E. ... watched another kid doing it.  
I mean there is a lot of ~~mothers~~ who let them do it themselves, but that's no' very ~~many~~.
- M. That's true.
- D. and what do you think the mothers are more likely to be doing than letting them do it?
- E. I think they should let them do it themselves instead of standing there, -- you know -- they're doing it.
- D. Hm.
- E. I think that, well.
- J. ~~What~~ you should actually <sup>just be</sup> ~~do-wi'~~ standing back to help the kids.

- G. But it's the other way about. We're doing the work, they're doing the helping (laughter).
- D. But why --- Margaret, you were helping me a minute ago there about --- you think they're not doing it right. That was why ---
- M. He thinks you're not doing it right. He'd love to by himself.
- E. Maybe they're no' going quick enough?
- M. Which.
- E. You know how some --- they no' going that quicker? - that the mother -- she's had a' the angles before.
- G. You mean the wee boy thinks that she's doin' it wrong.
- E. He'd like to try his own way of doin' it.
- D. But he's not getting the chance.
- D. We're not fair right enough, we're bad for that.
- G. Look at the expression on his face, I mean, that's enough.
- E. He's got a disgusted look.
- ? We jump in there and do too much for them.
- D. But supposing you wanted - you said, well right I want to let him do it and yet you are back in the position Margaret was suggesting there, but he's no' doin' it the way I think it should be done. Well how do you change that? Supposing you're right, supposing you're saying to somebody about a piece of school work. I'll do that he doesn't do it properly. Now how can you bring about that change? Let him do it and yet let the standard improve. That's really the problem isn't it?
- E. Try and advise him I would think.
- I've got a son that's awful backward and for a full year he got nothing in the school and he just began to do it himself and I cannae help him, I'm not allowed.
- D. Is that right? This is Hamilton, isn't it?
- E. Yes, and he goes to the school round the corner and in no way can I show him how to do a thing, he's got to do it himself.

- D. Well then, that's an interesting example. How can you help Hamilton without doing it for him - without actually showing him what to do?
- E.
- D. Well can you give me an extra example.
- E. The teacher gives them sums they should not be getting. She knows he can't do them - she gives him it on a paper to see how he's progressing and yet he goes to the clinic and it's really mixing him all up. When he brings home the paper I just tear it. He should not be getting..... although he's eight. If they had /..... at the beginning when I asked, he would have been far on by this time.
- D. Supposing - Does the clinic give you a piece of work?
- E. No, he's to do it all himself.
- D. Do they tell you what you have to do?
- E. No, he gets reading and he gets work and he gets it in a book and then he gets it home to show me, but if he's done wrong; see how sometimes /.... he gets all his words together and says 'here is a dog'. He actually closes all the letters together and makes it all the one sentence and you have to say "you've not to do that, that's not the right way, you have to space them out" and when you say space them out he does it, yet he doesn't get that in the school.
- D. Now there's an interesting point, I am sure that happens to all your children at some stage - they do a thing, you show them how to do it and they do it gradually. Now if you could use a wee bit of praise there. This is what I'd like to know, what you think that does for them. What is the difference when you praise them?
- E. They seem to get on better, they seem to try.
- D. Mh. Do you think that Grace?
- G. They've got that bit confidence.
- D. What about Jean? I'd like to hear everyone's thoughts about what praise does. What about Jean? What do you think?
- J. Ah well, ma Sharon's sitting doing her reading and I tell her she's a good girl. I mean, she thinks it's marvellous and she keeps on at it.
- D. and Margaret?
- G. Mine's the same if I praise them up.
- M. Catherine or Tracey (indistinguishable) quite pleased wi' it.

- J. But I find if I get angry with Sharon and tell her she's been wrong in doing it, she'll no' do it again for me. She cannae do it, seems to loss all confidence in it. She's rather sit and cry as try again.
- D. That's ---- that's very-----
- J. She'd rather sit and cry. And yet I've seen me fighting with her in the morning and saying to her daddy 'She'll need to do these pages ower again' and yet she'll come in at dinner time and she's done her reading right.
- G. Oh, I've seen Brian do that when he's up there in the house. When he comes home he's got more--- he's did it in the school and they've gave him more pages. I'll say 'why no' done it wi' me? And right enough, it's because I shout and (indistinct).
- D. You are all saying a tremendous piece of educational idea really, that if you praise a piece of work, and if you say clearly what it is you are praising--- I don't think it is all that much use just to say 'You're good'. You've got to say - like, if I could go back to your example (Eleanor)-- 'That's well done because you've spaced them out!' Name what it is that you're praising so that they put the praise and that together and they can say, 'that's what I'm good at, that's what I'll repeat.'
- G. Brian's got a habit of writing his numbers big and I will say to him, 'It's too big, away and do it smaller'. He's started now he'll do them a bit smaller for me and he thinks he's --- good, ye know!
- D. And how would you --- can you give us an expression of a way you could say to him that he would know what it was that was good about that. I mean how would you say - how would you tell him that that was good?
- G. (doubtfully) What?... I'd say 'well it's good that you've...' You know, he's made them smaller now, it is tidier and that would be quite-----
- D. You see, we would use the word 'tidy' and we'd use the word 'smaller' because we know what that means.
- D. But sometimes it is difficult to know if they know exactly what it is.
- G. Uhuh.
- E. Ah but you could show a person --- you can show---
- G. You can show them, you can show.
- E. ... A size and a small letter and they understand it.
- F. Great! You can really say 'that size!'
- G. It's that and you've to do Not that one.

WEDNESDAY, 13th OCTOBER 1976.  
SECOND MEETING - A.M.

PAGE FIRST.



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Obviously, it's important .... (several voices together)....

He went near the television and we told him to stop, told him to come away from it, you know, away from it, said he was a good boy, he never went near it since it ....

So it took him once ..... and what else is he doing now?

(words said in laughter)

Goes and stands with his record player; he gets a record and tries to put it on the record player (laughter) .....

I think you've started it with that one..... (laughter again)

Did you try it with <sup>Phon</sup>..... (undistinguishable)

Oh <sup>Frank</sup> got his reading book from the school .....

Yes, that's right.....

Well, got through to that, tried praising him ..... stopped, he was rushing on and I had to tell him, "You're not supposed to do that, it's got a wee dot in it.!....now he's just stopping when he should, and then he starts on the next line ....

Did you use the idea that it was good when he did stop?

Uh huh, I says to him "that's right I said" "because when you see that there it means you must stop, just pause for a minute or so and then start up again."

- child interruption -

and he's doing it right now .....

Did you try it?

I tried it with the laces. Mines ... if you ask him to do something and you persist, you know how they will take it into ... he'll no do it if he doesnaw want to do it (child interruption) he's got to do it in his own time; even the wee one, he's beginnin' to ...../.

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WEDNESDAY, 13th OCTOBER 1976.

SECOND MEETING A.M.

PAGE SECOND.

to stutter the now ma wee one, the last three days he's been doing this; I think it's attention he's lookin' for (two voices together) he doesnae do it when his dad's there .....

It's attention .....

But when I'm there .....

So there is something .....

He jist kinna a hu hu hu ... kinna style, and he disnae do it in school.

What age is he?

He's five, so he's going through that stage the now .....

Mmmm ...

.. where he's wanting attention, you know how he (interruption) .....

and he needs that much more attention and it's just one of thae phases he's gaun through the now..... but I've tried to get him to do his laces, but he's got to do it in his own time as well.

How did you do it then?

I showed him how to tie ... you know how he can tie, you know how crossing it, and put the knot in it, he gets it in a state .....

I gave up.

.... he actually shoves it through and then it goes in a bundle. And the bigger one, he's the same, he ties it a different way, but he's no tieing it right, it's jist a' knots.

M ...

But if you say to them "Will you do this, and I'll show you .. aw that's good" he says "I OK" but at the same time you're tellin' him whit to dae and he disnae like that, he likes to dae it hissel. You know how you're puttin' that actual thing in his mind and he says "Am no gonny dae that" and he gets fed up.

Mmmm .....

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1976

38.  
(1)

Wednesday p.m. 13th October  
at Betty Jones' house

**PRESENT:**  
Betty Jones  
Jeanette Stuart  
Edith Paton  
Mrs. Barr

**CONTENT:** Importance of language interaction between mother and child as  
(a) developing the child's intelligence;  
(b) supporting the child's work and learning in school.

**FOCAL ACTIVITY:** Role play with mums showing contrast of "Billy Connolly" type mum and "Super mum".

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Begin Tape:

**KATHY:** Did you get anything out of what we were doing last week?

(Mixed voices replying variously at the same time, some laughter).

**VOICE:** Well, to be quite truthful, we were going down the road and I said, "I cannae praise her any more than I've praised her."

**OTHER VOICE: /**

OTHER VOICE: I couldn't find out who they were; what they'd said, you know?

KATHY: What did you think I was trying to say?

VOICE: I don't know. No. I said to Jeanette that I just failed completely. She said, "What do you think?" I said, "Oh, I don't know", I said, about the wee boy. (Laughter) "I don't know what we were talking about. I think it's a lot of rubbish we were talking about", I said.

OTHER INTERVIEWER(?) What did you do last week?

VOICE: I've been praising the kids, you know. However, it was about the wee boy, you know, and the expression on the wee boy's face.

OTHER VOICE: Aye. The expression....

VOICE: Mind you showed us a film?

KATHY: That's right, yes.

VOICE: And you asked us what we thought; what he was thinking...

KATHY: Mm. Yes. And then we went on to praise.

VOICE: Aye. And we stuck at praise. (Laughter)

KATHY: We stuck at praise. (More laughter).  
Did you think I - did you think I was talking a lot of rubbish about praise?

VOICE: /

VOICE:

No. I didn't think you were talking a lot of rubbish. I just thought that ...(sound of bird chirruping in background)... we had explained what we thought praise was, you know, and how we praised our kids. (Interviewer: Yes) And you kept asking us, you know, for a different kind of praise. (Voice: to other members of group: "Didn't she?") - and we couldn't figure out praising them any other way than what we - you know - the way we had been praising them.

KATHY:

Yes.. I wasn't really asking you to praise them in a different way, but to use it to teach them to .....

VOICE:

..... use it - like if they done wrong, instead of giving them a lecture you thought that if we praised, tried to explain it a wee bit better or if they done something good then you thought - do you think it would be better to praise them, rather than just don't bother with them?

KATHY:

Mm. Well, were you able to try it out in any way?

VOICE:

Well, what you were saying, I mean, we were giving you our versions of what we would do to our own, because that is the kind of things, I mean, that, er, teacher says to you, maybe some day, I mean, you praise them up, likes of the wee boy that was going to get the star. And I said it was good, and he came in the next day and he said he had got another star. So that, I mean, praise him that way and - it all depends on your moods - maybe, as I say, I could turn round and say to mine .... "That's a good boy." Maybe some days, I just say, "Right. Get they (oot of my road there???)"... (indistinct) .. but you're still gie'ing them that wee bit of confidence even if you just say, "Good boy". Think that, you know, you're giving him that/

contd.

that wee bit of praise. (Kathy: Mm). Well, this is the way we were explaining. When I was talking I was explaining my own children and when Jeanette was talking she was explaining hers.

KATHY:

(in background) .. Well, that's what it's.....

VOICE:

(talking through Kathy) ... As you say, the different expressions on the face. I mean, if you say he's a good boy, he'll walk in laughing; if you say that ....(indistinct).... one of ? faces. I mean, I'll(?) just hit it and he'll sulk. Inside his mind he knows he's getting checked. I've got to say to myself ...(laughter). But I thought it was, er, - we weren't talking about you. We were talking about us. I said, I wonder what that lassie was saying(?).

INTERVIEWER:

(in background) Mrs. Owen(?) wait till you hear next week's .....

VOICE:

I said, I know what she's talking about but I don't know what we were talking about.  
(Laughter)

KATHY:

Oh, no. I got quite a lot of .....(indistinct)  
This is something we might look at to-day; is not just how we use praise, but how we talk to children; sort of, what we say to them and how important do you think it is to talk to children. How important is the way you talk to children .....Edith:  
Do you talk to them a lot?

OTHER VOICE:  
(Edith?)

Sometimes. I was just going to explain about the day when that Health Visitor came. It was the first time she brought a book for Agnes - that's my/

EDITH: (contd) my second-youngest. And she sat with her and that's what she said: it's good to sit down when you've time and get a coloured book and explain everything because her speech - she says she can't pronounce things right.

KATHY: So she was saying that's a mistake? I suppose that is!  
(Laughter)

EDITH: She can say her words.. you know the likes of 'fish'? She'll say 'ish' - she can't pronounce 'f' right.

KATHY: Did she say why it was ?...(indistinct)

EDITH: She just said to sit down, you know, she said the same things as you - to sit down and read to her; you know, get a book out and say, "What's this?" ... (indistinct) ... it's the other two. Like, she says to me, "Mummy, what's that?" You know - a ball - she knew everything in the book; that's what she said. She said, "Oh, she's intelligent enough". It's just that her words are slurred.

KATHY: So you - because there's so many of them you're not able to find the time. Is this it?

EDITH: I don't know. I never ever bothered with any ... to sit down doing reading. They (he?) said to me, "Is this a ball" or, you know, something like that, and I'm reading the paper; someone just answered him; never ... (indistinct) ... any quicker.

KATHY: What about general talking instead of just reading? Do you chatter a lot to him?

EDITH: /

*1st idea of it  
Role play of  
Docks visit  
mother/child talk.*

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*39. (12)*

Transcript of Meeting 2, Group .....  
Wednesday afternoon, 13th October 1976

39.

*Role play  
& start of Docks  
idea.*

PRESENT: *Donna / ~~Anna~~ / Agnes /*  
Dolly, Alice, Ann. (Margaret absent)

Note: All three mothers have children in P.3  
Copeland Rd. Two classes are involved.

CONTENT: Conceptual Language. An attempt to stimulate a  
greater use of conceptual language and logical  
discussions between parents and children. The  
idea will be introduced that this kind of inter-  
action is of direct use as a support to the  
child's efforts in school.

FOCAL ACTIVITY: Role playing of mother/child interaction using two  
caricature situations at opposite ends of the  
communications spectrum.

TAPE

Introduction in summary:

A short discussion on the use of praise and on the attempts made  
during the previous week to bring about appropriate behaviour through  
reinforcement. Each parent had made some attempt but showed in discussion  
that the concept was not clearly understood, e.g. Dolly had accepted  
everything her daughter had said and done, including Donna Marie's refusal  
to help with washing dishes, etc.

(The concept of reinforcement will be reintroduced throughout the ten  
week programme, and an effort made to refine the definition.)

Dialogue:

Dialogue:

DOREEN: We were wondering if we could look at the difference between the way teachers talk to the children and the way you talk to them at home. You know, if we could see if there were ways in which we could bring those two ways of talking together a bit. It would help the child more in school. And I thought if you could - you know, we all do the kind of school way of talking really, on many occasions, but we don't do a lot of it. I thought - supposing Billy Connolly - Did you see Billy Connolly last night?

DOLLY )  
ALICE ): Aye.

DOREEN: I didn't see him, but .....

ANN: Oh, I never seen him!

DOREEN: Well, you know, supposing Billy Connolly was doing a scene of a mother on a bus going along Govan Road and she's got the child with her, you know, the one that is at Primary 3 stage - and he's on the bus. And then, straight after it you've got one of those kind - you know those things like 'Rainbow' they put on at mid-day? You know those television programmes?

DOLLY )  
ALICE ): Uh huh!  
ANN )

DOREEN: ...where they're doing, you know, 'Mummy' bringing up 'little darling' on the bus? You know how different these two scenes would be!

DOLLY )  
ALICE ): Mm.  
ANN )

DOREEN: /

- DOREEN: You know; it would be awful different with Billy Connolly's 'mum' and child on the bus, especially if the mother didn't want really to be bothered with the child. You know, she's that busy talking to her neighbour.
- GENERAL: Aye. (Laughter)
- DOREEN: And then you've got the other one when -
- DOLLY: When it's 'Rainbow', it's 'What is it, dear?' and (general laughter) and all that patter.
- DOREEN: I thought we could just try it out. You know. If we just played it now. You know, as if we were the people and we were - supposing we were rehearsing for a - for being the people that Billy Connolly was putting on his show. You know, if he was running a show, and he was having a group of mums, and he is suddenly saying, 'Now, I've got a group of people from Govan here. They're going to show you what it is like on a bus on Govan Road.' You could do that for us? Really being the difficult mum who would have nothing to do with this child no matter what the child asked. And somebody else, being the child who was really pestering for information, and not getting anywhere. Which of those two would you do? I think if you (DOLLY) did one and you (ANN) did the other and ALICE was ... (laughter) ...
- DOREEN: Just for a laugh!
- DOLLY: I'll be the wean!  
(laughter)
- DOREEN: /

DOREEN: What about you being the two neighbours? You try it. You and Alice are trying to hold a conversation about something else and -

DOLLY: And I ask questions: 'Whit's that, Mammy? Whit's that?'

DOREEN: And Ann, you do the mother, the Billy Connolly mother.

(All talking together)

ANN: Aye, just the normal?

DOREEN: I just mean, taking off a Glasgow mother. I've never seen him do this either.

ANN: Mm.

DOREEN: You can imagine what he would - a kind of 'Sunday Post' mother.

ANN: Aye. 'Shut your mouth or I'll choke you.'

(Laughter)

That's what I say! They never do it!

DOREEN: Let me be the audience. You're on a bus. You've just got on a bus in Govan Road; it is going down Govan Road. Right.

ANN: We're talking?

DOLLY: Aye, you're supposed to be talking.

ANN: Did you get ....

DOLLY: /

*Start*

DOLLY: Mammy - Mammy!

ANN: You shut up!

DOLLY: Whit's that?

ANN: Look. Shut up. I havenae even payed your fare yet!

(laughter)

That's what I often say!

DOLLY: (indistinct)

ANN: Sh! See if I get you aff this bus - I'll choke you.

DOLLY: Oh, Mammy. Look at that man. He's drunk. Like my Daddy.

(Laughter)

ANN: Shut up.

(More laughter. All talking together.)

ANN: Right. I'm goin' to put you to bed when I get home.  
(To neighbour:) What was that you were saying?

---

*and*

DOLLY: Mammy! That's a coloured man. That's a coloured man, Mammy. He's a darkie.

ANN: Ssh!

DOLLY: That's the things they say. All depends what age they are, right enough. He's a darkie. What would you say.....

(Laughter)

DOREEN: Try asking a question.  
WhatIs/

What's that ..... (Laughter) ..... I know what you mean ... (all laughing and talking together) ..... voice: 'That's the general idea'..... (more all talking through each other)

VOICE: Are you right? Here, talk to her. Keep on talking (Dolly I think) to her.

ANN: Aunty Lizzy's got a sore throat. Is it awful bad?

ALICE: Aye, it's awful bad.

ANN: Did you have to get the doctor in?

*start continuing*

DOLLY: Mammy. Mammy! Whit's the man daeing? Mammy, whit's that man daeing that for?

ANN: You be quiet. I'll get you lifted. I'm no' taking you out with me again.....

*(taken away by a note)*

DOLLY: Mammy. Whit's he hitting the woman for? Whit's he hitting the woman for? Mammy!

ANN: (to neighbour:) I don't know how to explain it (laughing).

DOLLY: Mammy. Whit's the man hitting the woman for? Whit did you say that for?

ANN: It's just that the pubs are coming oot. (Laughs) You see many an argy-bargy - you know, when the pubs are ....

*end.*

*Dolly*

Sometimes you're on the bus ..... I've no got the patience for this. I'd rather go up ~~and change seats~~ *the town without ~~her~~* ... she asks too many questions. (Laughter).

ALICE:/

ALICE(?) *dm*

Maybe I shouldnae; my wean doesn't ask questions; just sit  
Maybe I restrict her; too strict.

DOLLY:

What about Alec?

(indistinct remarks, not into mic.)

ALICE(?)  
not sure who

Mammy look at that funny hat she's got on .....  
But Mammy, what's that? what's that? Then he keeps  
on going ..... indistinct

DOREEN:

A bit exhausting?

VOICE:

I usually have to go over the floor .....  
See when I've been up at <sup>town</sup> in the morning ....

DOREEN:

(With Pamela???)

VOICE:

(indistinct remark)...the other day .....  
When he goes up to town, soon as he goes up, maybe  
you're taking him up for clothes, soon as he's got  
what he wants, he wants hame. Cannae be annoyed with  
it. If we go up the stair in the bus, you know how  
they're filling in the docks just now? He's twenty  
questions: Eh, what do they want to dae that for?  
That means my daddy's boat cannae come right up to  
that bit. Eh (indistinct)... now when they motors  
go over there, will they motors no sink wi' all that  
water? I say, how can it sink if they're filling it  
in? They're putting a lot of rubbish in it, you  
know. Now they're filling it - wee bits in.

DOREEN:

Filling in???

VOICE: *Dolly*

Oh aye they've already filled in two lots. (Doreen: Mm)  
and they're on a third one right along ..... (Mm)  
and you see all the dirt - and it's just putting dirt  
into/

into the water and the dirt's really - all the buildings are getting pulled down and they're throwing all the rubbish and that in it. I mean, they have got three bits, I think it is, just now and it is already all flat out right to the very end of the sheds - at least the sheds and the docks and this - this is him on the third one(?) He's twenty questions; he wants to know (Doreen): Aye. And how ..... (Laughter) must go up the stair in the bus.

DOREEN: What about trying that one now as if it was - what was that programme you were talking about?

VOICE: We were talking about Play School.

OTHER VOICE: Oh aye. So do I watch it.

DOREEN: Do you watch it with Joanne?

VOICES: I think it's interesting.  
 .... Do you watch it?....  
 .... When he was younger I used to watch it.....  
 .... How they can make the one person into two and things like that .....

~~VOICE:~~ *Dolly* Don't talk about one person into two. See the Record during the week ~~talking xxx~~ about the man that became a woman? My son wanted to know how can that happen? Because Donna Marie, the one that sits, says, Mammy, - you know how she's reached - Mammy, is that right? He was a man at first.. I says, aye, he had an operation. She says "that's daft. He cannae. A man cannae have an operation to become a woman." And I didnae know what to say to him. Because he's only ... I just says, "Aye they can. When you're a big boy you'll find out about it later on." And naturally he ~~says~~ just turned round and said "He's a horror as a woman/

woman; he was nicer as a man..... photo of him as a man and a photo of him as a woman. And he's hugging his wife. And he couldnae understand it. He says, two women hugging (Voice: Yes ....) I said, eh, later on. I could explain it to Donna. Donna Marie read it right enough, you know. But I think she forgot he was sitting there. And it was just the way she came out with it.

DOREEN: ..... in conversation ..... don't know how to put it into words ....

VOICE: I could explain it to Donna, but ....

DOREEN: .....I'm not so sure that I could .....

VOICE: No. I just said there was something wrong with him that - just - one of yon things, because that's what they call them anyway (laughter generally) yucky<sup>†</sup> I said it's one thing and another; he's just maybe been a yucky, as you call them, and he's just changed - naturally too, - some parts of him - a feeling inside as wants to be a woman and he cannae fight that feeling so therefore he goes to a doctor and the doctor's helping him. And that's all. He says, "Oh aye", and then, "Is that how he gets the operation?" And I said aye. I mean, I didn't make him any the wiser on anything else, because I don't know anything else (myself?) but to me it is ....(Doreen's voice in background).. to me people - they call yuckies.

DOREEN: Homosexuals?

VOICE: Aye. but they call them yuckies. They call them 'yon things!' You know. but, er, she ..... Aye said to her ... (other voice indistinct ..... "this talk!.....)

VOICE: /

VOICE:  
(Dolly??)

Oh aye, they can talk about it all right (other voices joining in together) ... If they think a boy's talking like a lassie, they'll say "He's a yucky". .... says "Donna Marie, he's a yucky" - Och Mammy, he's a cissy. He talks like a lassie. But they call them, you know, they sometimes call them yuckies. I wondered what a yucky was myself. (Doreen laughing) You know and I just said, these people, some of them when they grow up, I said, you've to feel sorry for them because they've got a feeling to be a woman and they're no a woman. and they cannae help it; it's just their feelings inside. It's maybe a - something's been born in them hasn't developed right. (She said, "Oh aye". - You can explain things to Donna Marie, but with the wean I just said, "Och you'll learn later on, son". But that was him. He was quite content. He never (Doreen: Yes).. asked any more questions after it, and neither did Donna Marie because I think they talk about it in school anyway; I'm no' saying they talk about that but you know what like lassies are - they talk amongst themselves.

DOREEN:

Supposing we were to - you were saying earlier - I mean supposing one of those programmes like "Rainbow" or "Play School" or something (Voice: Aye) was doing that very thing at the top of a bus in Glasgow, looking down on the docks being filled in. You know (Voice: Aye) .. supposing they were doing that kind of ~~thing~~ programme - you know - just put that on instead of your Billy Connolly one, now if we took the opposite kind, of somebody who's really got it all prepared in the programme really and (Voice: Aye, Uh huh) .. and they were putting it on as if it had just happened, and this is a conversation of people at the top of a bus and the child is asking what's happening out there (Mm) and he's getting all these right - suitable - (laughter) answers.

VOICE:/

VOICE: (Laughing) Aye. I suppose I'd hit him one!

DOREEN: You've seen them do that kind of thing on "Play School", or on "Blue Peter"? You know, taking the children out somewhere and talking to them.

VOICE: Yes I've seen this programme.

OTHER VOICE: I like "Magpie" better.

DOREEN: "Magpie"?

VOICE: I like "Rainbow" better  
(voices comparing their preferences)

VOICE: To me, it's all well prepared. I mean, that's their business, to prepare it.

OTHER VOICE: I find it's good to watch - the way they speak; to listen right so that the kids can ... I think it's good for them.

DOLLY: Is "Play School"/<sup>the one about</sup> look through the arched window, look through the round window and all that? Is that "Play School"?

VOICE: Aye. (Laughter).

OTHER VOICE: Because mine don't come in until about twenty past and sometimes that's just going off. Sometimes that's going off as he's coming in.

DOREEN: You see, just when you were saying just now, they were prepared for that and you were saying it was good for them, what I wanted to talk about to-day is if the more we do that kind of thing with them in the house, the more/

DOREEN: contd they're able to cope with it when the teacher's doing it. Because they're kind of used to it and they're looking for that kind of response. And so what really we were trying out was to say well, we're sometimes a bit like the Billy Connolly Mum..

VOICE: That's true and sometimes we're a bit like this .....  
Play School Mum .....

DOREEN: So that if we put them both together .....

Mixed voices. (to an arrival: "coming to join us?")

DOREEN: Yes. And what in fact we really do, you know, it's not just posh mums really.

(All agreeing)

VOICE: Sometimes you rear your kids with a wee bit of strictness, don't you, to speak proper and at other times you say "I'll choke you" (laughter).

OTHER VOICE: That was a good example what you said about - one of these television programmes for children - doing - on top of the bus and looking down at the docks and the sorts of things which they would ask.

Two voices speaking at the same time:

1. (Oh that - that's .. going to the top of the bus and  
{ saying .....
2. (The day I was ..... ask questions and they'll  
{ say: where did that boat come from?
1. (Because the boats used to go further(?) down the Clyde  
{
2. ( ....(indistinct) ..... you had to wait till you came  
{ to the end of the boat to find out - oh that came from  
{ Persia or that came from India .....

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: ...Let's do that again because that's going to be interesting. You be the wean this time, and you ask questions. She seems to know all the answers.  
(general laughter)

DOREEN: .... you start about .... what there is up(down?) there. You be the wean at the top of the bus and you be the Play School Mum.  
(more laughter)

VOICE: Questions you cannae answer, the half of them!

DOREEN: Oh well, let's see how you (drowned by voices)...

DOLLY: You'll no answer them, but you just answer them the way you think you would answer to a wean at eight years old.  
(laughter)....

DOREEN: So, Alice, will you be her companion this time?  
(more laughter, all talking together)

DOREEN: But you see, this time the child's going to be allowed in the conversation. (Voice: Yes) Going to get answered.

ALICE(?): She's going to get answered.

DOREEN: ....on top of our bus and passing the docks that have been filled in at the end of Govan Road.

ALICE(?): Right. Well, How's your man to-day?

VOICE: Mammy: What's he daeing that for? Mammy?

DOLLY: /

DOLLY: Wait a wee minute, Alice. They're filling it in to widen the roads. They're going to make a flyover.

ANN: Ah, but what are they filling in that bit for?

DOLLY: They've got to fill it in so that all the motors will go right over it instead of going into the water, dear. Now, the boats .....

ANN: And where are the boats to go?

DOLLY: The boats will come up so far and that's as far as they'll come up. They won't be able to come to they lanes; they'll just come up so far to the dry dock. Just sit and look, dear, till I have a wee talk with Alice.

(To Alice): You were telling me about your man. Is he back at his work yet?

ALICE: Yes. He's back at his work.

DOLLY: Is he?.....

ANN: ....Will they go over that road, Mummy, that's filled in?

DOLLY: Yes, Ann. Yes, dear. It'll go over it and they'll make a flyover and the boats will go under that flyover and the motors'll come over the flyover - and the boats will go under the flyover and when you come over the flyover you'll be able to see the boats. Now just you sit and you be a good girl.

ANN/

- ANN: Mummy: Do you think they houses once they're finished will be .....
- DOLLY: The ones at Kinning Park? - will be very nice.  
Do you know .....
- ANN: What are they men doing down there?
- DOLLY: Well, they men are filling in they big bays where all the water is and all that dirt is turning to mud. See all they houses that they're breaking down? The dirt is coming from there and going into that and that's it filling up the Clyde.
- ANN: And where will the water go?
- DOLLY: The dirt and the debris will soak into the water and that'll make it hard like <sup>Glabber</sup> gravel. See the way you play with the <sup>glabber</sup> gravel in the street, hen? That's just the way the dirt will go.
- DOLLY: (to Alice): And your man's staying on the night shift Alice? Is he still on the night shift? Aye, that's fine.
- (All laughing together)
- VOICE: See when she was telling you that? I didn't even know that was happening. (Laughter). ....about the flyover? I would have gone through it. (More laughter).
- DOLLY: ...There's going to be a flyover. Did you no know that?  
(All talking and laughing together about the flyover)
- VOICE: Where's the flyover going to be?
- DOLLY:/

- DOLLY: It's going to come - you know where Shieldhall is? See that bit of the building at (Berryknowes???Road?) Now they're opening up one this Friday. Right? Did you no know that?
- ALL: No. We didn't know.
- DOLLY: Right. Well it means they're going to make a - see that bridge they've made over the Kingston - you call the Kingston Bridge? Well, it means it's going to go right over all that. Right. Well if they can build another flyover right over that again and bring you right down on to the back end of the docks...
- (All talking together)
- DOLLY: See how the Kingston Bridge takes you over and takes you back into Argyle Street? Well that bit is going to get kind of lifted up - I think it's to the bit that they're making up at Bellahouston Park - Berryknowes Road, Kinning Park, and on to - you know how it's a big kind of bus-over thing?
- DOREEN: Do you know somebody in the Planning Department?
- (Laughter)
- DOLLY: No. .... See how, if you go .... there's a bit of the flyover - there's a bit goes down and and you're walking over there; you could stand on that bridge and see they motors going down (Yes...) Well they motors going down are going to get connected with yon bit at Shieldhall roundabout. Right? Know what I mean? (Aye) They're making the roundabout .....
- VOICE: /

VOICE: That bit's used just now, that bit at Berryknowes; you know that's used just now; the traffic's on it. They're connecting it all up.

(All talking together)

DOLLY: ....And it'll only take you fifteen minutes to come to town.

VOICE: And you've got a car?

DOLLY: No. Fifteen minutes if you go to the airport

VOICE: All the things that we've got happening here for the children to talk about..... up the stair on the bus to see this because I didn't know. I used to say, what are they doing with these docks lying there? I used to wonder.

---

DOLLY: Well you see that - you know that Rent-a-Truck? You see them going in (Aye) .. even see them .....ing it up and all the dirt going into it.

VOICE: Ann (talking through Dolly) .... no I never go up the stair in a bus.

DOREEN: .....the time it's going on, we'll never get a cup of tea if you're going on .....

VOICE: Ann I only travel in subway. I think it's very - marvellous, you know. I just - the subway's closest. I never take her in the town because she's no interested.

OTHER VOICE: I don't bother; when she's going in to get her hair cut or something new .....

VOICE: /

VOICE: *Ann* I never go up the stair because of the smoke. I never go up the stair.

But my wee one always takes a comic or a book and reads.

VOICE: She doesn't bother. She's quite contented enough. She takes everything in. But I didn't know about this.

DOREEN: You see how interesting.....

VOICE: *Ann* She looks at the boats. I take her on the ferry and everything.

DOREEN: Oh aye, that's great. ... If a child's in school ..... the teacher starts saying "what have you got for news?"

VOICE: Yes, yes, yes.

DOREEN: Your wee one should know all about going on the ferry. What are you doing with yours, Alice?

ALICE: I take him away on a Friday afternoon when he comes out of school; go over to Gallowgate.

DOREEN: To do the shopping?

ALICE: To the Barrows. Loves the Barrows. That's on a Saturday, and Sunday, I take him up that way. He likes to see all the stalls.

DOREEN: Now tell me ..... tell me about it.

VOICE: /

Doreen's Tape

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40  
—

Doreen: Well, I really thought that we would try something. Did you see Billy Connolly the other night? I didn't see it. Well, we were talking about it and thinking that whatever you think of his language, he certainly takes off the Glasgow v ver, well, you know a lot of it-----

Mary: Did you see the wee girl v to Inverbeg?

D. No.

Mary: About the Glasgow language. They were taught in schools to speak proper and that how, no matter how they are taught in school she doesn't like talking proper and she likes the Scottish dialect. She likes that she's goin' to stick to it.

K: And he really gets it off so well doesn't he?

Mary: You don't realise until you hear him how funny it is.

D. Well we thought, you know how sometimes in school the teachers are as you were saying with that wee girl she's got this problem in the school' there's one kind of language expected in school, and yet she prefers to talk differently at home. I don't think it matters awfully much whether you're talking broad Glasgow or standard English as long as you're saying something, you know as long as ----- As long as it's interesting.

Mgt. As long as people understand.

D: Uhuh, as long as it's interesting that's what really matters, and so we were talking about helping the children to get - that's really what I've been talking about all this time - getting the children able to speak the kind of interesting things that the teacher wants to hear in school. The teacher's saying 'What have you got for news' and she's asking for something interesting and some of the kids, even if ~~they have something interesting to say~~ something's happened they can't even begin to turn it into a story for her; they've not got the way of talking so that's the kind of thing I was trying to do. We were talking about that Billy Connolly thing and we were talking afterwards we said---- I suppose we could really try it now and trying to do the two extremes because we all have days when we tell the children to be quiet and shut-up and we also have the days when we are very aware that we should tell them what things are and describe things to them, the kind of thing you were saying last time you know, like the people on the television programmes. Do you every watch "Rainbow"?

Mgt. Yea mine watch all thae programmes at dinner time.

D: Do you watch them yourself?

Mgt: Yea, I'm with them.

D: Well you know the kind of Mum that's in those programmes - super Mum you know, she does all the right things and says all the right things to them. Well, I thought we might try, just for fun just a game really /

really at the beginning just to try and show ourselves these two extremes. Supposing Billy Connolly was having a show in which he was saying "Now, I've got a group of Mums from Govan and they are going to show you what it's like on a Govan bus when they take their children out and you're supposed to be doing it at its worst, you know, when you're really doing all the wrong things with the kids, and then straight after that we will do a kind of "Rainbow" saying (in different voice) "Now I've got a group of Mothers from Govan and v and we're doing the super mum ----- several speakers on tape.

- D: No but really we do both things so come on we'll try that at the minute, one of you doing the child and one doing the mum on the F.V. the Govan bus (laughter).....  
Right now who'll be the Mum. Margaret you'll be the child and I'll be the Mum. Margaret and I'll do the first one then Mary and May can do the second one.
- D: You're my neighbour, Kathy, and we're trying to hold a conversation and the child is v  
It's a terrible day Kathy.
- K: Oh it's shocking - going down to do your washing today ?
- D: No - you're supposed to be interrupting me -
- Mgt: I'm supposed to be interrupting?
- D: You're supposed to be the child trying to get -----
- Mgt: Mammy, a piece (laughter). Can a go to the inside of the bus?
- D: What were you saying?
- K: I was asking you about the messages you were getting - did you manage to get the meat?
- D: Well I didn't like the meat in that butchers, I thought it was too dear.
- K: I've noticed that. If you go to the one down the road - laughter - Did you notice what price they are selling their ham for then?
- Mgt: I'll tell ma daddy when a go home you're no' listenin' tae me.
- D: Quiet!
- K: I was saying about the price of the meat down the road, did you notice-----
- Mgt: What's that man carrying there?
- D: I don't know what it is.
- K: Can you no' keep your weans quiet?
- D: She's aye askin' questions, now don't ask questions, be quiet.
- Mgt: Why not, you're supposed to be answering me.
- D: There's nothing anywhere out there - there's nothing to see.  
What were you saying?

K: I'm saying about the price of the ham in that shop (laughter).

D: Well you know there are days when it's like that.

Mgt: It's true.

Mary: When you sit back and think about it what you done ....ind.

D: Seriously is that true?

Mgt: That's true what a kid wid do to you if you were out.

Mary: It depends on what - the likes of the day if you're in a hurry  
v came in there wasn't even a bed made.

Mgt: Well you put it out on the kid.

Mary: v I want a boiled egg, I want something else - can you no' jist do with such a thing and when you come in from school I'll make it up to you, I'll give you such a thing you know. But then it's not all the time like that you know.

Mgt: Some days you're better organised than others.

D: What about that kind of answer to a question you know I was glad at one stage you asked me 'what was that' and I said 'Och it disnae matter'. You know instead of making an attempt because the thing might be too difficult for me to answer.

Mary: Well, I think you should say to them "Well I'm talking to my neighbour now but after a wee while I'll tell you whatever you want to know.

? Well I've said that to them many a time but I've never got round to it - explaining it to them.

Mgt: *hey* When I'm talking to <sup>Gina's</sup> Jeanna's Grannie or I'm talking to anybody, Jeanna'll come and she'll butt in and she's 9, she should ~~know~~ have sense.

D: What about when the child is really you know, when you feel that when you look back on it maybe you should have answered their questions.

Mgt: *may* Aye, but you're speaking to somebody else, you're trying to tell them they shouldnae be - isn't that right?

D: Yes but there's both sides to it aren't there?

Mary: An adult can understand that you have to talk to the child.

Mgt: It means you have to say to everybody youre talking to, 'Excuse me just a second till I explain it and then you'll find out maybe they'll go away and leave you and you can yap yap away to your heart's content.

K: So are you saying that if you explain to the child why you cannot talk to him then, then that's a help?

Mgt: No, say the likes ae if a'm on the bus, a pay ma fare and David says "Can I go up the stairs", I say 'Aye' or I say "No we cannae go up the stairs because we're no goin' right to the terminus" then he understands that we have to get off in the middle i' a bus stop where  
(indistinct).

D: How old is David?

Mgt: He's nearly 5.

D: Oh yes.

Mgt: If I say 'Aye' he'll come up the stairs himself and sit at the driver's seat and that's him happy - he'll no move, he'll sit there v but if we're downstairs he'll fidget 'cos he knows we're gettin' off before he gets to the terminus.

D: So you're saying there are times .

Mgt: I think you should tell them.

D: But May is looking at the other side of it which is also there that the Mother has her rights to hold her conversation as well. Well, let's look at their side of it May. What about the times when the child has a right to v you know if you're really thinking of making your child able to talk in class. You know what we were saying when we started this ~~maxxing~~ <sup>May</sup> that teachers expect the child to be able to tell them things, well if you're going to help them to do that, the way you help them is by answering their questions often so that you're holding a conversation with them and then they are better at it when the teacher wants to do it.

Children crying

D: I think we'll bring Nancy with us next time. Nancy offered to come with us today, she's the one who runs the playgroup work and I said v well I didn't want to bring too many people to the house. She would come and v things with the children but I didn't like to bring too many people into the house. Next time I'll bring Nancy.

Well, what about doing the other one now - supposing we try out asking questions and the other answering (you know as if you were the Mum on "Rainbow" or one of those things on T.V. ~~maxxing~~ <sup>where</sup> the Mother is spending her whole time bringing the child's intelligence out by talking to them and discussing things with them. Will you two do that for us, you be the Mother and you be the child, you can ask whatever you like on a Govan bus.

*Handwritten initials*  
So you're the child May and Mary you're the Mum.

Suppose you're looking out the window at the shops and the people passing. They're digging up the roads out there and there are two sorts of things going on. You try it out.

May: What's the man ~~maxxing~~ digging up the road for?

Mary: 'Cos there's a burst pipe and he wants to fix it.

May: What's that big building?

Transcript of Meeting - Doreen's Group  
Wednesday afternoon, 27th October 1976

(20th October was half-term)

P23-27

Ann Ainsbury talking about the art galleries. Piece on Agnes & her daughter - found later to have an IQ of 149

'Anna' discovers she is an 'upstart' on the Docks!

PRESENT:

/'Anna' / /'Agnes' / /'Danna'  
Alice Meikle and Ann Ainsbury. Dolly was absent. (Margaret, who has no young children, has left the group.) Details of this are noted elsewhere.

CONTENT:

Conceptualization experience. A continuation of the discussion on 13th October concentrating on the need for accurate language when re-telling an experience.

FOCAL ACTIVITY:

Stage I in the planning of an educational visit round Govan in a specially hired bus.

TAPE:

The discussion began by recalling Dolly's vivid description of developments at the docks, as seen from the top of a bus. Ann, who had not seen the changes, had said that she was keen now to see all this for herself. This week's discussion showed that Ann had responded to the stimulus by taking action in the week between discussion.

ANN:

I never go upstairs in a bus. Never with the smoke!

DOREEN:

But you went.....?

ANN:

I went up the stairs in a bus to see this!

ALICE:

Just to see it.

ANN:

I always travel on the subway.

ALICE:/

ALICE: You'll need to go and take ~~Ann~~ (Joanne).

(Princess Dock)

ANN: I'll need to take her to see it. Even walking through it - but maybe you'll no' be allowed?

ALICE: You can.

ANN: You're allowed, are you?

ALICE: Aye. At the end. Right through .....

ANN: ..... take her along ..... see ... and let her hear...(?)

DOREEN: We were wondering about the possibility of actually sitting on the bus ... you know how we kind of talked about it a wee bit? We've got three groups running on a Wednesday. We've got this group; Kathy's got a group up in Mrs. Jones' house, and ....

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ALICE: (interrupting) ... there's nobody at Mrs. Jones' house to-day.

DOREEN: .... what I was going to say .... she was going along to one of the other groups, because she was rehearsing the numbers as she came along the road. 41 ~~Merkland~~ <sup>Leith</sup> Street she was going to, so there must be something else that's on; but that group and this group will make a group together on ~~Wed~~ <sup>Wed</sup> Wednesday morning and we thought if we all had something special, like, you know, being at the docks, and the morning group are talking about cars; getting their children interested in cars, and we thought it would be each something (??) ... that we were going to go there to ..... if we could get the bus with a microphone ... we could do it among ourselves. You know these city bus tour things that they put on? We could do it ourselves. We could hire a bus and actually go to a place.

ALICE:/



ALICE: Aye. That's right. A place ....

DOREEN: Would you say that's a good idea? ... You're awful kind of quiet about it!

VOICE: Oh, but it's no' getting publicised - it's no ....

DOREEN: Oh, no. We're not thinking of taking the whole city. (laughter) ... Just the three teams. Just the three groups.

ANN: Yes. And we all go with their kids. They're all picking a different place. We pick ....

DOREEN: That's right. And so each one does their bit and then listens to the other people's bit. On a Saturday morning, about three weeks away. We've got it planned. Would you fancy that?

ALICE: Would it be something you're interested in, that I could learn about? What about the kids learning?

ANN:(?) Aye, you dae ..... Well, where are we going to go? Are we going to the dock? This is our bit! (laughter)

ANN: Yes. (More laughter) .... Docks ... the first stage ... travelling on the ferry?

DOREEN: How would it be if we went ourselves, first of all? (Voice: Without the children?) ... Without the children, and learned what it was, and then ... how else would it help? We'd have to get the details exactly. Where else would we get information?

ANN: Of what's going to happen, and where? Publicity? You mean exactly what's going to be on top of them? Is it going to be/



ANN:(contd)      be traffic, or ....?

DOREEN:            Somebody must know. Who would tell us?

ALICE:             Well, actually in the dock there's someone up .....  
                      there's these (lavatories??) ..... boys and that ... and  
                      there'd be workmen too, watching them; there's a man watching  
                      them, and testing ....

DOREEN:            Will there be somebody? ... There must be somebody.

ALICE:             I don't think so. You see, workmen never can tell you the  
                      right story. Is that right? They just tell you anything.

DOREEN:            And who's telling the men? There must be somebody that's  
                      above them?

---

ANN:                We want to know the right place to get the information. Is  
                      that the library? Do they no' tell you?

ALICE:             What about the Information Centres?

DOREEN:            In George Square?

ALICE:             There's one in George Square and is there no' one in St.  
                      Enoch's?

DOREEN:            Ask for information about it. That's a good idea. So if  
                      you tried both of those? If you tried the library and we  
                      tried the Information Centre?

ALICE:             Well, I go up to the town on a Friday. I'll call in to the  
                      one in St. Enoch's. If not, I'll go to George Square and  
                      ask them.

ANN: /



ANN: ...And I'll ask in the library. Any leaflets or anything like that.

DOREEN: And if they haven't got it themselves, they'll know who has, won't they? .. They should know. (Voice: Oh yes.). There's a Planning Department not very far from that George Square one. Somewhere in Queen Street. Now I don't know exactly where. I've phoned them but I've never been to them. So if the Information people say, "Oh, it's the Planning Department" ... do you know ...?

ANN: ....wouldnae bother .. to the Planning .....?  
(mixed voices) ...

ANN: Do you no' know where it is in Queen Street?

DOREEN: No, I don't. I know it's the City Planning Department. And they might not be doing the Docks; they might only be doing the houses.

ANN: Well, I'll try there and you try here ..... I'll try the other side of town.

NANCY: ..... Clyde River Authority?

ANN: Oh, aye. The Clydeside Trust. It comes under it, doesn't it?

ALICE: .... a cabin affair. But you get the Clyde Port Authorities, sitting there. (Voice: Whereabouts?) ... Actually on Mavisbank Quay.

ANN: Aye. I know. And there's another dock .....

ALICE: ....(indistinct) ... this side of the water at the dock.

ANN: /

ANN: .... this side to tell you - the one that tells you ...  
What's that ....?

DOREEN: Have you two been (holding out on me ??)  
(Mixed voices)

ANN: Oh, well, we'll try and get something for next week.

DOREEN: Will you do the Clyde Port Authorities and you'll do  
Planning Department. And - tell them what we're doing.  
An educational ...

VOICE: ...A project - we call it a project.

DOREEN: It's actual title is The Strathclyde Experiment in Education.

ANN: Right. The Strathclyde Experiment in Education.

DOREEN: Good.

VOICE: Actually we use the initials of that. He'll know what I  
mean: S.E.E. It's just - we are part of the project - you,  
and us, all of us, are a part of the project - to help the  
children in their education - and we want to know if we can  
hire a bus and look at this. We want to know (if we can  
write a story?). Now who can tell us? Who can give the  
information?

DOREEN: What about the children? Is there something you could teach  
them so that they could do their bit in the bus as well?  
Maybe have a child up at the mike who could actually talk ...

ANN: (indistinct) ... Maybe a boy would ask loads? Maybe a boy  
would ask quite a lot, would he no'?

ALICE:/

ALICE: (indistinct) .... if anybody asks him .....  
..... no' to talk to; he's away, going first, "But whit  
do you want to talk to me about?" - then he goes and he ...  
(indistinct).

ANN: See, my wee one doesn't ask a lot of questions; this is how ....

DOREEN: Supposing they could get some answers, then.  
(Voices: Oh yes, aye, uh huh, etc.)  
You could have them saying .....(Yes...)  
Something that you pick up from this ... from the Clyde Port  
Authority or - Ann was the Planning Department; if you  
bring home some leaflets and papers (Voice: Uh huh) ...  
you could be discussing that with the child... and dividing  
up the work between you. Say, well, if I tell this bit,  
would you like to tell about that - when you've seen what  
the child's interested in.

ANN: See, I've no' told Joanne, because I don't believe in ....  
telling the kid anything unless I'm actually able to take  
her there and see it. You know what I mean? I've never  
really ..... Have you told the wee boy about this?

ALICE: Yes. My Alec asked me - where I'd been .... "I go up to  
Sister Doreen's for a wee meeting, a discussion, when the  
school starts."

ANN: Oh, I've no' told Joanne...

ALICE: ... About the Art Galleries and that - things like that.

ANN: See if I telt her .....?

ALICE: ...And he'd tell me whit he seen; mark you, I don't think  
he's ever been to the Art Galleries; I think it's more or  
less been ... what he's seen, that Alec would tell you.

ANN: /

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ANN: See if I said to Joanne, "There's a dock been filled up, pet, and they're making a road", ... "Oh, come on and take me, Mammy." And I say I'll look in .... Oh, I should be taking her. Well it's been bad weather and I'd other two kids last week to watch. I'm going to do it in about a month's time.

NANCY: See, everybody's going to go. There's no point in me just going just now.

ANN: No. I think that's more interesting. If I told her and she's saying .... it's different??

DOREEN: Would Joanne do what Nancy's saying: wait till she knew it was a planned thing?

ANN: If she knew all the other children were going.

DOREEN: We're going in a month's time. This is what you need to know before you go.

MIXED VOICES: ..I suppose that would give her more time to .....  
.... Aye. Try it.

ANN. ..."But Mammy..." ... It's the docks. It's near the docks. It's just up the road. I mean, my wee lassie thinks herself and she knows it's near-hand. I take her everywhere, but I don't know ...

DOREEN: There's no reason why she shouldn't see it beforehand. It's still going to be different.

ANN: I don't think it would be fair to take her.

DOREEN: Well, you see, she's going to go with the group and she'll see it beforehand; after all, we'll see it beforehand as well.  
(Ann:/

DOREEN:(contd) (Ann: Uh huh) ... This is an extra thing of which you go - with some preparation and you're ready for - telling somebody else.

ANN: I've never - did that with Joanne. No.

DOREEN: This is going to be quite exciting, isn't it?

ANN: All right. I'll tell you what I say. I'll say: If she's going to a pantomime: That I don't tell her that week, "You're going on Friday." I'll wait till it's right at the time - so maybe it'll no' be a disappointment ... I very seldom plan.

DOREEN: Well, this'll be a new experience for her, then.

ANN: So I'll plan this - and this is a new experience.

NANCY: Well, she might understand ... about you going; I mean, everybody else is going.

DOREEN: She'll be used to the school ...acting a part??

ANN: Oh, she's used to that.

DOREEN: So, you know, it's the same if you prepare this act.

(some asides about something in the flat - the heating? - not part of the discussion - indistinct)

VOICE: Do you want me to go on and have a look at ... (indistinct)...

ANN: Who's to ask questions? What's the kids to do? What's this ... the most important part .....

DOREEN:/

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DOREEN: Well, what we're trying to do is to look at the aim of the whole thing - it's interest - to start with. We'll all learn something. But what we're aiming to do is to give the children the ability to express themselves so clearly that they can tell something interesting in a classroom; that they can explain a thing clearly and quickly so that the teacher says, "What have you been doing that's interesting? Instead of a child humming and hawing and saying, "Well, we went to one of them things"; they are in a position to say, "We went to look at the filling in of the docks and such and such a dock is having such and such a thing done." They can name the dock and name what's happening and they can give you it all, snap snap. And everybody will stop and listen, and everybody in the class will want to ask wee bits, etc.

INTERVIEWER: Now, that gives the children a number of things.

ALICE: Confidence?

INTERVIEWER: It gives them confidence. It does, doesn't it? And it gives them the ability to take in ideas. Once they've done it with this idea, they'll have picked up something to do in the classroom. They'll start listening to the teacher saying that and seeing if they can express it better. So it gives them an ability to use the English language a bit better. We were talking about language earlier and you were talking about grammar, saying that ...

ANN: Aye, I'm hopeless. And I'm awful at pronouncing words.

ALICE: No' really.

DOREEN: I think it's - the idea - that you're seeing ....  
(voices over each other) ... but you get through to people, don't you?

NANCY:/

NANCY: But that's what we mean by language. Being able - not to say the words right, maybe, or put them in the right order, but to be able to find the words, and use them, and other people to hear what your idea was, because you've got the words to say it.

DOREEN: See, both of you said a tremendous amount. I'm awfully glad we've got it on that tape ... I hope it's working - I'll go mad if it isn't!

TWO VOICES: ...Never knew about the tape .... Neither did I!  
(laughter)

DOREEN: It's only useful for us because before I came here just now, I read what we did the last time. You see, the typist took the tape and she was going to type what bits of it she could catch and she's given me enough to ... we have five of these groups .... and you say .... who will be talking through all that?

DOREEN: It's just to help; to be able to scan through it and say, "Oh yes, there were all these ideas about the docks" ... before you came up. So that's ....

ANN: ...It is an interesting thing; I mean, it's right on the doorstep, isn't it? (Doreen: Mm) .. and you know ... and you don't notice it - you know.

ALICE: Aye. I ... two or three things like that ... and then you just notice them and I think you get more interested in it and you want to know the ins and outs of it.

(a confusion of voices)...

ALICE:/

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ALICE: See when I go out with Alec? "Right. Up the stair. I want to see the boats." We get on at the .. just down at the bottom of the road.. (Betsy Street). Then you come to the dry docks. (Doreen: Mm). You see all sorts of ships and then you go down, more or less a straight road then it turns (Doreen: Mm) ... and that's when the - you see them start to fill in ....You come to that bit ...

ANN: I'd never have known about that without Dolly ....  
Going to it with Dolly.

ALICE: You can actually see it getting levelled off.

ANN: I'd never have known that without Dolly.....

ALICE: It's how .. they do it ... (Ann: Aye, I know) .. They actually took the ... I don't know whether it's cork, or just that a broken pole .. (?) .. is tied from one end of the ... (?) to the other.

ANN: I never seen them doing it.

ALICE: They've got two bits.

ANN: Hh huh. Two hits.

ALICE: Aye. But there's a big gap between the two bits; they start at the bottom of the basin where the steps is - you see it actually going - they start at the edge and work their way over to the other side.

DOREEN: Filling in?

ALICE or ANN: And they've left this gap and then they've to do that other bit.  
(Voice: Aye).

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: And why have they left the gap?

VOICE: That's what I don't know, Sister Doreen. I haven't had .. it explained.

DOREEN: Is that down at the water?

ANN: See, they're going to ....

ALICE: ... I imagine with the tides coming in that they're trying to stop too much water coming down to where they're actually filling the dirt and things in; it's actually to stop the water from going down.

DOREEN: But it's not stopped it completely? (Voice: Oh, no.) You see, I'm trying to picture what you've just told us, Alice. Because I haven't seen it. You've seen it. I'm trying to picture ....

ALICE: I've actually seen - er - the start of them filling in.

ANN:(?) Well, that's the first I've seen ...  
(Mixed voices)

ANN: ... see that; I did really; I'd never have known it ...

ALICE: It's an interesting thing if you actually see it from the beginning, when they start.

ANN: Aye ... the start.

ALICE: I've actually seen it, started.

ANN: You smoke, and you go up the stair, in the bus. (Laughter).

ALICE: /

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ALICE: Ah, but I've actually been inside the dock, because I've a habit - I'm a walker; I like walking, and I take the kids - through - because the last time I was in the old house(?) two ships from Brazil ..... well, we'd met them when they stayed in Queen Street (?) .. and the wee fellow had a badge - a medal thing, what they call it ... and I had kept it, so we got back in. So we took a walk through and that's when I happened to notice ... (Voice: Oh yes...)

(the above is a story about Brazilian sailors who had made friends with the family on a previous voyage).

DOREEN: You know, Alice, what's interesting, as well as the actual story, is your ability, at the minute, to be able to describe something so well I've never seen, so that I could see it in my own mind, you know ...

ALICE: ... (indistinct) ... sometimes I get awful - no; that's no' right - no' like the best way ... (If I can get a (photie,,) .. shut my eyes or just think of something, then it'll pass - a picture - of what I've actually seen.

DOREEN: But what's great is that you put that picture into words for other people. It's quite difficult, isn't it?

ANN: Yes. I know exactly; I can follow it. I don't know if you could.

VOICES: I could follow .... It's marvellous ... It's clear ...

ANN: ... and I was wondering how that was happening - the river bit - in the middle.

ALICE: .... see it. If you actually see the docks ... see the cork ... you would actually know what I was talking about.

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: You see, I can see you seeing those Brazilian ships, and I can imagine these people coming off and giving the children things and you going back to look for them. I can see all that picture - dead certain - I can see ..

ANN: I know what she's talking about ...

ALICE: They were very nice, and this ... we call him Pele ... he was always playing football with the boys. (Doreen: Oh yes?) .. the ones about fourteen or fifteen and he'd go down and take them aboard and show them round the ship and that ... (mixed voices)

VOICE: Are some of the boats still there?

ANN: Yes... there's one at ...just the one .. but here it was going away that day. I just found out about it and we went down .. nobody else was getting on it, you know

ANN: It was on the other side of the water; Partick.

VOICE: That big green one? .... gone?? they lie a long, long time on the other side.

ANN: He said no. It was only there - it would only be for a week; and it was ... (?) ... when I got to know about it. It was awful annoying because, er, Joanne's never been on a big boat except - I'm talking about they boats with the big crew - interesting .... up and down .....

ALICE(?) .... my father (Ann: Aye, I think it's good)...  
... my grandfather ... in the docks.

DOREEN: They worked in the docks?

ANN: Actually they were dock labourers(?)  
They/

- ANN:(contd) They might never get a chance to go and see where the docks are
- DOREEN: Does your husband work at the docks now?
- ALICE: No. My husband is in the meat market.
- DOREEN: But your brother?
- ALICE: My two brothers, now. My father was - he's retired. He was so many years in the docks - what do you call it - steamers - boilermen (Doreen: Well!) .. on the ships before that; but he can actually describe ... he took me on to see the engines but I was terrified when I was young.
- DOREEN: But that's just the sort of thing we're talking about doing. I mean, you tell me he took you when you were a wee girl, and talked to you about all the bits and pieces? And you remember it?
- ALICE: Aye. He would actually take somebody on and tell them - oh, this is the engine room - that's used for - this and that and the next thing. But see the now? If I'd to do that? Go on a ship? If it was moving? (Doreen: You'd get (sea) sickness?)
- ALICE: ... Tied up.. It's taking me all my time to go to Rothesay.
- ANN: That's funny. Aye.
- ALICE: Oh, I can't stand it. My daddy says maybe it's because I was on the ships and that when I was younger - on the big Deans when it was the big modern steam tramps. When he was taking me across the street, one of them threatened to take my wee brother away - so maybe that's .....
- (Mixed voices)
- ...and/

ALICE: (contd) ...and I had to (go on board the ship?) before I could get anybody to ... I was screaming for that. But I think that's still with me, somehow.

DOREEN: But what you're very able to do is to take the children to see things like that at the docks, and this is what we're just saying ...

ALICE: Especially if you've got; maybe - I don't know about girls, but I know the boys are interested in the likes of these things .... (somebody) .. took me up to the museum at Pollokshaws (Voice: Aye) to see the old trams and that.... (voices)

ANN: Transport Museum?

ALICE: Aye.

ANN: Couldn't tell you the right name!  
(laughter)

Joanne's in till three - but - she doesnae remember when - I take her everywhere. But I'm going to take her one day to see how ...

ALICE: Of course, my Alec would say, tell me. Remember we used to go away up, away, way up round, and we could actually - away up the road - I says "Away up the road where?" He said: "You cannae get there now, because there's flyovers and that."  
"We used to go up in the car, away up, where that was?? - indistinct....  
(laughter, mixed voices in exchanges)

VOICE: ... too young to see tram cars?

ALICE:/

ALICE: ... going up the road.

DOREEN: This was in the museum, you were saying, yes?  
(more mixed exchanges)

DOREEN: I think we must ask a final (campaign?) then. The next step is to actually find the information. Then, when you look at the information, you try and divide it up into particular ideas you think your children would be willing to tell us about. One small thing: just one particular dock: one particular ship: and one thing that you'd be prepared to tell us, you know, so that you would be ... like yourself, saying, "We're now passing the dry dock where they're filling in - the place - and by that time we'll have the names of all those ...

(laughter)

... get the information. I don't know your items are going to be ... You can look it up, you know, to name it. But you'll have to remember that other people won't know the names, so you'll be in a position to say ...

ANN: We have to entertain the other group...

DOREEN: That's right.

ANN: ... because they're going to get something to teach us, entertain us.

DOREEN: I hope the two go ... Right, Ann. I think that's very important, to see that entertaining and teaching can be together, you know, that you can enjoy them together.

ALICE: See, what we really need to do is get all the information that we can.

ANN: /

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- ANN: I've no' got a good memory. I forget the things. This is what I don't like.
- DOREEN: Uh huh. If we bring all that we need to understand next week, any booklets, papers, -
- ALICE: If we discuss it, what we're going to do, whereabouts we're going to go.
- DOREEN: Oh, I think that's the way. Anybody going to get us a table, I think we deserve a cup of tea.
- ANN: It'll be changed a wee bit ... in this place in Queen Street - the Planning .....
- DOREEN: Ask them for cups, tea bags - it's the boy, I think, who does ..
- ANN: So, I hope we get quite a bit of information on it. Some leaflets, etc. Whatever we get, I'll need to write it down..
- DOREEN: If you've to buy it, we would be quite interested in buying it.
- ANN: Don't mind ... ten pence(?) for education(?)...
- DOREEN: So that someone ... could say to me ... it's only a few coppers maybe (get) it yourself but if it's any more, we'll buy it. If you want to keep it, you buy it. If you want just to use it for this, you can sell it on to us. Because this is very interesting.
- ALICE: The likes of those places that give us pamphlets, or they actually give you all the information you want...
- ANN: I mean, you go into Glasgow ....
- ALICE:/

ALICE: ...They'll take their time and maybe let you write it down, or get somebody to type it up.

DOREEN: Well, next week we'll try and have a plan on the table - sitting on the table. And we could sit and (decide) among ourselves exactly what we're going to do with them. Well, that sounds great. Sure it would be good if we plan it next week with pamphlets and we go and see it ourselves without the children ...

ANN: Yes. That would be good.

DOREEN: So that we could say - now what were you going to tell us? .. and we could try it out, and you've really got ...

ANN: It is amazing .... amazing ....

DOREEN: And then we'll see ....

ALICE: ..... was just after saying that - that you didn't know anything about that ....

ANN: ...I didn't know anything about that other .... that's the first time I've used the bus. I think I'll just take Joanne in the bus, up the stairs.  
(Laughter) ... (Doreen: That's quite .. that's quite ....)

ANN: Joanne is an awful practical wee girl. See if I say I'm going to do anything? ... she gets into action ... I don't know what you call it ... she's no a dreamer; she doesn't give up ... says, "Mammy, are we daeing that?" .. I mean, she's awful ....(?) .. Maybe I've taught her that - I don't know. So I'll take her on this bus to see - how I get (on).

DOREEN: But that's putting words into action, isn't it?

ANN: /

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ANN: Ah, well, .. well I feel that Joanne's that way - she's awfu' - she's no' lazy - she's all go.

DOREEN: That's very interesting, because you'll pick up from her what she wants to know about.

ANN: I will pick it up, because Joanne's been active since she was awful young. (Nine or ten before I could get her to go to sleep??) .. Do an awful lot with her (?); playing jigsaws .. playing at cards, and then my eye was sore. I wasn't going out a lot. I was playing with her. But she's no' an idle ....

ALICE: Uh huh - has to be daeing something.

DOREEN: Now, what about your other children, Alice? How will they take it if you're doing all this for the youngest?

ALICE: Aye, that's right. Colin's .... ((a deaf and dumb son of eleven (indistinct)... he's away all day; I don't get him till the back of four.

DOREEN: Would .. he come with us on Saturday? He should get in on it as well, shouldn't he?

ALICE: ....he's coming up for eleven.

DOREEN: I don't know ... I think he should come if he's interested.

ALICE: The likes of that, maybe he would be interested.

DOREEN: Mm. He's got this handicap.

ALICE: ... when I'm sitting talking, or even sitting discussing, "Mammy", he'll go, "Bup-bup-bup" - talking - then he goes back to Alec. .... "That's no' right....."

DOREEN:/

-

DOREEN: Well, there's a real problem.

ANN: You see, he might go to somebody.....

NANCY: Would he be able to lipread whoever was talking on the bus?

DOREEN: There's a bit of a problem for us because he's deaf and dumb, for us to be able to communicate with him when we're talking through a microphone, for example. So we're going to have to plan it how we're bringing him in on it. But he should be in on it.

ALICE: Oh, he goes to the likes of places like the Art Galleries and that, on days out.

DOREEN: We might have to plan a notebook for him so that he knows what each person's going to be talking about, and will be able to put the person's name, and the heading. You know. So that ... "Your mummy's talking about the dry docks .." so that he knows .....

ALICE: Aye. So that he knows what it's about.

DOREEN: Even though he can't hear ...

ANN: That's good. And if he's interested, he'll maybe know a bit.

DOREEN: And actually the other children will start explaining to him, won't they? - which is a help to the other children.

ALICE: I don't know about the other children. I've actually seen Mrs. Jones' boys discussing things with him ..

DOREEN: Yes. They're good .....

ALICE: And at times Alec gets .... his hands - you know - he's trying to do the alphabet ...

DOREEN: Yes. Alec told me.

ALICE: Ah well, don't do that. Just talk to him so that he can see you.

DOREEN: It would be helpful in this street, for instance, if somebody else was talking through a microphone ...

NANCY: But Doreen, if Colin's going up front ..?

DOREEN: The mike'll be downstairs. <sup>un.</sup> Fortunately(?) the mike's downstairs and you're upstairs to see it best ... (Voice: Oh, I didn't appreciate ...) .. Unless we can get a mike actually upstairs, well, it would be much easier, because we'll all be upstairs, to take our turn at it. I'll have to go into all this with the bus company.

ANN: Is that different? Is it a different thing?

DOREEN: We're going on the bus as - a - thing all built in -

ANN: Oh yes, I know what you mean.

DOREEN: So that you can hear it over the engine. It's much easier, because otherwise you get all the rattle of a bus.

ALICE: .... a double decker ...  
(mixed voices) ...

~~VOICE: *Power* ...Do you go in the holidays?  
*Just because it is*~~ *I Ann Amstrong Talked about the Art Galleries of the Modern Embroidery Exhibition*

ANN: Oh no. My wee one asks me quite often to go to the Art Galleries. I go quite often. See, I've been taking her since she was young.

ALICE: /

ALICE:

*She'll say 'many coming and well go & I'll say*  
No. I cannae be bothered ...

*See, I've been taking her since she was young*

ANN:

See yon animals? Arctic animals? I like them.

DOREEN:

Have you been *over*?

*Dreen*

*In the art galleries? Yes.*

ANN:

That is marvellous. You know. The Arctic. It tells you all the names of them. See, I don't say it right; ~~maybe it's~~ "Arctic"

DOREEN:

Well I wouldn't know how to say them either.

ANN:

Arctic's away in the cold places, isn't it? And you can have a look at them. I enjoy it. (Doreen: Mm) ..

...(indistinct)... and I say, Joanne, Oh, I don't take her -

I ~~take~~ other kids and I say I'm no' going again with you

I'm going myself when you are at school (~~when you were at school~~)

*when I can*  
~~you didn't~~ enjoy all they paintings. // I used to watch them.

They'd talk. You know how they'd talk loud, and you ....

you'd try to keep them quiet.

DOREEN:

And did you know there ... *modern embroidery was* the drawings ~~were~~ there - did you know that exhibition was there?

ANN:

No. Do you know they have different things every *month or?* ~~winter?~~

They had glass - er I forget the name - Joanne would remember.

That glass ... Culditz (~~Gaithness???~~) Glass ...

DOREEN:

I don't know.

ANN:

They have special things - from away back they had the old dress costumes. We were in umpteen times when they were there, seeing all them. Velvet. The bustle, and that. Different things every month. *or handcraft it runs*

DOREEN: /

*the advert for the modern embroidery*

DOREEN: Yes, I saw that. That's at the modern drawings exhibition.

ANN: Did you? I didnae know it was on. I like the modern .....? *where they've someth*  
in the centre *bit then you've got* the modern arts... bright colours... *I cannae make head nor tail of*  
~~The wee ones touched it.~~ *That embroidery they were* I was touching it. You cannae *at it*  
help it. And the lady said, *Don't touch it* "Don't let the children touch it." And I said, "I'm very sorry".

A girl did it and I think it was done with a wool - a fine wool. It started in the centre with one colour. It had a different colour, just as plain as anything, and it would be a rug, a square. And the butterfly, the spider's web, was done, all in silk thread, it was beautiful. And the spider's there. You could see the spider eating the insects. Oh, that's gorgeous work. I enjoyed it.

DOREEN: Do you ever do any of that yourself? Do you ever do any embroidery?

ANN: No' with my eyesight.

DOREEN: Oh, have you got bad eyesight?

ANN: I had operations. I don't abuse my eyes. I preserved them as much as I could.

DOREEN: I think it's fascinating to hear all those things you go and look at.

ANN: Oh, I have to take that wee one everywhere. She's a wee bit kind of advanced for her age. I take her to swimming on a Friday night. I've never took her to the Museum of Transport - I have took her, but she's too young to remember. You know. I took her - I was enthusiastic when she was wee, before I had the eye operations to take her they places but I've seen me taking her round in her pram(?) You see, I tell her I cannae see .... all the houses ..... learn to read ....

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: Do you use your eyesight?

ANN: Oh, aye. I'll say to her, look, pet, I cannae see that from here. Can you tell me what it says?

DOREEN: What's being done about your eyes?

ANN: I had a detached retina. He said I was to wear contact lenses, and I lost the vision of the right eye.

DOREEN: Because of the contact lenses?

ANN: Aye. They said they think that was what it was. I bumped my eye really. Then I was in last week for another..... When I took Joanne in swimming I could feel my back, and my head - I thought I was feeling great but see when I came out? When I take her now, I say, oh no, pet, I'm no' as fit as I thought.

DOREEN: She enjoys swimming?

ANN: She's nearly there. She's nearly learned.

DOREEN: She enjoys being in the water?

ANN: And I think I should take her every week because she's so keen to learn. And I taught my other daughter to swim. Kept at it. Whereas I feel I'm no' so fit with the wee one; because I've made this promise, every Friday night - it's good for me!

DOREEN: She's eight, isn't she?

ANN: No. She's only seven at the end of .....

DOREEN:/ Oh - she's not seven yet? So she's in Primary 3 and she's not seven yet? I thought they were seven, coming up for eight.

ANN: It's all muddled up that .....

DOREEN: The classes, you mean?

ANN: Aye, the way there's a lot of them eight. Joanne's in Primary 3. That's where she should be.

DOREEN: She's able to do the work in Primary 3?

ANN: .... She plays at school every night. She's the teacher. She never gets tired.

DOREEN: Do you ...? (Ann: It's interesting, you know). That's very good.

ANN: She's no' got a daddy .... I'm a wee girl. She's Miss (Tyrell??). I'm Joanne. You know. .... She writes up her sums.....

DOREEN: Yes. The first time I visited your home I noticed she was doing that on the blackboard.

ANN: She puts up her spelling, and everything she's taught in school, she puts it up there - and it's as good as the teacher could do - just - she enjoys it. I don't want to discourage the wean. (Doreen: No!).. It's a tremendous thing.

ANN: (indistinct remarks)

DOREEN: She prefers to do this?

ANN: Well, she prefers that. She likes doing things at home. She likes painting, coloured paper, making cartons into things,

DOREEN: She does all that at home?

ANN: Oh aye. See, I gave her scissors when she was young ....

2<sup>nd</sup> copy  
1<sup>st</sup> copy - reflected

Doreen's Group

Wednesday p.m. 3rd November, 1976

Robert Mc  
Background story to  
the work on the  
Docks visit  
Upstairs only  
Chrt 4  
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This group did not meet. Dolly came to the flat and explained that her brother-in-law had died and she was going to help with funeral arrangements. Alice and Ann did not come, so at 2.15 p.m. I decided to visit their homes.

*me* Alice Meikle lives in 31 Kellas Street. The name on the door is Evans. Alice answered the door when I rang the bell. I hardly recognised her. Though she does not seem specially well groomed at meetings, her "at-home" state is particularly lacking in care. Her seven/eight-year-old, Alec, was with her. He is a very big child for his age. A seven-year-old girl, Anne Marie Lennon, was also with her. Alice explained that all of them had had bad colds and so were at home. Alice certainly had a bad cough. The Lennons live quite a distance away from Alice in Moorpark. None of the children in that family go to school regularly. Incidentally, Alec is a pupil of Copeland Road School and Anne Marie Lennon is from St. Saviour's.

Alice seemed to have a surface and a hidden reason for not attending the meeting that day. She was not feeling well. This gave a legitimate excuse. But she had not been able to obtain any information from the Clydeport Authority on docks. This left her with nothing to bring to the meeting. Kathy and I had also been trying to find out about the Clydeport Authority and the docks. We had discovered an information source by phone and had subsequently gone to the office and picked up plans of the dock changes. We had used the official status of the project to obtain this. It is doubtful if an ordinary member of the public would have been given these plans. In fact, the City Planning Department, who were helping us with information on housing development in Govan for another group, gave us the relevant Clydeport Authority telephone number, but added that we might not get very far, as even the Planning Department had not been informed about the possible uses of the new land that would be created by this filling-in process.

*Agnes* Alice and Ann had therefore set themselves an impossible task and this, in turn, showed up an interesting problem.

Last week, the meeting was particularly good with this group. Both Alice and Ann had initiated plans for the progress of their section of the proposed outing. These involved them both in going to the centre of Glasgow and seeking out information on the changes being made in the old Govan dry docks. But the information had proved difficult to obtain. Their/

Their very enthusiasm the previous week made this lack of success more embarrassing. This had, in turn, contributed to their non-attendance. The home visit to Alice gave an opportunity for this problem to be discussed in conversation in a non-threatening way and the original cooperative relationship seemed to be re-established.

The visit to Ann Ainsbury followed much the same lines. Ann spoke enthusiastically about the meeting the previous week but again there was this ambivalence which it seems is seen in so many settings in this work. Alice and Ann had enjoyed the experience of the meeting and discussed it with one another later but they had subsequently wondered if their contributions had really been of value, and had been unable to see that they had anything of importance to offer, a fear borne out by their inability to bring concrete information to this week's meeting. So again, some ill-health (there was a long, detailed description of present and possible ailments) and a sense of failure had combined to make Ann absent. Once more, the discussion during the home visit may have put the balance right again.

Additional material was offered by Ann about the effects of the groups on local relationships. Ann, who lives two closes away from Alice, at 43 Kellas Street, lives alone with her daughter, Joanne, and is rather afraid of her neighbours. Last week she began discussing local problems, such as the noise at night, both in the street and in the central back-court area. Alice has given her some support in this and Ann, for the first time, had met somebody who was also distressed by the level of noise about them. During the home visit she explained that she had always disapproved of what she had seen of Alice Meikle but discussions in the group had shown Alice to be caring about her children - a possibility Ann had not suspected. Alice had also talked of Alec's preference for younger children as his playmates. Joanne, Ann's daughter, had always been afraid of Alec and Ann had been suspicious of this big boy, who might be unkind to her little girl. Now that she was on speaking terms with Alec's mother, the fears had disappeared and the children were able to play together, Joanne having actually stated that she no longer feared Alec.

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Kathy Robinson's Group  
Wednesday p.m. 3rd November 1976

43.

PRESENT: Betty Jones  
Edith Paton  
Jeanette Stuart

CONTENT: A continuation of the process of using an experience to analyse, identify and relate concepts.

ACTIVITY: Planning of the specific parts of the outing:  
- What to see  
- How to organise it

-----  
begin tape

KATHY: You're all talking about the outing, and what maybe we could do to-day is see if we could make any more plans about what we're going to do and how we're going to arrange it. I've got some plans of the - this is the new Riverside, Phase I. I went into town and got those. And I thought maybe we could talk about the sort of things that we want the children to see, because, really, it's - getting the children to talk about things they've seen, and to be able to describe them to somebody else so that somebody else can see them, so it's increasing their sort of ability to talk about things and to use words. Er - I wondered if any of you have got any ideas on - particularly to do with houses and things; see if we/



KATHY: (contd)

can find any way that we could do this. Does that make any sense? (Kathy referring to map or plan): This is the river. That's Govan Road. I think - it's these ones we're in at the moment. These are right by the river. (Voice: Riverside?) All this is Riverside. All these - the dark black bits are the houses. And these are the paths all round. That's the car parking space. And I think these must be the backs. That's Govan (railway?); you go along that river road and come into it here. Then, I think - is this the bit that's done? Or is that?

VOICES:

I think the end bit is.  
I think it's that bit that's done.  
This is Napier Street...  
That's Napier Street. That's the ....?.... It's down this end that's done.  
And what about along; the houses that's been allocated is there - right at the corner there.  
This bit? Here?  
Aye. These ones going along there are all allocated.

KATHY:

So it's not .. by Govan Cross? (Someone pointing out Govan Cross) Kathy: I thought that was Govan Cross.

VOICES:

That's Napier Street. Napier Street's here.  
Oh well, that's Govan Road, then. No' Napier Street.  
Well Govan Cross is at the other end.

KATHY:

So that'll be there. Govan cross is - where's Govan Cross? (Voice: Govan Cross is up here.) There. It'll be here. Because this is the river.

VOICES:

That's Govan Road. Govan Cross must be ...  
Oh well that's it, right?  
They've/

VOICES:(contd) They've got two crosses there. So that must be the...  
over there.

That's the walkway to the river, right along.

KATHY: That must be it, yes.

VOICES: That must be it still.  
And how do you get into that? Do you go into it through  
Water Row, or do you get into it through the Riverside  
houses?

KATHY: I don't know. Can you - I wonder if you - there must  
be a road.

VOICE: See, there's new houses down at the bottom of Water Row  
and all, so that'll be round about here. Won't it?

KATHY: You must be able to get down there.

VOICE: That looks like a bit down there - go down and cut  
(Betty?) round.

VOICES: River Clyde ... That's the Clyde down there.  
See down there? Aye. ... That's to the Riverside  
houses - so that must be Harmony Row - no - Watering(?)  
Lane.

..Just cut down and through....?

..And maybe Water Row'll be the entrance?

Must be the entrance at Water Row because that's where  
the Clyde starts...

.....where the Ferry used to be.

KATHY: So the ferry was from roundabout here?

VOICES:/

VOICES: Aye. The ferry was down there.  
 (Betty:) Aye. They've still got a ferry up at this end of the road.  
 ..They've got a ferry up at (Strang?) Street too.

KATHY: And where does that go to? Partick?

VOICE: Eh, one goes to KelvinBridge and one goes to Partick.

OTHER VOICE: Aye. The Partick one's still on, isn't it? I know  
 (Betty?) it takes you into Partick, because my Dad gets it going to work.

VOICE: What one's that? Is that down at the Subway you're talking about? (Betty: No.) The Subway? The one down at Water End or the one at (Stag, Strang??) Street?  
 (Betty): The one up at .....? Street?  
 That's Strang? Street, that's the one going to Kelvin Bridge. (Betty): Aye.  
 Where does he work? .....? Aye, that's right.

BETTY: Well, it's near enough Partick, you know; it's in that area.

VOICE: There's a walk through that and all.  
 (Other Voice:) It's a good bit away from Partick.  
 You can walk through that.....  
 ....old, isn't it? - that walkthrough - right through.  
 I know you used to; you could years ago, get through.  
 (Voice: Aye, I remember ...)  
 It's as old, and old as the hills.

OTHER VOICE: We came to Partick one night and walked through it and it let us out at .....  
 (Voice): The iron bridge?  
 Aye./

MIXED VOICES:

Aye. That's (lifted up?) Aye. - Something to do with the rivets.....

KATHY:

Oh, that's as you're going along by the docks, there's a big round building that you can get down under the ...

VOICE:

Aye. There's a .....?... that lets you into Partick. But I mean ..... I think when the tunnel was - (Other Voice: Aye, when they took it away)... There used to be a ferry across to Partick and walk from Partick along to the Iron Bridge and up the Iron Bridge and go through and under to Whiteinch. Aye. ... right into Dumbarton Road; Byres Road.

KATHY:

But how often are they?

MIXED VOICES:

Is it every fifteen minutes? .....They just go back and forw  
If you just miss it you've got about ten minutes ...  
Couple of minutes; no' even ten minutes.  
I wouldnae bother going on the ferry.  
No, I don't like them.  
I don't like them. I don't like the ferry.

KATHY:

No. I've never been on it. You know. And it's.....

MIXED VOICES:

You're all right if you get near the bottom.  
Aye. Then you feel yourself kind of.....and it- you've got  
kind of jumps sometimes.  
It's that slimy.  
I nearly fell in.  
I'm really scared of the ferry.  
Oh, it's dangerous. I don't like the way ....  
Kids. I don't like them going on to it.  
See, they don't - our weans aren't allowed to go near the Clydeside. That's it. I mean, they never.....  
they don't look (squeamish?). I mean, that was one wee boy, remember, was drowned. Wee boy ....

KATHY:/

KATHY: ②

This is what they were saying in the group earlier; .. because they were saying that they didn't want to take the kids into the docks themselves because of it being dangerous and because of this kiddie being drowned and so what we thought that we'd do is stay on the bus and, you know, sort of point out different parts of the docks - the different bits - and then go on from there.

VOICE: When are you having this?

KATHY: It'll be in about - well, what we thought....

&

*Jeauette* (Voice: See, the docks is nearly finished)

Voices: ...Oh, it'll be in a few weeks.

(Voice: 'Cos on the 4th of January it's finished - that's them finished.)

... For good?

(Voice: ...Aye, they men'll be paid off. In fact, you'd be lucky the noo, because they're, eh, see, most of them are on the bureau - they're not in the docks the noo.

KATHY:

*2 reinforced.*

Well, we thought, er, this week, trying seeing if we could get ... some ideas on the sort of things that we want to show the children; the sort of things that we want to talk about, and come with a definite idea, maybe sort of next week and then have a group - a time when we're all together, and all the groups go out and plan a route. We'll get a bus or something. Maybe we'll be able to hire one. And say, right: this is where we're going to go. And we're talking about the houses and somebody else is talking about the motorway and somebody else is going to talk about bits of the docks. So we do it ourselves beforehand. And then we'll go the Saturday after....

VOICES:/

VOICES:

I'm just thinking of  
.....Another thing. You know how the Broomielaw -  
where the boat used to be? If you get the bus to there  
and cut down by the Clydeside and take them across that  
iron bridge, into the walkway (no' that one; that one  
further down ....)

Aye. That's right. Clydeside.

There's an iron bridge. You cut over that. It takes  
you into the new walkway - you're at Clydeside - er  
Clydeside at the other end. I mean, it's all high up  
on there. They couldn't .....((meaning a child couldn't  
fall over))

It is high up, that other bridge, but, er, I think the  
likes of taking - especially the boys - to the riverside -  
I think the boys would want to .....?.... To them it  
might be (an adventure?)

"We've never been allowed down there, you know - Come and  
we'll go back the night?" - or something like that.

KATHY:

What we thought we'd do is start talking about the  
safety - we don't want to let them out of the bus at all.

VOICE:

The weans very seldom (leave the street?) when they out.

KATHY:

Yes. I didn't realise that it was round here that the  
boy had been killed. So we thought maybe we could start  
talking about safety - you know, safety and how dangerous  
it is there, and safety on the roads.

VOICE:

Well, look at that bit in the papers - somebody had wrote  
in - the wee lassie - it just shows you how - what's in  
a wean's mind and all. You know how it gives you that  
green man on the telly? (Kathy: That's right, yes)..  
So she thought because the green man never appeared she  
was all right - she could cross. How many other weans  
is thinking that?

OTHER VOICE: /

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Wednesday a.m. 3rd November, 1976

44.

NOTE

This was the group's first meeting in the flat. The floors are finished and we have easy chairs from the Centre, but no other furniture or furnishings at present. The walls have not yet been papered or painted and show bare plaster in many places. Nevertheless, the flat was very much better for a meeting of this kind than the hall and everyone appreciated the improvement. The mothers have begun to show some responsibility for the maintenance of the group. Grace brought biscuits and after this was noted, the others volunteered that they had discussed the question of provisions and agreed to take it in turn to provide something to eat, leaving us to provide the actual tea.

PRESENT

All members were present: Jean, Catherine, Grace, Eleanor and Margaret, with Kathy and Doreen.

CONTENT

Analysis of a complex idea into component parts and the conceptualisation of each member's task within the whole plan.

FOCAL POINT

The forthcoming visit by the three Wednesday groups, with special reference to the nearby motorway, which this group has chosen. Maps of the new motorway, provided by the Planning Department, were used to focus attention and to help in the analysis.

THE MEETING

There was great interest in the maps themselves. The mothers seemed very able to use the maps to find their own homes, etc., yet needed constant reassurances that they were using them usefully. There had been a suggestion the previous week that mothers might make scrapbooks ~~about cars with their seven-year-olds. These had been attempted by the two one-parent families.~~ Grace had a finished piece of work, obviously done mainly by herself. The cars/

about cars with their seven-year-olds. These had been attempted by the two one-parent families. Grace had a finished piece of work, obviously done mainly by herself. The cars were neatly cut out and stuck on, with the names of the cars printed below. Catherine had a loose collection of cuttings, which included details about cars. An attempt was made to show that logical thinking could be encouraged by discussing the differences between the cars as noted in the adverts.

The members were obviously not used to planning outings in detail. Two mothers began describing how they had walked through the Clyde pedestrian tunnel to Victoria Park on a number of occasions during the summer. They had shown their children the goldfish, the ducks, etc. At first this seemed to suggest that the mothers were already used to taking children out, and aware of the importance of such visits. But as the conversation proceeded, it became clear that only the two women who do not live in Moorpark, i.e. Jean and Grace, had been involved in these visits.

After many digressions, the group was eventually pinned down to discussing the motorway, and especially the three new sections which have just been opened. The maps helped to clarify this and to focus attention on what might be done on this before starting.

Jean showed that she was quite keen to find out the piece about the Berryknowes Road end and stated this quite categorically; that's the piece she would do.

The other mothers were extremely reluctant at first to commit themselves. The group became quite silent, and it was difficult to be sure of the reason. It seemed to be connected with struggles going on in their own minds as they tried to analyse the whole motorway section of the proposed outing and conceptualise a piece of it that each could concentrate on individually. This intellectual effort was made harder by their diffidence, each one being sure that she would fail in the task of explaining her section to the whole group.

Grace, who is so confident in ordinary chat, seemed particularly troubled. When Doreen gave an example of being in the same situation herself a few hours earlier, when she had mistaken the directions of a traffic warden in Queen Street and so been unable to reach her destination. Grace immediately said, "I would have begun to cry". The slightest failure was enough to put Grace off. At one point, Dumbreck Road was mentioned to designate a flyover. Grace was covered with confusion because she did not recognise this name, though it was a feeder road to a nearby section of the motorway. Since Dumbreck Road comes in from Pollokshields, not from Govan, it was not very surprising that it was not recognised but Grace could not make that kind of distinction, and stayed out of the conversation for a long time after that. She was eventually coaxed to make cars, lorries and buses on the motorway her special feature, but even at the end of the session she was not really enthusiastic.

Eleanor/

Eleanor Dalziel began by saying that she knew nothing. And she really was quite sad about this, rather than upset like Grace had been. But she soon brought out an idea accidentally. She noted her children were always asking why they had to go down steps into the underpass. It took very little cueing to help her to see that she had an idea there that she could expand and she quickly responded to the possibility that she could do her piece on the subways and underpasses.

The plan was beginning to emerge now, with a further idea of the children taking photographs of their section and putting these up in the flat, together with the map.

Catherine and Margaret began to talk of a joint piece of work on the Kinning Park section of the motorway. It was obvious that each would have to go away and look at her own section, to clarify what exactly there was to see, and how it could be described.

Some of the mothers showed great interest in taking their maps to the spot to help the identification process. Some suggestion and examples were given, to help in the organisation of all this material.

By the end of the session, the joint venture had been analysed; each mother had committed herself to studying one section and to coming back next week with some conceptual framework for her contribution.

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Wednesday a.m. 10th November 1976

45-

*The Mrs McTavish  
of Chr's*

PRESENT: Grace, Eleanor, Margaret,  
Catherine, Kathie and  
Doreen.

CONTENT: Conceptualization of each  
task.

FOCUS: Detailed plans of outing  
to motorway.

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Begin Tape

DOREEN: I'm getting a bit worried about our meeting because it's  
now nearly half past eleven and really I want to time this.  
If we're going to hire the bus we'd better go on with what  
we're going to do with the bus.

KATHY: How many will..... You're not bringing your mum and dad?

VOICE: I never asked my mother and father.

KATHY: Would you like to ask your mother and father?

VOICE: They might no' go, Kathy.

KATHY: Well, you can tell us next week. It's just a general -  
you know.

VOICE: /

VOICE: Well, I'll say two just now too. And let you know.

KATHY: It's actually like buying them!  
What about you, Eleanor?

ELEANOR: Well, I've got two. The other two wouldnae - my boy's 13  
and my lassie's 15 so I don't think they would really go.

KATHY: If they want to come - you could ask them.

LIGHT VOICE: Put me down just now with two boys - that's the best way  
if you want to come.

DOREEN: What about Mr. Dalziel? Would he come? You see, if there  
are more men coming; I can see why he wouldn't come if he  
was the only man.

ELEANOR: No. He wouldnae go. He really wouldnae.

DOREEN: Would he really not come? I remember being very impressed  
by him when I came to the door. He answered very well and  
he said that .. we asked him if he would come to these  
meetings and he said, well, he'd wait and hear what you  
thought of them.

ELEANOR: Aye. He's terribly self-conscious. ... He really does. He  
no' one for going anywhere - no' unless it's the whole lot  
of us together - if we're going somewhere.

VOICE: It's all right ... it's good exercise!

DOREEN: But is the whole family coming? Ask him. Tell him there's  
a special invitation, and we won't expect him to come if he  
the only man.

SMALL VOICE: /

SMALL VOICE: Put down three for you just now?

KATHY: Well, will the older two not come? Can you not get the older two to say, well, we'll come .. when we have the younger.

VOICE: ... go to the granny every week on a Saturday morning. They take turns to go for messages for their granny.

DOREEN: Well, give them the offer anyway.  
Now, is Mr. McGilp coming?

VOICE: He has to work on a Saturday morning .....

KATHY: We're actually leaving at eleven.

VOICE: But he starts at four o'clock in the morning. That's day shift.

KATHY: That's day shift? Four o'clock in the morning is not day to me!

VOICE: ... he comes ben in the morning and gives me a cup of tea.. Well, he comes in at about six o'clock for his breakfast, and then he goes back out at seven and that's him till about half past eleven, quarter to twelve. That's him finished for the day.

KATHY: (?) He'll be glad to get into his bed.

DOREEN: Yet, still give him the offer. He seemed so particularly interested. It's only an hour and we're hoping to leave about eleven and be back for twelve and if he was willing to come, you know we're particularly anxious to get some of the fathers to help us, to see how to do the work with fathers, because one of the most interesting things that came/

DOREEN: (contd) came up (in the Lothians ?) - the other side of Scotland; some children do so terribly well in school. Why do some children seem to come shining through? We were trying to find out what was special in their home background and one of the interesting things was that where there was a father in the family, if he took an interest in the child and what the child was doing, this seemed to help the child to come on tremendously and because of that, we would like to do some of the work we do with you with some of the fathers, just to show them these ideas. But we don't expect any man to come on his own. One man - on his own. But if, you know, if more would come, would he be one of the more? You know: if we get two or three who say, "Aye, if somebody else is coming", then ...

KATHY: Anyway, we don't mind if they're asleep half the way ....  
(laughter)

DOREEN: If it's so boring, they can sleep .....

KATHY: So, how many children .....

VOICE: That would be four ... and ... David ...

KATHY: So that's five all together?

VOICE: Six, including me.

KATHY: Yes. Your husband, yourself and four children.  
Do you know, I've got this vision of the whole of the down-  
stairs being empty .... everyone upstairs!

(Laughter, mixed voices)

VOICE: .....he might be driving the bus!

OTHER VOICE: /

OTHER VOICE: I don't think her husband would come with her, let alone drive the bus.

VOICE: You never know!

KATHY: If he was working?

VOICE: You'll see Jean. Will I tell you what she would say? She'd crack up.....

(Mixed voices, Laughter)

DOREEN: She said about that possibility. Would you ask her to ask him, can he organise - I know they've got a hire-out. Is there any way he can organise it that he's the person that drives that bus?

MIXED VOICES: (indistinct) .... go up and ask him .... I'm afraid to! .... one way ..... Grace had .... yesterday ...

VOICE: Where is this bus going to?

DOREEN: The bus is going from the Tenants' Hall and it's going to three places. One is the motorway, one is the docks - we're not going in the docks; just looking (below?) the docks, and one is the new houses on the riverside. We'll get off at them and walk round. Each group is planning to tell us about their place. One group are planning to tell us about the riverside; one group are planning to tell us about the docks, but this group is supposed to be at this minute planning - that we're going to show the motorway, and we're supposed to have done our homework. So - not necessarily by going, Grace - all right ... (Voice: I never went either)

VOICE: .....I got no response to-day ....

DOREEN: /

666

Thursday

11<sup>th</sup> Nov 76

Doreen's Group

46.

Mary McSherry (maureen)  
May Dunn (maize)  
Margaret Griffin (Molly)

only piece on the tape about employment proble  
(Mgt. Griffin)

DOREEN: I was just telling Margaret that some of the groups we have on a Wednesday got all hot and bothered because we are tape recording what we're doing. I never noticed anybody bothering before.

*non-punk* It doesn't bother me. I think it is good

MAY : How did they not like the way <sup>idea</sup>.....?

DOREEN: Well they wondered what we were doing it for, they couldn't understand ....

MARY : People are funny, some people are funny <sup>like that</sup> using them. <sup>for something</sup> Is that the idea

DOREEN: Yea, I think this is it. Well, we couldn't see what they could think we were ...

MARY : What the objection was.... Did they not say?

DOREEN: Well I couldn't understand any real point in it. Have you heard if anybody else is complaining?

MARY : We haven't seen other groups really.

MAY : But I could believe what you're talkin' about - there is some people like that.

MARY : It wasn't the idea of being - <sup>shy speaking through it</sup> ~~indistinguishable~~ - or was it the idea of you actually using them?

DOREEN: I think they thought in some way there was some other reason for us doing this than just education. // You know they kept saying well why ... I couldn't see what else they could think we could be doing - it seemed so straightforward.. *y didn't trust you sort of style*

MARY : ~~Indistinguishable~~. <sup>You must be on two different wavelengths, you & them</sup>

DOREEN: UHUH - I just began to wonder then if there was any talk in the neighbourhood in any way that...

MAY : I haven't even seen <sup>anyone else</sup> ~~them here~~ this week. .... ~~indistinguishable~~.

*may* Laughter. well we've been speaking long enough

MARY : In the beginning we were more worried <sup>- embarrassed</sup> ~~about~~... coughing... <sup>not</sup> because they were usin' us / more embarrassed.

MAY : Aye, the things we were sayin'.

DOREEN: UHUH.

MAY : Aye put it that way, 'cos sometimes we <sup>didn't know what</sup> were sayin'

MARY: As a' said before, 'a load a' rubbish.'

MAY: Just like the television <sup>going on fire & the panic we got into</sup> .....indistinguishable.

DOREEN: And the television was on..other voice... and they just left it. Somebody said May, what about your television and she said, kind of, <sup>what</sup> 'leave my things' alone' kind of voice, 'Never mind the television' so we all gave up and we talked about... and suddenly the television was <sup>blatant</sup> .....laughter and talking. <sup>went up in flames!</sup>

MARY: We'd some good laughs, didn't we.

DOREEN: All sorts of things happened in that house, - <sup>margaret</sup> house of mysteries

MGT: Aye, we had great fun.

-----

DOREEN: <sup>Well, that won't get</sup> At ~~the moment there's to get~~ today's work done. Well what about the books, did you use them at all?

MAY: Well, Gina she read them but Peter and Catherine jist looked at the pictures. But Gina read three - reading stories.

DOREEN: Gina actually read three of the books?

MAY: Gina read them.

DOREEN: Well that was.....

MGT: Well ma Karen and David, they actually told me to get <sup>either</sup> ones for them.

DOREEN: So they actually made some judgement on them Margaret?

MGT: Yes the likes of their readin' books, books like that <sup>do</sup> get to them. Well the likes a' this book here, well a' read this - a couple a' stories ti them but they got kin' a fed up with it.

DOREEN: Mh.

MGT: An' <sup>see</sup> ~~ae~~ the likes a' this one here, <sup>?</sup> they found this awful old fashioned - you know how it's back to the old days.

DOREEN: The History of Fairs - it's not ..... enough.

MGT: They were interested then in the Carnival bit. When are we goin' tae see this, when are we goin'.

DOREEN: Oh, yes.

MAY: Are you takin' them at Christmas like.

MGT: Yea, we're havin' a day with the Project - can a' come - they two want to come. Well a' says well I'll need to find out....

DOREEN: Oh, sure...

MGT: If it's a day you'd need to ask permission off your school you know like that find out if you can get

other voices.....

The likes of ma Ann a've tae bring th~~e~~ whole lot intae her and she'll read them she'll ...

MAY: Aye, well that's true

MGT: She says have you no more Mamma, no more?

MARY: She just came up and got them off me.

MGT: She jist finished them<sup>all</sup> though.

MARY: 'Cos a' said to her..... back and she never came back.

MGT: See she'd her clubs - Friday she was at her club - Monday night, Tuesday and Wednesday she's at her club and she disnae do much readin'. But the whole week-end .....Get up and get that bed made first and then start to read .... other voices.... She read a couple a stories tae Karen in bed.

DOREEN: Now Karen's how old?

MGT: 6.

DOREEN: And Ann is how old?

MGT: Ann's 11.

DOREEN: So the 11 year old read to the six year old. What did she read her?

MGT: but except for this one. She read it but she said it's too old fashioned for her - she didn't like.....indistinguishable.

DOREEN: So for the sake of the tape recorder so that we'll remember which books you're talking about you're talking about the Fairs.

MGT: Of course, it's back to the King James and King Arthur .. I thought it was interesting because it shows you the Fairs, they didnae have much in the actual Show Fairs or Circus....

DOREEN: Yea.

MGT: It was all thae Minstrels and what d'ye call them again the bears, the dancing bears ...

DOREEN: Oh yea, so the adult - you enjoyed it.

MGT: I enjoyed it. Things that I didnae know about. This one here Karen took intae school and the teacher was...

DOREEN: Took in Wasn't that great.

DOREEN: What teacher's that?

MGT: Sister Janet.

DOREEN: Oh, yes.

MARY: That's up her street.

MGT: And instead a takin' 'er schoolbag she takes ma handbag and everythin's stuffed in it.

MAY: That's the kin' a thing Catherine wid dae.

MGT: And she'll say Mummy have you got.....my bag at school. Sister Janet was readin' one a these stories and she's lookin' through them - A says whit wan wis it? She says "A cannae remember it - once ye read it back tae me a'll remember. So we'd tae go through the whole lot till a came tae the actual one that she was.....

DOREEN: And did you read it back to her?

MGT: She said 'That's what we got in school, a know what's happenin' next. A says ' Wait a minute ti he finds oot'.

DOREEN: UHUH.

MGT: It was very good - a says 'The next you take a book, tell me 'cos a wis huntin high and low for it.

voices and laughter.

MGT: See this one - a couldnae get that fae George - ma George took that tae bed every night wi' 'im.

DOREEN: Did he?

MGT: A says 'There's a book for you George - there's a book for you David Karen'. A gave them all one each and that was his - nob'dy was tae get it - I'd tae take it out his pillow to gie them it.

DOREEN: Now George is what, two?

MGT: Naw, two in April.

DOREEN: Not 2 yet and it was his book?

KATHY: He was great when I was showing him pictures. He just sits and he really does ..... he's tremendous.

MGT: He must think ... youse people he's got tae take that and took it all but ...

DOREEN: He sits and pretends he's reading it.

MGT: Every night he'll come in about half past eight, nine o'clock at night and you'll sure find ma newspaper lyin' on the carpet.

DOREEN: Ha ha, that's great. Who is he copying that from?

MGT: His Dad.

DOREEN: Uhuh - isn't that interesting that what the Father does the child likes to do.

MGT: When the newspaper comes in, father's first tae get it - if a take it he goes ..... I sometimes maybe take it tae see what's on the television before father gets it or he grabs it.

DOREEN: Do the children make you give to their Dad?

MGT: Aye, 'cos they know he gets it first to look at the results

MARY: Aye, that's what..... the sports page.

DOREEN: Have you said that anything to him any of you or to your husbands any of you that the boys would be interested in books ~~xxxxxxx~~ if they read to them?

MGT: He reads quite a lot to them. He was readin' last night to them. School books and everythin' - he does that if a'm out.

DOREEN: So someone reads to them every night?

MGT: Oh aye, a do their readin' books or their father does it.

DOREEN: That's great.

What about you May, what happened about the books in your house?

MARY: <sup>Mark he</sup> Well, .. more or less jist went to the pictures or v And Jackanory was the one that Gary liked. But Charles he's still taken up with this Encyclopaedia - he never really looked at these books much apart from the one Gary has.

DOREEN: Gary's how old?

MARY: Six - the same age as Karen.

DOREEN: And Charles is 7?

MARY: 7.

DOREEN: And Charles was looking through an encyclopaedia?

MARY: He's brainwashed I think. I didn't buy it for him - it's been in the house for years. He jist came across it and it's new to him and he keeps goin' back to it - I thought he would have flung it aside ow .

DOREEN: Someone came round the doors selling Encyclopaedias a few years ago didn't they? ..... ~~xxxxxxx~~

MGT: A book of twelve wisn't it?

DOREEN: I remember ..... Currie talking about that - about encyclopaedias being sold at the doors. You know when I was here the last time

KATHY: Did he say what he liked about Jackanory?

MGT: Different stories because it was something the same as you see.....

KATHY: I think you've got to think there's the Jackanory and there's the Dugal that ..... in television.

MARY: I think that's what it is.

MGT: He's got another book in from school you know ....

MARY: They want something they can identify with..... school this time

DOREEN: Oh, that's interesting.

MGT: He's takin' an awful lot of interest in drawings just now. A got him a sketch book and he's doin' an awful lot of sketches just now in the house. Must be in coloured ink - an ink pen.

DOREEN: Oh, what do you mean by an ink pen? A Biro?

MGT: A Biro, nothin' else but a Biro. I bought crayons but no.

DOREEN: He's an adult then.

MGT: He's seen fingerprints you know his finger is ..... row boats ..... what - men, a hen - a cannae hear ye.

DOREEN: He's all right with it Mary

Now you said Mary that Gina, how old is Gina?

MARY: Gina's nine.

DOREEN: She read the books?

MARY: That yin, Brownies, wis it Brownies?

KATHY: That's right, that's the one she got out.

MARY: She liked that ti the end, but ~~she~~ the Christmas, that Christmas tellin' about Baby Jesus and that - what Christmas is all about. She read that yin and that Brownies yin - she read that yin Peter he jist looked at the one wi' the elephants - he jist looked at one page and that was it.

DOREEN: And Peter's how old?

MGT: Peter's eight.

DOREEN: And he didn't read?

MGT: He jist looked at the pictures.

DOREEN: UHUH. You know that's kind of surprising - I wonder if we didn't bring something that was interesting enough for him.

MAY: Well he didnae - Gina's mair interested in the ones wi' a good story.

DOREEN: See the book you've got there - back on Dugal - I wonder if Peter would look at at because it's a television thing or is it too young for him.

MARY: I think it's too young for him now. D'you not think so 'cos remember when they used to watch Play School Peter used to think that was too young for him.

Suspicion

This transcript reports on  
Dolly reporting local suspicion  
about the Project's motives.  
The topic had possibly heightened  
if not caused

Wednesday 17th November, 1976

The Dinner & Dinner  
of the 17th

IN THE FLAT

There is a note on this,  
written at the time,  
"Reflections"

Very helpful  
discussion on  
Process of Family  
& its use for records of all sorts.

**PH7** 

DOLLY: (Dinner) ..We're going to start ..... I says: No. They don't do that. Any time I've been, it's only been the school, and talking about the school, and that's it. I said, it's nothing else - just the Education Authority, and that's them. But if they're going to start asking me how much pay my man gie's me and what do I dae with it and what do I don't dae with it, I said, I'd be the first one to tell them to .....

(Kathy and voices speaking together)

DOLLY: (Dinner) ....No. If that's what really was going to be the scheme ....  
(Voices off: I wonder how that got in ...?  
..... At the door. )

DOLLY: It was an IQ test and this one said .....? ... No - Ann!

DOREEN: It could only be people Dolly says who don't come, because if she does come .....

DOLLY: (Pat?) only came once and she said she wouldn't come back. Oh, she said, "It's an intelligence test all right". But I said it's not. And nobody forced her to come. Nobody forces me to come. If I want to come, I'll come.  
(Voices: Yes, Uh huh, etc.)  
Even Betty. Betty says that an' all. She says, Oh, I try to .. I mean, there's no use .. you would need to get all the women together and tell them ...

DOREEN: You could never - you could never tell the world everything ...

DOLLY: /

DOLLY: There now, Betty - Betty's supposed to be - "Oh, I'll be definitely up here early..."

KATHY: No, I ... Betty said she'd definitely would .....

ANN: Did it fall through, the other group? Or are they all meeting together?

DOREEN: We're all meeting here together, in fact.

KATHY: <sup>Edith</sup>~~Eve~~(?) has just been along. She's away, because one of the kids has got .....? She's sorry she couldn't come. Says ? | she won't(?) be on the outing as well.

DOREEN: What have you got, Alice?

ALICE: I'm just bringing my homework book back.

DOREEN: Oh, look .. Alice has done her homework. Oh, yes; that's your return(?)..

ALICE: .. Nancy gave me that.

DOREEN: Oh aye. Did you show it to Alec? This book on the docks?

ALICE: Yes... You see, I had it first and I got it on Sunday.

ANN: Joanne read it halfway; she said, "Och, I'll read it tomorrow." Now, that's school work - she's no' interested ...

DOREEN: It meant she wasn't interested? Uh huh. What about Alec?

ALICE: He was more interested in the other pamphlets. They actually show you inside the dock; the containers and Greenock.

DOREEN: ..So the actual adult pamphlets about what's really going on ...

VOICE:/

VOICE: I mean that you didn't see the pamphlets last week ...?

ALICE: I didn't get them all; I got three.  
(Ann in background .... I think it's three ...)  
.. That one - where is it? - that one shows you the actual map.

DOREEN: That's the one - That's the one we got from the Dock Board.  
Takes you a wee while to work it out; it took me a wee while  
to work it out, what was what.

KATHY: Have you .....(indistinct question to Ann).

ANN: No. I didn't .....(indistinct)..... but I'm going to show (??)  
the other children that's no' been to see the docks ... say  
a wee bit ... say to the teacher ..... a lot of talk in school  
so she does, you know....  
(few indistinct remarks) .... maybe I didn't put her off ...

DOREEN: Of course, we're going to look at other places as well.

ANN: I know. I told her this. Well, she's no' excited about it.

DOREEN: She wasn't all that interested? Is that what you're saying,  
Ann? - Oh, in the book?

KATHY: No. She's a bit frightened about the thought of standing up..  
and saying things.

ANN: I asked her. I said ..... you know, we were talking...

DOREEN: Well, what we were thinking was, actually the point you were  
on about, Dolly, that, you know, how would we tell the rest  
of the scheme - people who're not coming - I mean, people  
who're coming know what we're doing, but people who're not  
coming couldn't think up all these bright ideas. I must say  
the one about the IQ's funny because it's almost impossible  
to/

DOREEN:(contd) to test an adult's IQ. You can only do it with children. And we were really going to do it - to offer you it, actually, if you wanted to see how your children are getting on. We thought we might in fact try it - ask you - we do it, in fact, with all the children of that age group. But how an IQ is made up is that you - somebody thinks up the questions. And then they try them out on thousands and thousands of people - the identical questions. (Voice: Aye..) And when most people - the answer that most people can give - you say that's the normal answer for that age. But of course you can't do that for a grown up. You can only do it with small children.

DOLLY: ..... for small kids up to a certain age...

(Doreen: Yes...)

... I mean, you reach a certain age. I mean, to me, my Harry's IQ's different from Donna Marie's because Donna Marie's that eight years older. So you expect a girl of sixteen to have a different IQ; and yet there is kids - because they're good, the one of eight could be a better IQ than the one at sixteen.

DOREEN: Well, I think the thing about intelligence tests is they don't really tell you all that much, but they tell you, for that age, you know, they'll tell you how bright a child is for his age. For eight, or for - once you get to sixteen, people know too much. It's not possible to think up questions that would be much of a test for them..(Voice: Aye) .. so, in fact we cannae do it - supposing you wanted it, we couldn't do it. (Voice: No, I know what you mean).... But what we were thinking actually was to say to you later on that we might, in fact, let you see how your children are getting on now, and then when we've done more work and talked about how you get on in the home, give them another one and see if in fact it's made any difference to them - the kind of things we're doing; taking them out and showing them things. We would/

DOREEN:(contd) would be interested actually to see if in fact it made any difference to children, doing all this.

KATHY: What would you think about that?

ALICE: Of course Alec wouldn't ..... (indistinct)...

KATHY: No, no. I mean, would you like to sort of find out how he is now- what he's like now and what he maybe will be like after we have been doing that - or after you have!

(All laughing)

DOLLY: As I say, there's things Harry'll dae for a teacher quicker than he'll dae for me, you know what I mean? As I say, an IQ test, fair enough - I'll ask him a lot of questions, but do I know if that's the right answers? (Kathy: Yes) .. See, that's it, I mean - excuse me for talking - How does a monkey - they say man's made from a monkey .. I cannae say to the wean, "That's right ..... that you're ..... (indistinct) .. is like a monkey. You know what I mean? I mean, it's comical listening to that, but he talks a lot of things like ..... I don't know the facts enough about them.

DOREEN: Do you know what we were just talking ... we were just talking the other day, and thinking how we must start to introduce a lot more use of books, where you could look at things together with them, because we don't know the answers either, and you're left saying, "Well, come on and we'll look it up and we'll see if we can find it together." You know. We must learn that nobody is - you know - a computer with all the ideas in their head.

DOLLY: No. Nobody's got a computer ....

ANN: I play at schools with Joanne at adding. I mean, I'm no' that bad. I can add. That's nae bother. But I've seen me saying, "Oh/

ANN:(contd) "Oh, that sum's wrong, pet."

DOLLY: Aye. It's wrong for you, but it might be right for them.

ANN: ... and it's you that's wrong ... I'm going, oh - it's my fault; I mean, you can do it quite often.

DOREEN: Och yes. And we can all do that, yes. Is your Harry .....?

DOLLY: The schools have all got different ways of teaching kids. Did you no' see the Record yesterday? It shows you different groups of people from different schools. (Doreen: No, I didn't ...) Right on the middle page. And this man says that he thought the schooling that his daughter got was average; was all right. It says (about) this other one, she's in a private-owned school and he thinks that they're lacking in something that an ordinary school didnae - was gie'ing their weans and yet this other one took his wean out of an ordinary school and put her in a private school and he thought that - this other one says he was better at his three R's than she ever was, because they weans were getting sums - she's only 10 I think it was, the wee lassie - and she was daeing - she's daeing decimals and that; she said, well, I didn't get decimals till I was about twelve or thirteen, you know? And the way that the woman did it was different from the wee lassie and, as I said before, well my wee Harry does his sums different from me.

DOREEN: I'll tell you something about your Harry. Did he tell you Mr. Locke was asking him where he'd been? Did he no' tell you this? (Dolly: No.) Well, we thought we'd do a preparation for taking them out by asking Mr. Locke in school to ask them where they went at weekends; where did their mummy and daddy take them? and really what he was trying to get was to get them to explain, before anybody had particularly helped them to explain, and then ....

ANN:/

ANN: To speak through a speaker? (Kathy: That's right.) Joanne said Harry was there and I don't know if it was your wee boy.

DOREEN: It was. Harry told him. I heard him.

ANN: She said, "I was at Mr. Locke's, Mummy, and I was speaking through the mike...!"

DOLLY: You see, Harry doesn't tell me a lot of things that goes on at school....

ANN: ..And I said, "Who was all there?" And she said, Tracey and Harry and - who was the other wee boy?

DOREEN: Alec was there.

ANN: Oh, was it Alec that was there?

ALICE: I've never heard that before ...

DOLLY: You see, Harry ... Harry doesn't tell me everything that happens in school.

ALICE: Oh, aye, there is a big thing. My Alec tells me he doesn't like school now and he doesn't want to talk about it.

ANN: (Speaking through Alice, above) ..... Pamela, aye, and Joanne, and Tracey, and she says, "Mammy, Harry - a boy called Harry," and I could only picture you, because I don't know any ....

DOREEN: Well, I'll tell you ... We're going to let you hear it. We're going to put it together with something else. He was telling about how your husband took him into Fairfields.

DOLLY: That's right. So he did.

DOREEN: /

DOREEN:

And it was really interesting to listen to. But what we thought - we wonder; we don't know - we thought that maybe next week if we could do this outing on Saturday and we'd organise how we'll tell them things, maybe by the Monday we could film them telling us and we'll just look at the two things against each other: how they describe the thing before somebody has really sorted out how to tell them it.. (Voices: That's right, uh huh ...) which is, showing them without thinking, and how they would say it when somebody had settled down to teach it to them.

(Voices: That's right ... That's what I ... The parent ... Oh no; ... it's great ..... to-night .....

On Saturday, you see, ...

(Ann: No. It's just to see ... what Alice said ... the reaction... )

DOLLY:

I wouldnae tell the likes of Harry; as you say, he's started and telt you that. And he said Fairfields. His father's even took him into Smith McLean's - that's where he used to work before; and I said, "That'll be right" (aside: No, I don't smoke) .. and yet there's things - my wee Harry can go back on things and he remembers his Dad taking him to his work with his pal, but his pal and his father left him in a cafe and went in for a pint. Don't get me wrong. But the woman in the cafe says, "Are you watching him?" And my wee Harry wouldn't sit in the cafe if a drunk man came in. He went out & stood outside the cafe. Whereas I said to Harry, "You shouldn't have done that." It wasn't Harry that telt me. It was wee Harry, and it was weeks after it. And you should get him to talk about his Uncle Sandy some time. He loves his uncle Sandy. Golfing, fishing, he tells you everything, aye. And his Uncle Sandy up in Aberdeen - they've no' got any kids ..... he's made him a fishing rod; in fact, I've got a fishing rod made when he was 20 years old. It was Sandy's young nephew's. But the brothers and sisters said/

DOLLY:(contd) said when he phoned the other week, Sandy's making him a fishing set, plus he's made him golf sets. Well, he's got wee golf sets ... (Doreen: This is up in Aberdeen?).. Uh huh. But this is things - and you say, "What do you do when you go on holiday?" He'll tell you, and it's his Uncle Sandy that takes him quite a lot of places, you know, like fishing and all this carry on. But he could be hame - he could be hame for months and then all of a sudden he starts, "Remember, Mammy, my Uncle Sandy took me here, and we done this ...." But he'll no' tell me when they were in Aberdeen; he'll tell me weeks or months after it. He sits; he'll sit and talk and he'll tell me wee things that happened, you know ...

DOREEN: What we wondered, then, if we could get him - and all of them - you know, to get your children as well, here on Monday after school. Now would that be all right? (Voices: Aye, aye ..) If you can come with them, that would be all the better, because they'll be (freer?) and we'll bring Mr. Locke here and we'll get them to tell him, here, in front of you, how they get on, so that the parent and the teacher together will be listening to the child. And two lads with cameras said they would come and film the outing on Saturday, so I've said to them, well, come along to the flat on Monday and film the kids then, telling it back, and then ...

DOLLY: And will we actually see .... .?

KATHY: Well, you know that thing that happened in the Tennants Hall, (Dolly: Uh huh) the kids ....(indistinct)..... (Aye) ... We'll just do something like that, you know, but sort of listen to the way that they're telling us.....

DOLLY: They describe in their own way?

KATHY: Yes, oh yes.

DOLLY:/

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DOLLY: You know. We just describe it in our way. I know once Harry starts talking you cannae ..... (Laughter) That he needs to be interested, you know. (Kathy: Uh huh). There's a lot of things that ... He asked this question on RemembranceDay. We sat and watched that on Saturday night. He wanted to know the difference - what was the difference between the old soldiers and they soldiers ...(Doorbell rings).... and - there was hardly any soldiers in it; it was nearly all sailors and all the rest of it; and what happened in that war, and what happened in this war.

ALICE: Well, that's the kind of things .....

(Sounds in background: Kathy talking to an arrival; Someone talking to Doreen, who agrees that yes it's cold.)

Voice: .... can you find the place at the beginning?

VOICE: No. She's getting her kitchenette fitted. (In answer to Kathy's question is ??? not coming) ...

KATHY: Oh, is she? A new one? ....

DOREEN: Well, when I say ..... Betty, .... do you know... I didn't know who Edith was. Kathy kept saying ... Edith .. and I kept saying, I don't know Edith. And I do, perfectly well. ... Now, we were just talking about these tapes a bit earlier and then we got on to the actual work (of the) outing but we'd said to you when we saw you the other day that we would bring tapes from the past and let you see them so one of the things we're going to do is a piece with Dolly actually. (Laughter)

KATHY: ~~The actual tape?~~ But we've lost the tape!

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: Well, we've lost the actual tape. We must have re-used it because - you know - we seem to ... what we actually do is get someone to type it down because it's awfully hard actually to follow the conversation on a tape - you'll find this on the majority of tapes - and so we get a typist to copy it down. She misses half of it, but she at least writes most of it - she's got wee dots all over the place. I've brought you copies to show you. But she gives us at least enough of it to be able to look at it and we listen to the tape in planning the next week's lesson and if you don't catch something, you don't have to worry; you don't have to run it back, you can just look at the paper. And you say, Oh, aye, it was that we were talking about there. So we brought some of this with us because we want to see what you could remember if you didn't have the tapes first of all because we have these tapes and that's what helps us to remember what we do.

KATHY: .....(indistinct) ..... only worse.

DOREEN: Well, listen, that's exactly what .....  
(Laughter)

Listen: What's the connection between those things that we were doing and this outing that's happening to-morrow? Because this is part of a plan that we're going to keep reading this and listening - to help us to work out and we want - actually (won't be able to do it?) without the tapes. You know: how much can you remember of what the connection was between that and having the outing?

ANN: Explaining to kids, for instance....

DOLLY: You asked us to do something about (the shop?) and Billy Connolly (Ann: Aye ...). ..... and you asked, what would her reaction be if she was on a bus and he sees a kid on the bus and/

DOLLY:(contd) and he wants to kind of a keep him amused on the bus and if they asked you questions, would you answer him or would you just ignore him? Right? And that's what me and .....? That's what I mean - I said I'd take Harry upstairs on the bus, because he likes to see what they were daeing, filling in the Clyde for, and that's when he asked us what they were. Well, I thought it was .....using as football pitches. Alec says no. He says - football pitches??

DOREEN: Is that what they're making on that ground?

ALICE: Supposed to be, but nobody really knows.

KATHY: Is this the bit that's got that funny name?

DOREEN: They're going to turn it into football pitches.

ALICE: I can't see it - football pitches. You know how .....  
(Voices together)....

DOLLY: .....(indistinct).. filling in. Right? There's only one in the Govan Road filling in now and yet at one time they said it was supposed to be helping with this new roadway; the flyover, but now he says it's no'; it's football pitches.

ALICE: ...that there's no' going to be a flyover on that bit?

DOLLY: There's no' going to be a flyover on that bit.

ALICE: It was supposed to be part of that new roadway.

DOLLY: On that tape I'm ..... "Whit are you daeing, Mammy?"  
"That man's drunk, Mammy", and all this, and she's telling me to be quiet.

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: That's .... with the child?

DOLLY: That's me, uh huh.

DOREEN: And that was the Billy Connolly one and she wasn't - you weren't - Billy Connolly was supposed to be the mummy that wouldn't answer. The ...(?).. type. And then you went on to this other one about the docks.

ANN: Aye. She was answering me the questions I was asking her. I was getting her ... time ... (indistinct) ... the neighbour's time... (Doreen: Yes.)

KATHY: We started doing this but we didn't actually do the acting out. We started talking about.. (Ann: No. That's right.) Just a little bit.

DOREEN: Well, you see, what's interesting actually is, Dolly tells it - now you're putting two incidents - we did two different things - and you're putting the two together every now and again, and that's what we would be doing if we didn't have it in front of us. But because we've got it in front of us and I've written - run off one bit, you'll see that one of those was quite separate from the other one and this is what it's useful for.

(Dolly laughing)

Well, we thought we were going to do this and play the tape at the same minute. But we haven't got the tape.

KATHY: I wish we did, because it's great.

DOREEN: It's cleverer on the tape but it just - er - we must have re-used the tape; as soon as one of the typists had typed that up, we just got the next one.

(Sounds of pages turning, Dolly, Alice and Ann are reading transcript.)

VOICES: ..... That's right! ..... here I am .... (laughter)

DOREEN: Now you see where the typist, of course, doesn't know who people are. If she can recognise a voice, good and well, and if she can't, she just writes, "Voice".

(Everyone reading transcript again)

DOLLY: ... and this is the bit where she was the wean and (what) I'm daeing is go over it - over the flyover and all that... (Voice: That's right, yes) ... she was the wean and I was ....

DOREEN: It's all so polite, isn't it? You remember - because we weren't actually at that stage doing Billy Connolly. We were doing another radio - television programme at that stage. .... (All reading again)....

Look at the polite Dolly is .....!".... dear."  
At the "glabber" the typist didn't know the word "glabber" and I had to correct it.

(All reading again ..... as indistinct comment in background)..

You see, every time the typist can't catch the words, she just writes (because they're laughing) she just writes "laughter", and lets me know there's a gap I have to listen to.

(Everyone laughing at this)

...Take that away with you, if you like, to show what that was all about.

(Doreen to Kathy): Have you got one of your group?

KATHY: Yes. That's what I was saying .... I've got two, actually. Er ..

DOREEN: I must admit that this is the only one that's run off copies of. I ran up to the photostat machine as I was coming <sup>here</sup> with this one/

DOREEN:(contd) one, and I thought, oh, that's so good, it could do as a play; you could do it at home. So I would just run it off and give you all copies, and you can all take it away.

KATHY: This is the first one - one of the first ones that we did. I think it's the first one in your house, Betty, this one. Listen to the tape and all I can hear is the bird chirping away in the background..... She hadn't - the person who was typing it hasn't really got - doesn't know whose voice it is, so it's just "Voice - and Voice - and Voice" and me. D'you want to look it up? And that was - I think this was the one that - the first one we had (in here?) typed, early November. Can I just - that one that you've got, Betty, this should be it. See, I don't know whether you you'd be able to follow it properly, but let's see.

(All consulting transcript)

DOLLY: Did you get a laugh? .. Like we got? ..... No, I don't think .....

VOICES: (someone reading from transcript and laughing)  
Kathy asks ... "What did you think you ought to be saying?"  
Voice: I don't know. - No. I said to Janette .....  
...(indistinct)..... Oh, I says, I don't know, I says,  
about the wee boy ... (laughing) .... I says, I don't know  
what we were talking about ..... talking about .....  
(Kathy: It's on the next page) ..... about praising the  
kids, you know. However, it was about the wee boy and the  
expression on the wee boy's face.

DOREEN: Is it written down yet, that first piece? Sometimes they didn't bother writing down some .....  
(voice in background ....)  
There's the bird!

Kathy's/

(I think some of  
this speech ---->  
is possibly the  
tape playing in  
background??)

VOICES: Kathy's voice in background;  
tape still being played, with assorted voices over.  
Some laughter.

..... you know how we praise our kids .....

(tape?) → ..... you know, there's a different kind of praise ...  
..... and we couldn't figure out praising them any  
..... other way than what we had praised them.....

DOREEN: You see how hard it is for me to pick it up; and it's very  
interesting and so this is what - the typist picks it up and  
she just puts it down for us then, when we're trying to plan  
(tape still playing in background) our next meeting we don't have to try and - the mind is on  
trying to listen - you can really think what people say.

VOICES: (tape playing in background) ..... Kathy speaks  
(indistinct) .... (a comment about strange voices) ....

DOREEN(?): Maybe that's enough of that one, Kathy. (switches off tape)

KATHY: Actually what somebody was saying in one of the morning  
groups, and I don't (know who else would want to know???)  
if you miss a group - say like Janette's not here to-day -  
if she wants to know what's going on, would it be any use  
for her to have a look at a copy of what we're all saying,  
so she knows what she missed. Do you think.....?

DOREEN: ...Because if you miss it you can come sort of earlier the  
next week, just, you know, try and be really on time, and we  
would give you the copy of the transcript, supposing we have  
it. The typists type it at home. We never see these people.  
You know. They come. We see them for a minute and they  
come and they grab the stuff from us and they run home - you  
know - they're people with small children at home or some-  
thing; there's two of them do it. And then they just land it  
back/

Thursday November 18th, 1976.

Doreen's Tape

*24<sup>th</sup> Nov  
removed to  
Library section*

48.

Present: *name* Mary McSherry (and Teresa)  
*name* May Dunn (and Thomas)  
*Agnes* Ann and Doreen plus Kathy (later).

Content: Books with 2 year olds.

Focus: A selection of books brought by Ann in response to ideas brought up by the parents last week.

-----  
DOREEN: What's happened to Margaret today, why isn't she here?

MAY: Her husband's on short time at work and she's away out to the Social Security place you know, to see if they'll give her any more money but a don't think she'll get it. That's where she's away tae.

DOREEN: I remember she was saying that last time.

MAY: Aye, her husband's on short pay.

Short discourse about Thomas and pen, etc.

DOREEN: Well, what Ann's done this week as you see is pick up every idea you gave her last week. I was fascinated actually listening to Ann on the phone, she was saying to the girl in the library 'I want' ..... every idea you produced last week Ann produced on that phone, things like, you know you were talking about the ones that are on television.....

MARY: Mhm.

DOREEN: .... how that's of interest to the children....

MARY: Parsley...

DOREEN: Oh aye, I've never seen - I don't watch enough television.

MAY: I don't use the children's programme much you know a'm always daen' somethin' in the kitchen or...

DOREEN: Have you every seen this thing then?

MARY: I've seen that on but don't ask me what it's about.

MAY: Or Basil Brush.

MARY: I've seen Basil Brush.

MAY: I like that.

DOREEN: Let's have a look at Basil Brush.

MARY: Does it make a difference what they read as long as they read?

DOREEN: Yes it does to some extent eventually, but the first step is really that they read, yea.

MARY: v for them to read.

DOREEN: Uhuh. Have a look at that and tell, just tell... I don't even know what Basil Brush is about.

MAY: It's jist ae, it's a kin' a puppet effect intit?

DOREEN: Oh, is it a puppet?

MAY: It's a puppet and the other man does the speakin'. I think that's whit it is anyway.

DOREEN: He looks in that picture like a fox is that right?

MARY: Aye, that's right.

DOREEN: It's a puppet that .....

MAY: I think it's a puppet.

DOREEN: Well somebody speaks for him anyway does he is that the intention he's supposed to be able to speak? And is he a 'goodie' or a 'baddie' or is he just like a child or what's he supposed to be like?

MARY: I know what you mean.

DOREEN: Well you know how sometimes a story on television is supposed to be the bad person that frightens everybody and other people....

MARY: And always gettin' into trouble.

MAY: He's always v where he shouldn't be v .

DOREEN: Oh is he? Oh I see - like a child might be...

MAY: Aye, more or less.

DOREEN: Well you see we'll be looking at what a child might get out of that. Does that mean the child feels like he's Basil Brush.

(Joiner - discussion about safety in flat).

ANN: Paddington Bear - do you watch Paddington?

MARY: Oh, aye, that v Paddington Bear.

ANN: That v story books.

MARY: Aye, it should be good. V ACTUALLY Blue Peter that's on the telly.

ANN: Oh, Doctor Who.

MAY: That's a good book for the likes a' Gina.

MARY: Paddington takes the cake I should have said.

MAY: See Gina likes (indistinct) but Peter's no' interested in anythin' like that - he's lookin' for a story effect. You know how he likes a story?

MARY: Aye.

MAY: He disnae want v he'd rather look at the pictures.

MARY: Would 'e?

MAY: Charles - Charles he's mair like Gina. Peter's the same an a' - he jist looks at the pictures.

Is you other v no' here the day, is it Ann?  
Whit's 'er name?

DOREEN: Kathy.

ANN: She's coming - she's gone round to see somebody so she's going to pop in. There'll be more of us than you.

MARY: That's just like it there's more chiefs than Indians.

DOREEN: So you're calling yourselves Indians are you?

Laughter.

I was just trying to find out what that was about - what a child would get out of it.

(Interruption - talk about fire)

DOREEN: What I was trying to say about Basil Brush was that it's one of the interesting things about books to see why a child likes it and that's why I was asking you is it somebody that frightens them - do they kind of enjoy being frightened by something that doesn't get near them. But you're saying 'No' he's somebody that they...

MARY: No. They like some.....

DOREEN: .... could feel was like them.... they do.

MAY: Aye.

DOREEN: Can you think of anything that they like watching that kind of frightens them.

MARY: Even anything to do with ghosts or that. There is a thing about ghosts and there's that, what do you call it, that boy that pulls his tie and he disappears.

MAY: Aye, that's that thing (indistinct).

ANN: Who's that?

MAY: It's on a Tuesday night.

MARY: They could tell you if they were here. I think it's (indistinguishable)

DOREEN: But what I'm trying to say is for you to know the kind of things so that you can supply them with different kinds of books, you know

DOREEN: they like things.

MAY: If you supply them with books you want them to read them.

DOREEN: Mm.

MARY: Remember that Margaret was sayin' about that one about the players that Ann didn't like it, but then she's 10. Well Charles read it and he did like it.

DOREEN: Oh!. And how old is he?

MARY: He's 7. I was askin' him why he liked and he said it was because it was about things that happened long ago, you know.

DOREEN: Well maybe he didn't know them, they were new to him - they were interesting.

MARY: They were new to him - maybe they weren't new to Ann - she knew the difference, he didn't.

DOREEN: Well that's very interesting that he enjoyed those.

MARY: Ann didn't like them - he did, you know that's...

DOREEN: So that's very interesting to see the difference between kids

MARY: It's the ages I think though.

DOREEN: Maybe also being a boy you know sometimes - or just interest in a particular subject he likes...

MAY: That's like ma sister's wee boy he's the same an a' - he loves ti read.

DOREEN: Mh.

MAY: But I think Peter's the opposite , he'd rather jist look at the pictures.

DOREEN: But it's possible to get them wanting to read - you see it's so important to everything else they're going to do in school.

MARY: Peter is good at readin'.

MAY: He is good at readin' but he's no' interested in readin' at home.

MARY: They didn't like readin' before they had the v but now that they've got the v they like to read anything even the paper you know, they like to pick out things from the paper.

DOREEN: But if Thomas doesn't like reading but yet can read, it might be an idea to do this kind of thing with Basil Brush. Does he watch Basil Brush?

MAY: Aye, he watches Basil Brush.

(Thomas at mike)

DOREEN: If he likes Basil Brush then we could get him a book on it because

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Wednesday 24th November, 1976

Afternoon Group

49.

PRESENT: Dolly McKibbens, Ann Ainsbury, Alice Meikle,  
Edith Paton, Betty Jones, Jeanette Stuart.

- AIM:
- (a) Feedback session from the outing.
  - (b) Introduction of the concept of control through language.
  - (c) Planning of the remainder of the course.

- CONTENT:
- (a) Discussion of the outing, and the children's reaction to it. Also listening to part of the tape of the children on the bus.
  - (b) Using a paper-cutting exercise, which will lead to the making of Christmas decorations, in order to show the power of the spoken word in learning new processes, and in retaining the new information.

Begin Tape

DOREEN: .. well that would be why they did that. But we have still got to see if Jordanhill College can give us the tapes for that. They said to us to tell them when we wanted it; give them in writing when we wanted it, and they would let us know. And I was spitting this all over the phone at them, can we come and look at .... (Dolly laughs) ... I said - really - give them it in writing! - because we thought we were going to see them yesterday, you see.

DOLLY:/

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DOLLY: It'll take a wee while to come - they've got other things to do besides ... (laughing) .... to the gaffers, "get it done". (More laughter)

DOREEN: Still, that's exactly - we hope to go on a Friday and see it - and that's still seeing it on their machines - they've not cut anything - and this is what we're waiting for - to see how quickly they can cut it on those machines. They tried to tell us at the College that they had other jobs to do than run after us.... polite at the college! They were students, you see. So, we should get it at least by - what was that Monday you said?... I think it was the 15th - 15th of December.

VOICES: 13th is a Monday ... is it 13th? No, No. 14th is a Tuesday.

DOREEN: Of December?

DOLLY: No, no, I'm sorry. It is the 13th, sorry - you're saying the 15th. 13th..... I've got a big dance to go to on the 14th. That's how I know. Is the 14th a Tuesday?  
(Voices - indistinct)

DOREEN: ....will be finished, actually then, because nearer Christmas you've other things to do.

VOICES: (an indistinct question and some answering comments, also indistinct)

DOREEN: ... instead of having the meeting at this time, we'll have it at four o'clock, so that it's actually a party for the children.....(indistinct)..... we'll get some sort of - jelly and ice cream .....

ALICE: Oh, I've no' brought my purse for the bus ....

DOREEN:/

DOREEN: We've decided we weren't going to charge anybody for the bus - this time because we've got a grant for some transport and our idea was, if we charge everybody a wee bit, then it gives us more for another outing. But in the end, we thought: first one for nothing, and we'll start that the next time: when the money's done, it's done.

VOICES: This is why .....(?) ..... Oh, aye .... That's a good idea ..... that means it's the 13th, 14th, 15th of December... all right ..... (laughter) ..... well, say the 14th anyway; I don't know if ..... (more laughter) ..... best left to ....

DOREEN: It's maybe just as well we're having the party at 4 o'clock.  
(voices in background - indistinct)

DOREEN: Now, what we've got to do until the party, to take up the next two weeks: this week we'll talk about the way children learn to store information and next week we'd actually see if we can make it happen. We'll bring the in from school and after school if you could bring them here - at least some of them you could bring - next week at this time - and, er, try and see if we could teach you this thing. What we were suggesting that we worked on is this, that if you say a thing in words to a child (to Kathy: Have you got your piece of paper there?

KATHY: I was just looking ... (thought I'd left it here last time??)  
Yes.

DOREEN: Yes. We show the finished product first of all and then I'll show the process. (producing the article in question).. All it is - it's really very simple - just (pleat?) it all the way round. Have you ever tried making that?

(an indistinct reply)

DOREEN: /

DOREEN:

Well now, have you ever thought of what difference it makes, the way you teach that - if this was the one you were doing with the children - we're just using this - for Christmas decorations - as an example of a process - you know how ...  
.....(indistinct).... an ordinary doiley... but you know if I was doing this and trying to show it to a child - I'll give you all a sheet now... (Dolly laughing, .... to make men wi') I can't make those wee men (Ann remarks about doileys)...

Now: There's two possible things I could do. I'm going to do it one way first of all, and then the other and I want you to tell me afterwards which of them was easier. Just do what I'm doing now ..... the edges of it ...

(everyone is folding paper)

... and the next step..... (more folding)...

and again ..... (Dolly laughs) ....

now; are you all with me? Have I lost you? I've already lost you, haven't I?

(voices commenting on whether they got lost) ...

No. But that's actually what I wanted to show, Ann. You've - done my lesson for me .... (Ann: ..... got on ... went wrong..)

Yes. Because I wasn't putting it into words, when Ann took her eye off me, she lost where I folded it. You see that? Now, that's often what we do.

ANN:

I'm looking at Nancy. See how that looks - I was just going to do ...

DOREEN:

Yes. You were going to arrive at the same end-product, almost. But I in fact did it differently. I did it that way and you did it longways first.

ANN:

Oh, I see, aye.

DOREEN:

You see? But that's because we were not putting it into words and I think often we teach children a thing and we just - whether it's setting a table, or putting on their clothes or  
.....(indistinct)... tying/

DOREEN:(contd) tying their shoelaces when they're wee tiny children - and we don't put it into words and we keep on doing it with them; whereas, if I had been saying just now, "Put the top and the bottom together. Now put the two sides together." .. you could have gone in the wrong direction..

ANN: I could have. (Laughter)

DOREEN: It is much easier really .... what would you have done in your head, supposing I hadn't been quite sure what I'd said? What did you do .... you said, "I could have" I saw you thinking something in your head straight after that.

ANN: I could have done it wrong.

DOREEN: That's what you were saying. But I thought that you were in your own head repeating my words to yourself. You looked as if you were saying (Ann: indistinct remark..) No. repeating the words.

ANN: .. Just automatically....

DOREEN: But if something complicated as Kathy's .... look how much easier it is if somebody is saying words. You know what I'm talking about. If somebody's actually saying words, you can repeat them to yourself if you've missed the place; you know, if you say, "sides together" ... and you've got the words in your head - "sides" ..... talking about ....

ANN: .....edges together... I just - I glanced away and when I glanced up I thought you were doing ..

DOREEN: And I wasn't. I was actually finishing sides. But because I didn't say it the first time, you could make a mistake and you'd no way of bringing it back to your own mind what was...

ANN: /

ANN:                   ....that was right. (Doreen: Right.)

DOREEN:               ..Where, if you had words to say to yourself again, "What was it she said?" ... She said, "....." You know - once you look at a thing ... "What did she say?"..... top and bottom together - sides together ...

VOICES:               ..... if you had done it that way ..... No, I did .... ... if she'd still done it that way ..... turn it that way ... that's her gieing it - an extra time from what you were daeing it.

DOREEN:               That's right. And so she wouldn't have got the same number of holes and spaces that we were going to get if she ..... and Ann's just saying there just now that it's because I didn't put it into words.

VOICES:               (Ann says something about the sides ...)  
Kathy: That's right .....  
(doorbell rings) .....

DOREEN:               That's exactly what we're after .... knock this off for a minute and we'll warm it up when you come in.  
(Ice-cream van is playing outside)

ANN:                   .... you know what I mean? I wasnae concentrating.

KATHY:                You were saying you weren't concentrating? Wouldn't it ...

ANN:                   I would have heard her saying just now .....

KATHY:                ....but you don't need to concentrate if you hear .....

ANN:                   If I heard, aye. If I heard you saying "sides".

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: Yes: you wouldn't really need to concentrate ..... it's not ...

ANN: Aye, aye. It's listening... if she(?) was listening.

DOREEN: It's not even as big a strain. If somebody's actually putting into words, you don't have to try and remember, because you're memorising the words.

ANN: You're telling .....

DOREEN: I think it's a bigger strain if somebody's just saying, you know, this .... where you're having to say, "Well, what is 'this?'" Whereas if the person says, "Put the top and the bottom together, well there's nothing more to think about it - that's clear.

ANN: They're letting you - they're doing the thinking for you, so what when you're trying to think.....

DOREEN: And if they say, "put the two sides together" .....  
(Kathy: Well there's (less?) to concentrate on) .....  
Well, supposing ...

DOLLY: A kid would need to watch a teacher daeing that.  
(Ann: You'd need to watch .....)  
We don't really need to watch; we just see that if a kid's doing it, it's only natural that the kid's going to watch (Kathy)'Yes! ... and he's going to ... the teacher first ... and every word the teacher spoke he's - the kid'll say, "She says 'Fold it over one way and then fold it over...'" and just like that, a kid might just do it the way Ann did it.

KATHY: ...But that's exactly what we were saying. The kid's (being teacher?) and then she says, "teacher said..." and it's the teacher's words.....  
(Voices together)/

VOICES: (indistinct remarks).....  
.....going in a wee corner now ..... squeeze in here?  
get another one in? Somebody sit here? It's all right -  
Kathy? - Kathy in that wee space. In the window .....

DOREEN: I want to actually stop that for a minute and go back on to  
the dates. We'll just drop that off for a minute because  
we're going this on that tape.  
(Tape switched off for an unspecified interval.)

VOICES: What is it you want, Dolly.....? (reply indistinct)  
That wasn't what you said before, Dolly. (reply indistinct)  
(laughter) ..... that's not my area .....  
What was the one you were telling us about? Playboy?  
(Laughter) ..... see that old man that's .....  
is it Playboy or Playwoman or something like that?  
(More laughter)  
....I was walking with it in my hand, you know, and everybody  
kept going ..... (laughter) ..... like it was a woman ....  
... I went like that ... (more laughter)  
Dolly says something about dirty books; everyone laughs.  
Like the glabber(?) you've seen at Elder Park, you know?

DOLLY: I've seen Harry bringing a book hame and saying, "There's a  
book for you, I don't fancy it." And I've seen me reading it."  
"Oh!" (laughter) And he doesnae ..... might be ... Vanity ....?  
It was good wasn't it?

VOICES: ...On last night ..... (laughter)

KATHY: And did it work?

VOICES: Valley of the Dolls.....(indistinct remarks)  
Oh aye, that's right. That one that was .....?  
(indistinct remarks) .... one of them played different parts...  
What's/

VOICES: What's all the wee bits of paper? (Laughter)  
(Mixed voices, all indistinct)  
....don't know. There's a television series on the now.  
Don't know who it is.

KATHY: This is what we'll be going on to ..... ideas for books.

VOICES: Ann: I cannae see it in the paper ...  
Doreen(?)An adult ....?  
(more indistinct remarks) .....Television.....  
Broadcasting? Yes. You get it ..... that way - broadcasting  
thing.  
Ann: Joanne asked me ..... and I cannae' .....  
I'll ask .....  
..... might be able to tell you .....  
..... use of the libraries .....  
Doreen: Right; thanks very much, Ann.

KATHY: I hate to say this, but I think this is what everybody's  
done with all the arrangements.  
(Laughter)

DOREEN: I want to do two things actually, now. I want to finish  
this piece of folding papers and explain why we're doing it.  
It's all towards the Christmas Party for the children. If  
we just do - er - the process. What we were starting to say  
was that if you want to pick up one of the (tricks?) (tips?)  
it's really terribly important for a child learning things -  
is that you put things into words; you don't just say to them,  
"do this, do that" - you actually name what you do and Ann  
gave us a great example because she's got a .....(indistinct)...  
... very much - and we had folded this paper over and I hadn't  
said anything; I'd just said, "fold it like this; now fold it  
like that." And Ann wasn't watching me - did the second one  
differently. And this is - she'd no means of knowing whether  
she/

Thursday 2nd December, 1976

See 'Reflected' mod 30  
'a lesson learned'  
It follows the meeting & shows  
that the outing was completely  
changed after the session  
- & tries to analyse why.

50.

PRESENT: Mary McSherry, May Dunn and Margaret Griffin

(4 Boys from auto)

CONTENT: Guided discovery. A planned piece of adult-child interaction in which a child will become very aware of the concept, and able to express salient features clearly.

FOCUS: An outing to the Kelvin Hall Carnival, with special emphasis on any one piece of the Carnival that the parents were interested in. The important point is the adults' current interest which they were going to hand on to the child.

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VOICE: .... and I said to her, I said, "Do you see any faults in this room, she says?" .. (Voice: No) .. I says, "Well, Mrs. Young's complaining to me, says I'm no' doing the work right...." ... No. I don't mind if I was getting pulled up if I wasnae daeing it right, but I mean, I've seen me ...

DOREEN: She may just look on a Friday morning ....

VOICE: ... I don't know what she's talking about .. and that's the reason why I don't do - because I do it on a Friday night - know how I go back in again, say at half past three?

DOREEN: If you were to say, "I don't do it on a Friday morning because I'm going to do it .....

VOICE: /

VOICE: ... that's the reason why - because I've got more time, because I've got the Friday, as you know, and I've got the Monday to dae it the whole way, you know ..

DOREEN: You know, (May?) you were going to say to her, "If you want it done on a Friday morning I can do that, but I can't do it as well ... show her ..

MAY(?): Well, that's what .. since I came in on Monday I've done Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, then also this morning - but I'm also daeing to-morrow morning an' all .....

VOICES: (in background, saying No, no, ... it's bad ... to a child) .... are you in trouble? ..

KATHY: Well, now, we hadn't started anything. It's just that, apart from the fact that Thomas .....

VOICE: Oh, I see you going out from the room. D'you want to go in the room yourself?

KATHY: Thomas has just been telling us his favourite books...

DOREEN: It just shows what a few months do. You know. He'll be 2 in January, won't he?

MAY: 2 in January. (Doreen: So he's ...)

(indistinct comment, some laughter)

DOREEN: So you know, by the time they're two, they're ready for - what is it? ... Now what about your fellow? He's obviously interested in books. He's got himself ..... (voice: tearing away) ... When is George's birthday?, (Voice: April.) .. So he's only eighteen months, really. (Infant's voice: Mammy)

KATHY:/

KATHY: In the next few months he'll start developing, because Thomas has been using all the words from last week, because May's been telling him the story.

DOREEN: Have you?

MAY: Aye. I've been telling him stories, aye. Once or twice, you know. All he keeps saying is, "Big bear" and "his eyes, nose.." you know how I was saying that to him here? He keeps saying that, and saying, "The big bear".

(Voice speaking through the above to an infant: Put it back - put it back..)

DOREEN: You should get the story again and see if you can get him on to the size of things at the next point because that's one of the things he was doing with Kathy - he was doing "The big bear"

MAY: Aye ... she was doing that ...

DOREEN: So Mrs. Young will do those kind of things with you - sizes - different kinds of things - not just bears particularly - talk about big things: the big chair, the little chair ... (May: Aye, that's right ... ) .... See if you can get him interested in what you mean by size - just those sizes; you won't get anything more complicated than what big and little and middling is.

VOICE: It's quite interesting to see somebody .... saying "middling". Middling. It's a long time since I've heard that word. .... stayed in Ireland for a while ....

DOREEN: They say it in Glasgow as well ... Yes; I noticed that Kathy was saying "medium-sized and I was thinking, "I wonder what's the proper word for that?" - The one in the middle, isn't it?

VOICES:/

VOICES: ... That's what I always say.  
... Aye. Middle, but not middling.

KATHY: Do you use the word "middling"?

DOREEN: We certainly use it here in Glasgow, but whether in fact you'd find it in the dictionary, I don't know.

VOICE:  
(Irish) ..(indistinct)... well, that's what I'm saying, I've rung a bell there.

DOREEN: Would you use "middle-sized"? What would you use for something that's ....(?).... small?

VOICES: Small, medium and large.  
..... (indistinct) .... last time .....

DOREEN: When you're talking to the children, you'd talk about a thing - you know - naturally talk about it - say it was a wee thing.....

VOICE:  
(Irish) No - I'd just say middle-sized. I wouldn't say middling. But I'm not saying middling is wrong, because I don't know - I mean, you know, maybe in my day ..... I don't know ...

DOREEN: .... (not) wrong, I mean, I don't know that middling's wrong. I'm asking if it was well known.

VOICE: .... but I know the saying - remember I thought I just .....

VOICE: (May?) Aye. I've heard people saying, "There's her middling into somebody's business."

DOREEN: No. That's "meddling".

KATHY: /

KATHY: The sound is very similar.

MAY:(?) They sound the same, aye. I've heard them say "middling".  
You know. Instead of saying "meddling."

DOREEN: .. But used in that sense? ..... Oh, well, maybe I've  
invented a word.

(Laughter, Mixed Voices)

DOREEN: Well now, we were just talking to Eric (?) - he's in a bit  
of a difficulty ..... concerts on - stuff - and these  
children are missing from the rehearsal - you know .....  
so, I don't know; I don't think his children are going to  
come at all. Not if we're going to go in school-time.

VOICES: It's up to yourself...

It's up to whoever takes .....

(Mixed Voices all together)

... Well I could always leave Fraser with my Daddy... Fraser!  
That's bad! (Infant voice calling out)

(May: ..... leave Thomas .....)

(More mixed voices)

..... you said you want to go .... for a change ...

(Doreen: Certainly: We do want the old ones .....)

.... I don't think there would be ... any education out of  
them ...

DOREEN: What about ....(?)... would they be a nuisance coming? It's  
not whether we would want them or not; that's not the point.  
Who would the older ones get on best with - would they be -  
would you have to run after them at all? If so, we might be  
as well to leave them ....

VOICE: When ..... took them, the big ones went their way, you know,  
going/

VOICE:(contd) going to ... and I took the baby ....  
(Doreen and Theresa's mother speaking to Theresa...)  
... I think she knows, an' all!

DOREEN: (to Theresa) ... You don't walk on them - you look at them.  
(Someone else counting, one, two, three, four - come and  
look at this.)

KATHY: May, May, ..... hear him counting? real numbers?

MAY: No; that's - see when I go up the stairs? "One, two, three,  
four", and this is it - this is what it is..... so that he'll  
walk up the stairs and no' need carried ..... 'cos I'm  
exhausted when I get to the close (??)

(Child's voice in background, with someone counting to him)

DOREEN: What was it ..... we talked about before - you talk  
about a thing to the children; it means a lot more than if  
somebody else talks about it. Now we thought we would try  
a wee experiment. We'll go to the Carnival and you choose  
something or other that you're interested in - that you  
enjoy and you take one of your children and you discuss  
your enjoyment with that child - you talk about it - what  
that .....(an aside to Kathy ...)  
If we talk about what we enjoy - supposing it was the fire  
engine - now supposing we started saying, "Who's coming on  
the fire engine with me?" Instead of leaving them to go on  
alone - "Who's coming with me?" - you go - just one .....  
you talk about why you're going on - why you were waiting  
for it .... this about it, that about it, get them to talk  
about it, and then go on it, and when you come home, try and  
watch first of all what they say and if they start talking  
about that, more than anything else, - the one you went on,with them  
the one you talked about to them .... Do you remember a long  
time/

DOREEN:(contd) time ago, May, when we were talking about a boat ....  
(Infant's voice, someone says, "Thank you, love ..."  
.... and - one day we had been eating in your house, all  
those years ago, and - I don't remember whether it was  
Charles or Garry, but I know I was asking what did they do  
in school .... and he said something about making a boat,  
and he was drawing one in steam on the window, and you said  
to him, "Are you sure you made a boat? And immediately he  
came up to you and said "Give me paper and pencil and I'll  
show you a boat". You know - once you'd talked about it -  
and I'd gone on for I don't know how long - as soon as you  
mentioned "boat" - it mattered. And it's this kind of thing  
it would be interesting to see if it goes on that way .....  
till you talk about .....(indistinct)..... that's the thing  
that's more important than anything else - and if you see  
that, then you would be able to do that with books; and say,  
it's a good thing for them to look at; I'll talk about it and  
show my interest in it.

VOICE: When you go there, there might be something else interesting ...  
(Irish)  
(Mixed voices)

DOREEN: I think you want to say that it's something that you personally  
could get an interest in because maybe if it doesn't interest  
you, you can't think of many questions to ask about it.

VOICE: Well, when I said to them about the library, I said, what  
book would you like them to get? What one would you pick?  
Charles says, "What would you pick?"

VOICE: He wanted your opinion.

VOICE: I hadn't a clue, you know, really. I just couldn't answer him.

DOREEN(?): What kind of things are there in the Fairground?

VOICE:/

VOICE: Dodgems; there's the waltzer, the speedway, the kiddies merry-go-round ... a lot of kiddies' things ...

DOREEN: Well could you (pick?) where you're going ..... talking about with them.

VOICE: More educational(?) that's what I'm thinking.

DOREEN: I'm interested in the fact that - what's educational is that it makes them try to communicate with you ... (small child speaking in background) ... it's the process of trying to keep their minds and your mind in tune with each other through a period of conversations - that's the exercise.

VOICES: I think there would be a lot of conversation between ....  
...(indistinct)... all the different things  
(Doreen: Is that not the same thing .....?)  
No. Different things.  
Yes, they've got a mini-zoo.  
That's the kind of things they go for and all.  
I shouldn't say - I thought it was .....  
.....coming out now.....

DOREEN: That's quite interesting, the zoo, because anybody would talk about the zoo, wouldn't they?

VOICES: Yes. ....  
Draw a picture of the animals ....  
... any kind of animals ...

DOREEN: ... beforehand, we'll be talking about it, and certainly when we come back. But really ... that would be particularly educational - the exercise we were talking about - trying to keep in touch with you through a conversation - that's the kind/

201.

T 51

WEDNESDAY MORNING GROUP

8th December 1976.

PRESENT: JEAN  
ELEANOR  
CATHY  
ANN  
KATHY  
DOREEN.

*This group never reassembled.  
This was partly due to a break up  
of friendship among themselves.  
It was also due to negative feelings  
about their own level of knowledge  
Feelings we had not learned to  
bring to expression.*

MARGARET WAS ABSENT.

GRACE WAS ABSENT. (CHRISTMAS JOB).

*These matters did not come to  
the outing - despite all the  
preparation.  
In retrospect we saw how the  
connected with Nov 12<sup>th</sup> prep outfit  
in which they felt aware of inexperience  
- though  
no one  
mentioned it*

CONTENT: Showing the film of the outing and teaching paper cutting  
in order to teach the theory of "Luria".  
Recording follows the presentation of the television  
programme; therefore not much discussion.

Kathy: Now, would you carry on cutting, parallel to the .....  
(indistinct) just for about half a minute.  
Cut down for half a minute ..... parallel to the pole.  
Now then, what is next, we'll be cutting diagonally, right  
up, diagonally, up here. OK. Right. The end bit, starting  
at the edge, not the folding edge, we've got to again cut  
diagonally, right up to the edge. Parallel to the cut that  
you've just made.

Doreen: Right up.

Kathy: Right up to the edge. I'm afraid he's got a long neck,  
this little mam.

Doreen: Now let's see them.

Doreen: Oh, Good!

Eleanor: I/.....

Eleanor: I told you I made it worse.

(Everyone comments together here on the cuttings, and there is lots of laughter).

Kathy: He looks like a baker, with a baker's cap on.

Jean: They should have made that for small people.

Doreen: It's good. Great. Right.  
Just before you do any more, we'll talk about what we're trying to do in this. I know we're trying to make Christmas decorations, but we're also trying to do something else, and I wonder if you could try this out with the children. The point we're really trying to deal with is if you give the children any instructions in words, as well as in actions, at the same time, that means they can store the ideas in their head, so that if you're careful not just to say "Do that" but if you'd say....."parallel to the other line" you know, you're giving them words that they can say it to themselves again. You know if somebody sends you for a message, and you walk along the road saying "What did she say". She said, "Don't bring the red jam" or whatever it was .... you say it to yourself, and that's what reminds you. So if you can give the children words that reminds them of it, you'll find they'll do more of it at home, than if you just say "Come here and I'll show you this wee thing".

Jean: Tell them exactly how to do it, uh-huh.

Cathy: Then they'll ask what parallel means.

Doreen: Sure. But yes, but maybe they'll need to learn the words of that.

Kathy: Now, at one stage you were saying to me "Now which end do we cut/....."

Wednesday Morning 2nd February, 1977

Present:

Ina Donohoe  
Helen Martin  
Helen McLaughlin  
Harry Montgomery  
Susan Ferguson  
Mr. Ferguson  
Doreen  
Kathy

T52

Content:

Guided discovery. The use of specific language for guided discovery - and the acceleration of learning processes.

Focal Activity:

The use of two pictures and a memory game. In the first picture was a pile of books - not very evident. In the second picture was another pile of books - even less evident, but cued by a caption underneath, "Book loving Andy relaxes at home."

The idea was for the groups to see how many objects they could remember from each picture, showing eventually that the caption underneath the second picture focussed their attention upon a particular item. This was then developed into the whole area of their possible usage of guided discovery with their children.

Doreen: We've been looking at pictures and trying to identify all the objects, in a game like in 'Ask the Family', seeing you many objects you can remember from the picture. In the first picture, we remembered almost everything.  
I don't know your first name.

Father: Harry.

Doreen: It's easier to remember just one name for everybody.  
That's what we were talking about - how does a child remember the important features about things. Somebody last week was talking about a child at bedtime. How does a child remember what you've been telling them? One of the mothers was saying last night that her child puts her hands through the neck of her dress - she doesn't think about the arms. How do you make a child think what is important.

Mother: Usually I say, "You put this hand through this arm (of the dress), and the other hand through the other arm", and the next time she does it herself.

Doreen: Because you've said that. That's interesting, because that's exactly what we're going to try to do with this picture - see what we can remember.

Kathy: Swirly painting on the wall. (Then continues round the room with replies). A carpet. A vase. A picture. Two settees. Books.

Doreen: So that's twice you've both mentioned books. What made you notice the books?

Mother: They were on a settee. Something dark, with something light on it, makes you notice.

Kathy: And yet, when we looked at this first one, it was yourself, or was it Helen, somebody said a writing pad or books, but it wasn't until after two or three times round.

Doreen: Look at the books first of all on that one - they're absolutely clear. There's a pile of them on the table and there's one lying open and I don't think.....

Mothers: It's the same colour as the cigarette case. They're too near the colour of the carpet on that one. The other one's clear - you can see it right away next to the dark colour.

Doreen: Actually, it took me long enough to see if those were books because of.....

Picture 2  
maths  
epidiascope  
game  
clocked

Doreen: How many people read the caption?

Mother: Something about Andy reading books?

You're just saying 'Look at that'. You're not actually pointing to a word.

Kathy: That's exactly really what we're saying. If you just say to them 'Look at that. What is it?' Or if you say to them 'Look at that red car in the picture.....'

Mother: Or tell me what that is. Show them something and say 'Tell me what that is'. They don't know what they're looking at. You're showing them a picture and they don't even know what they're looking at.

You show them something and say 'Look at that'. They're not actually looking at anything. If you say to them 'Look at that', and point to a thing, they'll look at that. But just to show them a picture, they don't know what they're looking at.

Kathy: You've got to point to the object?

Doreen: Do you notice the adverts. on television? While they're talking about something, they always have the name of the thing, somewhere in the corner. They're not mentioning it, but they're having it so that it's going into your mind and it makes you look round the picture for where the Fruit and Nut bar will turn up (reference made already to 'Fruit and Nut Case' advert.). If you sit and watch the adverts. you can see how clever they are. If they want you to remember a particular thing they're selling, that thing and its name are always shown, no matter what the picture's supposed to be about. They're always bringing up the word about the name of the thing. It's not only shown, but Cadbury's Fruit and Nut is always sitting on the picture, and somebody's always sitting thinking about it. That's the kind of thing we were doing there. You said you didn't notice the words. We'd written the words.

*only said*  
Mother: I saw it, but I didn't think you'd mention that. I never even noticed it, to be quite honest.

Father: That's one thing I did see.

Doreen: It was meant not to make you think about the writing, but to make you notice the books, and everybody is saying that the books were more obvious in the second picture. If you write the word 'book' that will make them obvious.

Quote  
P12 P18/19  
Susan & glasses

Wednesday 9th February, 1977

A.M. group

Present: Ellen Martin  
George Ferguson  
Susan Ferguson

T53

Content: An introduction to the concept of control and information storing through the combination of language and actions, then follow up activities for the home.

Focal Activity: Paper cutting a dice making exercise with parents - for them to then do with their children. Also suggestions for games and follow-up activities using the dice.

*Social on the 10-15-77  
of Susan's glasses at school  
- George interpreted for Susan  
P15 & P18/19*

- Mother: .....About twenty times, and then go and start with us and then come back, do you not remember it?
- Doreen: You were saying how you use pronunciation - the hard 'g' and the soft 'g'.
- Mother: It's hard for her to learn. She's calling George George, and good's the same letter, and yet it's different pronunciation.
- Father: In that 'On the Move' book, you've got the words in brackets.....
- Mother: And you just write it in yourself. I did that with her, and she did it. I said 'What does that say?' She said 'go'. Then I would give her "goes" and do it again in brackets and she would write it in, and she would say 'goes'. And then I would say, 'What does that say?' She would look at it, I would ask again, and then she would say 'go'. I would say 'that's right'.
- Father: Remember what you said last week about giving her the hard and soft ones? Well, she **did** better with the hard ones than she did with the soft ones. She could understand those ones better. See the two-letter words and the 'g and e's ', and that. The likes of George....when it came to goes, and get, she's getting mixed up with the s's and the e's in between. She's come on.... she's only coming up for six.
- Mother: I'll say it's "g..e...e...ts". Goes is g..o...o...os". I'll say 'look at my mouth'.
- Doreen: It's the vowels, then, you're saying? It's the 'o' and 'e'. But does she find them difficult with another word - if it was 'set'?
- Father: It's just the 'g's.
- Mother: You could tell her about 20 times and then go away and come back and she wouldn't remember it.
- Father: That's her finished that reading book now, and if you go on to the 'goes' and the 'gets' she's just stuck at them.
- Mother: This is her third reading book, so I think she's coming on well. This is it finished. That was her last page last night, and she was only stuck at one word. That was it. So, you know how there are words at the back of the page, well she's still stuck at those words - 'goes' and 'gets' and 'go'. I've been writing it down for her and she's been writing on it.

Doreen: If you go on doing that, it'll come, won't it? You've just got to give it time.

Father: That's what I was saying. I got hold of her at eight o'clock this morning, and I sat her down and I was reading the book with her, saying 'go' and asking her what it was. She would look at me and say 'I don't know', 'I don't know'.

Doreen: She looks at you when she comes to it, then? So she's aware as soon as she sees it that she can't do it.

Mother: I thought of maybeasking the teacher if she's the same in the class. She might be better - she might be able to do it in the class.

Doreen: She's in Copeland Road?

Mother: Yes.

Doreen: Has Alan Locke been round to the house at all?

Father: Alan was round before, and he's not been back since.

Mother: He said she was getting on smashing, right enough, at school.

Doreen: Well, give her time, then. He's trying to go round all the children, now, in that district. In Moorpark, who are in that class, so it's going to take him a wee while to get back to you. If you've got any particular worry, just ask him to come.

Mother: Joy's a wee gab, she picks things up quick. She tells Susan to shut up. 'Shut up', she'll say. 'Shut up till I read that'. She's a wee gab. Usually wee gabs come on better.

Doreen: Is she in the Playgroup, now?

Mother: She's in the Nursery. She's been in there for two years.

Father: George is in the Nursery along with her. They both went at the same time.

Doreen: O, they're both in the Nursery, they're not in the Playgroup. I see. I thought they were in the Playgroup.

Father: She didn't want to go to that. She didn't want to stay when we took her over.

Mother: She ran away. As soon as she saw the door, she ran away.

Doreen: But she's happy in the Nursery?

Father: O, she's very happy in the Nursery. I don't know what it was about the Playgroup, it was just something about it.

Mother: She used to go into the Disco, and among all the big ones - she gets frightened. She used to run out screaming 'They're all pushing me, I'm getting squashed.' Wee George, he used to love it - he used to fall asleep.

Doreen: And he was only how old?

Mother: He was only about three.

Father: Two, he was only two.

Mother: And the woman said, 'The next minute I'd look round and he'd be sitting on the chair..zzzzzzzz

Father: At the Disco?

Mother: In the Disco, aye.  
It's a change from a lullabye, isn't it?  
So there's a Nursery and a Playgroup?

Doreen: And there will be a toy library. We would hope that by the end of the year every child from Moorpark who is under school age, between three and five would have a chance of some kind of pre-school.....

Mother: I think the library's a great thing for them. They've all taken it up.

Father: Before that, you used to see all the kids going away down to the park, and then they used to say 'I'm not going away down there', and they finished with it. This is handy. I used to go down there and I chucked it for a while. I'd be all day taking books out.

Kathy: When it takes two minutes to go along to it, it's different from half-an-hour on the bus.

Father: This is more cosy than a library, anyway. In the library there's all these books, and you've nobody to talk to. You're just going up there and handing the girl the book. You can come up here and talk to them no problem. I think this is what the kids find as well. It's a lot more friendly than down there. Instead of just 'Hurry up and get your book', you can take your time and browse round.

Mother: .....has loads of patience, doesn't she? She really has.  
I'm cracking up - I just shove them all out the door.

Father: The last time I came up they were all screaming....

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Kathy: When all the kids come out of school at 4 o'clock it's packed - it's mobbed. When we first opened we had Tommy at the door sending some people in and some out, because the house was so full, and they were all in the library - they were queueing up down the stairs and in the close.....

Doreen: Yesterday at half-past-four they'd got some boys down from school to stamp out this corner at the bathroom door. They've got other people..... I think he stamps out for the people who've already joined and in the kitchen they take them if they haven't joined, and the books themselves are in the library there, and Tommy's doing his doorman. He was saying at half-past-four to children, 'You're too late - closed now'. It really was funny.

Mother: It's fantastic, it's great. He's awful good at helping you with things.

Doreen: That's the man who lives down below us. He made all the shelving next door.

Kathy: He's making things for the library as well.

Mother: That puzzle as well. The jig-saw. That was great. It's a cartoon - Flintstones.

Father: I've not seen it.

Mother: Oh, it's great.

Kathy: The kids are all trying to put it all together and trying to make a picture out of it and then.....

Mother: He's very handy, and he's awfully helpful. If you go to him with a problem, he's really great.

Doreen: Here's Tommy's jig-saw.

Mother: It's really good the way he's done it.

Father: He's taken crayons across it, aye.  
(Everybody does the jig-saw).  
That's very ingenious.

Kathy: And it's pieces that the kiddies can....

Mother: Easy for them to fix in together.  
Not all that easy!!

Doreen: Tommy did it on square paper, first of all. He would have designed it to match, but then he realised he already had the squares so he just put what was already on the squares.

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Doreen: Well, where are the rest of our bodies, today?

Father: Two missing, aren't there?

Mother: Maybe it's too wet. Ann McGlaughlin, Ann <sup>Joan</sup> O'Donahue and Harry. He was good last week, wasn't he? Maybe he's had to go somewhere and he's going to come after that.

Doreen: They've a number of children at home, of course.

Mother: There's more kids in the scheme than anything.

Kathy: There are lots, aren't there? Still, there are masses of people to play with...

Mother: So they have - plenty of pals.

Doreen: And it's so safe. I watched a child yesterday, coming back from the van, and the van was quite a distance away from her own home, but it didn't matter. She had no fears, and she was stopping to everybody that happened to talk to her in the district. She would know most people there. The occasional stranger would be part of a group.

Mother: They all know each other, that's a good thing. If I'm looking for one of them, I just ask one of the wee boys in the street, and he'll say, 'She's round there'. They know one another.

Father: They're all related. Their granny stayed ~~here~~, then their mother. It's all family.

Kathy: That's good for babysitting. My mother's in London, that's absolutely useless. My next door neighbour's eldest daughter babysits.

Doreen: Well I think we had better get on with our game.

Kathy: You should have seen me last night trying to do these things. You haven't got to laugh if I get them mixed up. You should have seen me trying to watch television and trying to cut these things up at the same time. Shall we....

Doreen: <sup>to see if we can?</sup> I was going to suggest if you'd like to go up to the Centre now and meet Nancy and Ian who've both got interesting things to show you. Nancy is the person responsible for the pre-school stuff, so she will show you all that. Ian is our information officer who puts it all together and tells us where we should be and with whom we should be and how many people should be there. (Directions for getting there).

Kathy: Are we going to go straight into this, or are we going to talk about the sort of things that anybody would like to do?

Doreen: I think perhaps we should.....we just began to say what are all these scissors for....

Kathy: Anybody want a haircut?

Doreen: We were talking last night about planning these meetings, so we had a kind of first run last week, but really the next step is to stop and say, 'What would you find useful'? What are the things you would like your children..... you would like to help them to learn and you might find yourself discussing here. One of the fascinating things I thought last week was that it was Ellen and George talking out about the letter 'g' and not us at all. That really brought out the point about learning. And to listen to you do it this morning, talking about working it with them, the three of you were all involved with this one-letter process and in a way that's what we'd like to be doing - just offering opportunities for us to learn among ourselves. It's not that some of the people know all the answers, because we don't have children, so we're not in a position to say how a child really reacts to a situation. All we can offer you is what the books say, what hundreds of children have done in maybe another area, and therefore it's likely that a child will learn this way, but you're the experts who know 'Does your child learn this way', so you've got something to offer us, then. We want to use the examples you have to offer us. It's a two-way thing and we'd like to start by saying 'What would you like to talk about at these meetings?' and we'll say what we'd like to talk about, and we'll make a plan of the whole thing.

Father: *gentle* I see, yes. I think the main thing basically with any kid is getting them to read and write. And different colours as well. You say to a kid 'That's white, that's water, and that green stuff is not water, you're not supposed to touch that.' The kid then says, 'Well I've not to touch that bottle, but that bottle's all right'.

Doreen: So it's important to distinguish between different things. I'd be very much with you on that. There's a whole lot in that in the whole educational process, apart from the fact that you're maybe talking about poison or something, there's also a big thing in school - to be able to tell the difference between things. That's one of the things we're going to be talking about from our angle. How do you teach a child to know the difference? You were using

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Doreen: colour, just now, as an example. There are all different ways in which we learn to distinguish one thing from another - colour is one of them.

Father: My wee boy, George. I painted his room, the door, skirting boards and windows, green. When he goes outside he sees the colour of something and he says 'that's the same colour as my room, daddy.' He knows actually what that colour is. If he sees the colour any other time, he's going to know that. So that colour's off my hands, I can go on to another colour with him. That's the kind of thing that's important to kids as well - distinguishing different colours.

Mother: The youngest one of mine, James, he's eight. He can write, he can spell, he can do anything. But his writing, you can't see it, it's too small. He's a good wee writer, but it's very small. I even got a letter from the teacher. She can't read it. I've tried with him. He's a great speller, but he will not write.

Father: I found years ago....I used to write like that myself. It was neat and it was nice. But when I wrote a bit larger, it wasn't so neat. But then I had to say to myself when I write a letter I'm not caring if it's neat and tidy, as long as they can understand what I'm writing. It is a hard thing to do.

Doreen: That's quite interesting, George. You're really saying that maybe his problem is that as he does it bigger he has the control over the shape.

Mother: I've tried with him. The bigger ones have helped him, but no.

Doreen: I wonder if he did other things with his hands, like painting and drawing....

Mother: O, he can do all that.

Doreen: Maybe what George is saying is that he feels unable to control the shape of the letter and therefore if he was able to control design, if he was trying to design neat things, trying to draw a puzzle, so that he could get a sense of control on his hands.

Mother: I must bring in a bit of his writing. You couldn't read it. It's really..... I wear glasses and I can't see it! It's terrible.

Doreen: Now, Susan, have you any thoughts.

Susan: I think in schools they should..... the likes of Maths, well I'm hopeless at counting and that's all we used to get at school. I just never could understand a thing. The teacher was more out of the classroom than he was in it. He used to just write the sums on the blackboard and say 'Right, get on with it.' You didn't have a clue, and that's hopeless. In your primary school you don't get sums like that, and when you go to your secondary school you've definitely not got a clue what the teacher's talking about.

Mother: Mine used to get mixed up with the adding and multiplying. The teacher took him aside and she taught him that, and now he's great. I definitely think there, that they're good with them. They've got an easy way of doing it with them.  
*Helen*

Susan: When I left school, my sister was going to her secondary school, and when she got her sum book she was sitting one night, and I said 'Come on and I'll help you.' I'm telling you, I didn't know what it was. I'm really hopeless at counting.  
*Ellen Martin*

Mother: Well, I think the young teachers are fantastic. That one that Margaret's got is really.... I've never met a teacher like her, she's great. I don't know her name. She makes sweeties, and bowls and ornaments.  
*Helen Martin*

Father: If a teacher's got an interest in the thing the pupils see that he's got an interest as well. Then the pupils..... When I started secondary school I knew nothing about Science and this teacher always said if the Headmaster sent for him 'I'm with a class just now, I'll come later'. If you were sitting thinking about a problem in a book, he'd come over and ask what was the problem, and show you how to do it. He showed interest in it. As he showed more enthusiasm, you begin to show more interest as well. It worked better that way. If the teacher goes away and tells you to get on with it, that's no encouragement to anybody.  
*George (Susan's husband)*

Doreen: But that's true of parents as well.

Father: If the teacher shows enthusiasm, the biggest majority of them will begin to, and even those ones that don't want to know will begin to know a wee bit about it as well.  
*George*

Doreen: And if the parents and the teachers both are showing enthusiasm for the same thing from their different angles - you don't have to be saying it the same way, in fact it would be boring if you say it the same way.

Mother: Everybody's got their own way.

Doreen: The child's getting supported, because they're talking about it at home and they're talking about it at school, it must matter.

Father: When I was leaving school my dad asked me what I wanted to be - he wanted me to be the same as him, a welder - and I wanted to be a joiner. I started off in the woodwork. But even at that my dad would come in at night and I would ask him, and basically when it comes down to it the two of them are actually the same, because you're still making things. It's adding up and counting and subtracting and that. I'd sit in the house and at college you'd never get the same subject for a week, you were doing different things all the time. When I was going home at night my dad was more interested in the college than in his own job. He would say to me 'I never got this.' Him showing interest in what I was doing helped me. It helped me when I went for my exams.

Doreen: What college did you go to?

Father: Stow College.

Doreen: And your father's interest.....

Father: When I went at first I wasn't all that interested. When I was there for about six months eventually I got on to joinery., The only thing that really kept me going was my dad's interest in it. My mother's couch broke, all the springs went - my dad said he couldn't do anything with it, and I went round and fixed it in ten minutes. When her pram broke, my dad fixed that. The two things worked in well. I think it basically works the same with the kids - the younger kids. You've got to have an interest before they'll have an interest.

Mother: If they come in and tell you something, you don't just say 'Aye, all right,' and walk away. I'll say to the kids, 'What did you do in the nursery, today?' 'Did you draw mummy a nice picture?' If they bring in a picture I'll say, 'What's that?' And they'll say something like, 'It's a horse', and you can't even tell what it is. I ask if it's a horse running or jumping, and they'll say 'Yes mummy, it's a horse jumping.' I think that's a better way to do it, to say 'What's that' instead of saying 'I can't be bothered, I'm too busy.' I think you should just leave that down and ask what they did today or what did they get or what happened. Same with Susan, I'll say 'What did you get at school, today?' She might say, 'I just got milk and reading'.

- Mother: ...If they help one another. My brother got killed and his kids got put into a home, and his wife went into hospital - she took a nervous breakdown, so when they got put into the home, they were all....ages. The wee one, Daniel, was actually younger, but the three girls were all near one another. You've no idea...they were in the home about six months. The bigger one would show the wee ones how to clean their teeth, how to dress themselves, and she was only about nine herself, and yet they.... now, these kids can do everything for themselves. There isn't a thing they couldn't do. I had them for about a year, but her sister came for them and she took them away. By the time they came to me from the home they could do everything. They help one another.
- Susan: I'll say, 'Come on, you try and dress yourself, you're getting a big girl now.' She's five. I'll say 'There's your tights, away you go and put them on.' And she'll say, 'I'll get myself ready as well, then.'
- Doreen: George was talking about the 'g's. What were you going to do?
- Mother: I wasn't going to do anything last week. This week I'll try and get mine onto the writing bit, and see what I can do with him.
- Father: I think if he just concentrates on making it a wee bit bigger - never mind the neatness. When I was at college I used to do that as well, you know, write neat.
- Mother: I'll get him something he can draw. Something he can make something out of.
- Kathy: Has he got any real big paint brushes? The big chunky ones that he can't really do tiny little.....
- Mother: He does draw.
- Kathy: If he gets used to big shapes with paint brushes and.....
- Doreen: Try a newspaper, and the child gets the sense that he can waste it if he likes. He can draw big pictures on the newspaper.
- Father: Joyce does that. At night she'll say, 'Daddy going to let me see your newspaper?' She'll see the big writing, and the next time I look and there's about five or six words all scribbled over.
- Mother: I'm afraid he'll get into the habit, and he'll just stick at this. He's getting older.

Father: When I went into secondary the teacher said 'Look, George, you'll need to write bigger than that.' 'I can't see it.'

Doreen: I think George maybe has the point, there. At least you can't see how untidy it is when it's tiny.

Father: The teacher says to me, 'Look, it doesn't matter if it's untidy, as long as I can read it, that's the main thing. If I can't read a word on your exam paper, I'll give you an 'x'. It could be right, but if I can't read it, how can I give a tick?' Then I got afraid, and started writing it big. I actually picked up 20% on my marks than I had had from the previous year. I went from about 7th bottom to third.

Mother: My Margaret's eleven. ...They go to Govan High after the holidays. She's waiting to go into hospital, she's got a blockage in the nose, and it's affecting her ear. The twins are in the same class, but she came in crying yesterday. She said 'the teacher asked me something and I couldn't hear it, and he shouted out to the whole class 'You'll need to speak up a bit, she's a bit deaf.' She said he let the whole class know I was deaf. I'm not deaf, it's just because I've got a sore nose.' She's thinking 'I'm going into hospital and I want petted.' I say 'You'll just need to get out of that, and tell the teacher that you can't hear right. She sits at the back and I told her to sit at the front. She's going to get behind in her lessons.

Father: It's the same as my father. He's got something in his ear, they think it's a cyst in his ear. He can't hear through it. He kids on about it. He takes it as a great joke, because once he goes in and gets it cut, it'll be alright again. He was sitting the other night, and my mum said, 'Do you want cabbage?' And he says, 'Look, don't shout in that ear, I'm deaf. In there.' It is comical. He'll sit next to the television and he's going to turn it up loud - you can hear it down the stair! We'll go to the close and say 'I wonder if my mum's in. Well, my dad's in, because you can hear the television.'

Mother: She'll sit and talk to my man, and he just says 'aye' and 'no' and she hasn't got a clue what you're talking about.

Doreen: She must be missing a lot of teaching.

Mother: I took her up and bought her a hearing aid, but she'll not wear it because it's a big one. She says 'I'm not going out with that on.' I'll

Mother: say, 'Well you're doing somebody else out of it that needs it, that could be wearing it.'

Doreen: I wonder if we could just look at those different things like that just for a minute before we start. <sup>Sus</sup> You were talking about your eyesight. They kept you back until the teacher made you get your glasses.

*Shelia*  
Susan: When I went to school I didn't wear them at all and I used to sit at the back of the class. I couldn't see the board and I wouldn't say to anybody. She kept wondering how I wasn't getting on as well as the rest. It was just one day she got hold of me and said to come in a minute. She said 'Sit there.' That was at the back of the classroom. She wrote something on the board and said, 'What does that say?' I'm trying to see it, and I couldn't see anything. She said 'Sit there.' And she said, 'What does that say?' I still couldn't see it. She said she thought there was something wrong with my eyesight, and I started crying. She said, 'I think when the doctor comes, I'll send for your parents.' My dad hadn't been keeping well, so there was only my mum. We were all to get a medical, and I went in and he tested my eyes.

Doreen: You see if you'd had that earlier, you'd have picked up a lot of your schooling better. A lot of your problems stemmed from that.

*Shelia*  
Susan: They asked my mum if there were any illnesses or anything. My mum said that I had had the measles when she was a child. They said that maybe caused it with my eyes.

*99/22/20m*  
Father: It took five years to get her to wear the glasses when she went out.

*Shelia*  
Susan: It wasn't that, see when I went to school it was, 'Four eyes.' It was horrible. I used to go into school and go to the top of the stairs and throw them down.

*John*  
Mother: The kids are bad to one another - they hurt each other.

*Shelia*  
Susan: It wasn't for a while that I came out of it. My brother fell, and he nearly lost his eye. The edge of the dustbin went right into his eye, and he had to start wearing glasses as well. I used to say, 'Aye, who's calling me four eyes now?'

Doreen: Can we hear what you're saying about your daughter's deafness?

Quote

Tape side 1

Doreen: That's the kind of thing you could try with your wee girl. How many words can you make up with the letter 'g' in it? If you look in the Express, you can see how it's written out, and you can make up your own, easier one.

Father: I like buying these puzzle books, these general knowledge ones and that. I've got quite a few in the house, and some of them aren't even finished. She never used to be interested in that, and she's picked up a lot more in school with that. In it there's one that has got a lot of muddled words (general description of this particular game). It's actually spelling.

Mother: It's the same one as with the animals. The kids go round the dots. By the time they get to a wee bit, they say 'I know what that is.' That's a good thing.

Father: I've picked up a lot of puzzle books myself. There's some things that you've not a clue what it means, but you can actually do the rest of them and then..... I'll say to her, 'What's a young goat?' and she'll say, 'I don't know.' Well, it's a kid. The rest of the letters just fall into place, and she'll say to me, 'That's a kid'. Even although you haven't done that one, it still comes because you've done the rest. I think with the puzzle books, it is a very intelligent thing doing it that way.

*Quote*

Doreen: Susan, the more I hear you talking about your eyesight, the more I realise your education has been suffering because of that. You are aware now that you could have done it, and it makes you angry now that you haven't been able to do it earlier. I think once you can look back and see why a thing happened you're better able to try and put it right. ~~I know I missed a whole chunk of my early education.~~

Father: *George Tom* I used to say to her, 'Everybody knows you wear glasses, so even if you haven't got them on, people still know.' Eventually after about four years of that, she started to wear them all the time.

Susan: *Susan* It was taking three or four weeks to get them fixed, because it was special glass. The glass was too heavy, and the frames were snapping in the middle. My dad paid a fiver for my glasses. That was dear. I only had them a week and they snapped right in the middle, because the glass was too heavy. He had to give me drops for my eyes. I had to take time off school because I couldn't see anything. I was straining my eyes so much trying to do my work, and the teacher would say 'You're not doing it.'

Mother: There's a wee boy next door, and I've got an awful habit of laughing. You don't mean to laugh, but his glasses got broken, and the kids were all playing at kick the can, and I was at the window. The wee soul was trying to kick the can and he couldn't see it. It was the most comical looking thing.

Susan: The bit I used to hate was that if my glasses were broken, and I was waiting for a bus, I couldn't see the number of the bus coming. Sometimes the bus would go right past you.

Doreen: So, next week we'll have done blocks, we'll have done cubes of some sort, and see what the kids have done with them. If you think of how you said it to them and how the words.....

Doreen: Who was missing today, whom you might see?

Mother: (Somebody) McLaughlin. I'll take them to her.

(General talk about how many dice they're going to take).

Mother to see Ina O'Donahue on Monday.

Wednesday 16th February. <sup>77</sup> Morning group

154

Present: Helan Martin + Mother  
Susan Ferguson  
George Ferguson  
Doreen and Kathy

Content: The importance of identifying and naming the salient features of a concept.

Focal Activity: Identification (Animal/vegetable/mineral) game in which the group had to guess an object behind Kathy's back, by taking specific features - shape, size, colour, texture, use etc. - then relating the theory to practical usage with the children.

no major points

Mother: You know when I was cutting, I couldn't mind the numbers, and I said 'I know it's like a cross'. It all worked in just the same.

Kathy: And it worked in the end?

Mother: It worked in the end, and you know the playing records? We didn't do the numbers, we did the letters, and we tried to get a record that started with the letter. Say it started with a 'g', we tried to get a record that started with 'g'. We played this on Thursday night. It was Thursday night, because Friday night we were at the Disco. It was great. Whatever letter turned up, we tried to get a record that started with it.

Kathy: An interesting point was that you said you couldn't remember how to cut the dice.

Mother: I couldn't.

Kathy: And then you thought, 'It's in the shape of a cross'.

Mother: It just came - I just remembered it.

Kathy: But isn't that exactly what Doreen was saying last week, that you can see how to do it if somebody shows you, but if you've got the word in your mind - you had the word 'cross', the picture of a cross.

Mother: A cross - I had a go and I did it. She was killing herself at me.

Kathy: Did you get the kids to make them?

Mother: We all made them. Margaret said that they did that at school. They did it with that paper, what do you call it? You know how it's all colours? We used to make wee things out of it.

Susan: I know what you mean - that sticky stuff.

Mother: They made it with that and just thingmied it all round it. She said 'We used to get that at school.' It was good.

Kathy: Did you make one?

George: I didn't make one, because ~~me~~ mind the ones you gave us? Well, I showed the kids, and they liked it to start with and then they lost interest in it.

Susan: I think it's because they're so young.

George: Susan was in, and I said, 'Right, what's that?' She said it was a 'g'. George said it's a 'g'. I said 'That's the same name that you've got.' He said 'No, my name's George.' Eventually these two lost interest, but I was sitting playing with Susan with it. Eventually she lost interest.

Kathy: You can't expect when they're really young to keep an interest in anything.

Helen: No, they lose interest, they really do.

George: Funnily enough, we've got dice in the house.. The old dice, you know? They were throwing them all night, and saying, 'Look, Daddy, there's a number there.' They played away with them no bother. I think it was the words that really got them.

Kathy: It's probably much easier with the numbers when they're playing with it.

Helen: .....these wee pictures. Throwing the dice and saying 'What's that?' Look for something in the picture starting with the letter.

Susan: I think we'll need to wait until they're a wee bit older, because I don't think they really understand. I think we'll need to wait till they're at school.

Helen: They lose interest in it.

Kathy: Young children of that age can't concentrate on anything for more than about 10 minutes.

Helen: They can't. They lose interest.

Susan: They don't even know what you're talking about.

Kathy: O, that's great - at least some of it worked. Now the sort of things that we were going to do today - before we actually start, we'll need Doreen. We're going to really wait until she comes along.

George: How did you get on with the wee one the other night?

Helen: He's still not doing it George. I tried, but he's still not doing it.

George: It'll probably take a wee while.

Helen: I even thingmied him. But I think I'll write a wee letter to the teacher, and ask her whether he makes a mess or not, just to maybe let him do it until he gets into the right way.

Kathy: So he's not writing something in his exercise book or.....I was thinking, on Friday Nancy was teaching us how to make felt pens. All you do is cut strips of dowling and with something like a knife you chisel the ends, so it's almost a point, get a piece of felt and stick it over the top, and bind it with cord and glue, and dip it in ink, and it's a felt tip pen. And it's about tuppence. And if it's a thick one that he's using, he can't make tiny shapes.

Helen: I've got felt tips.

Kathy: The little ones? They're fine, aren't they? But

Wednesday 16th February, 1977

Afternoon Group

Present:

Mary McSherry  
May Dunn  
Margaret Griffin

T55

The tape is not a transcript of the group meeting - but a conversation between the 3 mothers before the afternoon's activities began.

They were discussing some recent happenings within the area:- the rowdiness, vandalism and crimes perpetrated by the local teenagers; - their inability to do anything about this, because of repercussions on their own children; and this worry about declining standards in the scheme.

.....about 3 or 4 in the morning. So one night - I was up at the time. I was expecting George and my nerves were shattered - I couldn't get any sleep. At 2 o'clock Gavin was on the beat and I said he would need to do something about it or else. Put a complaint in - he got them for standing at the close, but they ring the bell and go out on the landing window. I said if he didn't do something about it I would go down to his office and report it.

Doreen: At 3 in the morning?

Aye. They borrowed my pram and told me it was for their Auntie to.....put stuff on the railway, and I gave it to them. It's to go stealing. Boys of 13 and 14.

They wait for the vans coming in in the morning to the shops, and steal from them.

You think you're doing a good turn.....

Doreen: We've just put the tape on because this is kind of useful for the rest of the team who are not here to hear this....

But maybe if they heard that it would be people belonging to them, and us too... Somebody in the Community Centre before, and said something out of place and the woman behind me..... you can't open your mouth.

Doreen: we're talking about people in the team - people like Nancy who's away out now. I think they would like to get the picture that you're giving us of what the problems are.

It was Charles who came in and told me that they had stolen the television in the back of the van....what was I to say to him? He knows. He hears him and I talking at night and we'll say 'They can't do anything with him'. They told us they could do nothing with him.

Doreen: I'm amazed to hear you talking about (a Royal Mail.....?)

Kathy: They actually broke into a Royal Mail van?

We didn't actually see them taking the stuff, but we saw them in the back with the stuff.

I stayed down low behind the curtains. If they had seen me at the curtains I think they would have smashed the window.

Doreen: And you said you saw them moving a television set along the road?

That's right, on Monday. Did you see them as well, Margaret? No, that woman was telling us about it. They took it out the van. The man must have been up fixing another telly, and when he came back it was away. He must just have jumped into the van and drove away.

Whereabouts was the van?

Two closes up from us - 46.

We watched them - they saw us watching them, and they put the television down and ran up a close. They stood behind a wall until the man went away, and then when he was away, they took the television out.

Doreen: And somebody was telling me about the use of the old railway lines, that they dump stuff there?

That's right, but they can't do that now, because the men are working on it - they're building on it now.

Doreen: At the meeting at the Tenants' Hall, they were talking about people breaking up cars.

That's right, it's the same family.

Last night the men were bulldozing on the railway, and they took the tractor, and they were playing up and down the railway with it. They took the ginger van down to the railway and tried to sell the ginger for 8 pence.

People are buying it, this is it. They do, they sell the stuff on the street.

Kathy: And you say that all this is during the day?

(Talk about all the different times these activities were going on - 11 o'clock in the morning- 4 in the afternoon etc.)

They never get caught, this is the thing.

They never get caught, but see if you were to go and tell the police or anything, your kid would get caught and get involved and everything.

There's not enough people getting together.

But we were told at that meeting that if you see anybody doing anything, tell them and give them their names, and you don't have to ~~bear witness~~, but that's a load of rubbish.  
bear witness

They asked us to be witnesses.

That's right. They said it would be alright if you told them, but now they want you to be a witness.

Kathy: But even if you're a witness, can you not keep your name a secret - you don't have to publicly stand up and.....

But it goes to court. There's a woman up the stairs, and she phones the police and tells them that there's a stolen car going round Broomloan Road and then Keller Street and out again, and that if they come now they'll catch them. An hour after, they come, and they're away. I've heard her on the phone.

Doreen: But you were saying just now that you can name these people as the Macphersons who are doing this?

We see them, and they know that we see them. Sometimes there's other people, but he's always there.

That Joan Douglas, she's always there. She's the ringleader. She does all the shops - the shoe shops, she's done R.S. McColl's, Boots got done, all in one week.

Doreen: I thought she had gone to Canada?

But she's back. Once she's finished school she's to go to Canada for good. They've been away from my close for a while but the summer's coming up.

The police were at her door yesterday. She's never been caught though.

She was in a Home before, wasn't she?

I don't know, they get away with plenty in the scheme, anyway.

I know the detectives were looking for her, yesterday, anyway.

Doreen: You were saying that there are houses that harbour them. There are places where they can stop?

O, there are. I don't know how half the mothers let their girls out to that time in the morning. I don't know where they sleep.

Kathy: This is a picture we don't see at all.

It's just the way they live. They sleep all day and are out all night.

It ruins the place for other people. Good people get involved also. When you go anywhere they say 'Where do you come from?' When you say 'Wine Alley', they said 'I wouldn't go in there'.

I refused one night - I wouldn't go into Wine Alley.

X refused Mary one night. (This could be that they wouldn't  
They let her in, not that she refused).

They haven't been in it for years, and you don't tell these people that it's that bad, you say that it must be a long time since you were there, and things are probably a lot different now.

All the meetings they've had, the right people are never there. You're preaching to the converted the whole time. I wouldn't say anything about the Centre, I think it's great, but there'll always be the vandals, and you can't do anything about them.

Doreen: What about the next generation?

But it's the young ones that are the worst. About 9 or 10, and that's them coming, up. They'll be the next ones. They get away with what the older ones can't, and they're teaching the younger ones. The ones at 14 or 16 are going about with kids at 10, because they can get punished over 16.

My Anne, she goes up to every week now. I can't let her....she stands in the street with Paddy McLaughlin....

There's no place for the kids to play. They chase them off the street and off the back. I say where can the kids play?

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Thursday 17th February 1977 pm

A Baby Burned

This is the transcript of a conversation which took place after a meeting in the flat. The incident described happened before the modernisation of the houses in Moorpark, when the electrical rewiring was long overdue and each house had only one power point per house.  
(flat) (flat)

MARGARET: ..... Well I had him up in the house - it was windy. I'll never forget that day. It was windy and his wee cover was blowing off the pram all the time. It was a wee girl that said, "Margaret, I think you'd better take wee Martin up, because he's getting cold." I says, "Well, I'll take the pram up." And I - don't know if it's in here - there used to be cupboards in your living room. Well, we took the cupboards away from the living room and made it into an alcove - so, I always put my children there. So - I don't know - I went into the living room and was making my man's tea - I was peeling potatoes an' that for my man coming in. I said, "That's funny", I said, "Smell of tar - more like rubber burning." I said, "I wonder what that is." So I went out into the lobby. Oh, my God, my hoose - it was flooded and it was - flames - you know yon black smoke - I thought it was a tyre - you know, the motor's tyres - I said it'll be one of the weans oot in the back burning the tyre oot of a motor.

DOREEN: And what was it?

MARGARET: An electrical fault. The wires were supposed to be done. The hooses were supposed to be done a long while ago.

BETTY: I thought you meant it was the cables ....

MARGARET:/

MARGARET: No. It was inside the hoose.

BETTY: I thought it was outside.

KATHY: Oh, what a horrible experience.

MARGARET: Well we .... my roof was all burnt but the fire was - that's what the firemen said, he said, "I don't understand it." He said, where the fire was, it wasn't near it, the fire. It was the other side of the wall. And the fire was right - there wasn't a roof - on my ceiling and you could see right into the woman's hoese up above us.

DOREEN: And the child was burned to death?

MARGARET: Aye. Well, we had a public - a private inquiry - then we went to a public one - all the men round about here, right enough, they all helped me - they smashed my windies - tried to get wee Martin out, you know. Couldn't get him out. But they said we had a - you know - we all broke into the windows well it was the black smoke .. and your television all blew up and everything - I mean it was horrible.

DOREEN: And the men from outside broke the windows trying to get in?

MARGARET: Aye, see it was a man across the road - he seen the smoke belting oot the window. And I went down the stair. I was in a ..... All I was shouting was, "Oh, my wean, my wean, get my wean out." So when I was - when the lassie across the road she said, "What's the matter wi' you, Margaret?" I said, "Oh, I've got to get my wean - my hoose is on fire." That was - well it was lucky there were two polis .. at St. Saviour's School wi' their walkie-talkies. They must have got the firemen. Right enough the firemen were'nt long. But the next/

MARGARET(contd) next minute I knew I was in oor Lily's across the road.

DOREEN: You were where?

MARGARET: My Auntie Lily's. She lived across the road from me. That was all I remember then.

DOREEN: And the child was burned to death?

MARGARET: Aye. It was burned - he was six inches away from his pram. He was burnt right out of the pram. When I went up the next day - the doctor told me, he says, "Don't go near the house." I said, "Oh, I'll need to go up and see if it was all right, you know." So, I don't know, it was a funny feeling I had if ever anything happens to you, you want to go up and see it, you know. But see when I went to that door? I couldn't go in. I was feart to go in. I was blaming myself, you know. I says, "Oh, no, I says, it's an awful sensation you're getting." And I says, "You're better just going in and see if the pram was there. The pram was there and they had a white sheet. So we got the pram here and wæ'd a couch wi' legs on it. Well the man said that - the man next door - he put a blanket - he soaked the blanket and he was crawling along the floor trying to get to the wee one but he said that he held on to a leg - he thought it was the leg of a cot. You see he didnae know the way our hoose was situated. It was the leg of the couch he was holding on to.

DOREEN: And how old was the baby?

MARGARET: A year and a half.

DOREEN: How long ago was that?

MARGARET:/

MARGARET: Must be six years now.

DOREEN: It was here in Moorpark? The same house you're in?

MARGARET: No, the bottom of the street there, Dava Street.

DOREEN: In Dava Street?

MARGARET: Aye. It was a horrible feeling, so it was.

(the group are having tea)

DOREEN: ... It all comes back to you a bit, doesn't it, when you tell the story?

MARGARET: Well, I don't know. See at the weekends? I mean, I really don't talk about him. I've never talked about him any other time, but I mean you've always ... it's a shame at that age, you know, then losing him. I said, it'd be all right if it was at birth - but to rear them up to that age, then losing him, you know, it's a shame. We hadnae - he was "away" then you know, and they buried - they had to go up to the mortuary up in - oh, what was the name of that place? Up the town - in the Gallowgate - somewhere up in the Gallowgate, we had to go up. And there was a man there, oh, a big, big tall man. I said, I'm up to see baby Corr. Oh, he says, oh no, hen, you're no' seeing him. Wouldn't let me see him.

KATHY: It's probably as well.

MARGARET: He says, "You just remember the way you seen him last," he says, Because I couldnae, he says, take you in there and show you that wee baby. So my mother went in, right enough. She seen him. She came in roaring an' greetin'. She said, "Margaret, ..... you'd end up jumping in the Clyde."

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: How many children had you at the time?

MARGARET: Three.

DOREEN: So you'd two older than that? And they weren't in the house when the fire happened?

MARGARET: No. Just lucky I sent them round to the shops that day. But that's what I always say - I always blamed myself. You know how they tell you on the television - if you open a door where a fire is - the draught - when I opened the living room door, the flames - I don't know ...

KATHY: Well then how would you've got in?

MARGARET: But see my telly? We went the day after it and my television was lying on its face; it was all blown. And even - you know the interior grates you used to get? See all the wee tiles? They were all blown off too.

DOREEN: Off the interior fire?

MARGARET: Aye. Everything was blown off.

BETTY: I was saying that, in the past four weeks, my two have been lighting fires in the house.

KATHY: ..... You teach your child not to go towards the fire ....

BETTY: Well I mentioned it to Mr. Locke when he was up on Tuesday. That's what I was saying to Kathy. I've done everything, really, that I can think of, you know, and I'm really demented because if they get up during the night, it's easy to switch it on. It's the same as that electric fire in there.

KATHY: /

KATHY: And they've been sort of playing with paper? Trying to light bits of paper on the fire - on the electric fire.

BETTY: I told Mr. Locke. I was asking him if the firemen ever visited the school - you know, the police, they were doing it. So he said he'd find out. But he's - he also said he thinks he's got a couple of books, and I said, right. I said, have they got any pictures of somebody being burnt - you know - really badly burnt, and he says, I don't know, because that would really put the frightener on Ian and he would be able to control the wee one, because they're egging each other on.

MARGARET: I think fire's an awful thing.

BETTY: .. So he's telling Miss Lawrie anyway and she can have a word with him because he'll listen better to his teacher, I mean ...

KATHY: It's true; as I say, all the adults that he meets are saying the same sort of thing ...

BETTY: He'll take it better from her because she's put paid to him. I used to have to go looking for him. I'd go to the dinner hall now but at lunchtime I'd to go looking for him and I caught him down at the school just before the bell was due for the kids to go in. That was him - he never had anything to eat so I took him in to the teacher. He never done it after that but he took his time coming up the road so I just let him go to the dinner hall.

DOREEN: What about .. is there a fuse at the side of the fire that you could take out at night?

BETTY: Oh, here, there is. Aye, that's right, because it's the same as that one there.

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: You could maybe remove that and at least feel safe for the night.

KATHY: And that's much easier than ....

BETTY: That is .... because I haven't got the stepladders. I was talking about that .. Oh, wait a minute - is the fuse not up in the box?

KATHY: No. I think there's a fuse - we'll show you the one in the other room. I'm sure there's a fuse that you can take out.

DOREEN: ...I know that's true of the kitchen one because we had to take it out when it wasn't working. So maybe in the living room as well.

KATHY: That's certainly one way, you know, that would stop it.  
(group asking the time and preparing to leave)

Do you want to take the dice with you?

DOREEN: That was very good. Now are you going to do some of those at home and we'll talk about it next week..... It was interesting to see how that man who came in, Eric, took a long time to learn. It didn't half show that it depended upon what words you said - how clearly the words were ... how clearly they would get it ...

KATHY: Well, see if you can think of any other ideas of games as well that we can play - that sort of thing - see what we can do with them.

(End tape)

P 10 'adip used over'

Thursday Afternoon, 17th February 1977

T57.

PRESENT: Betty Crawford  
Margaret Corr  
Kathy  
Doreen  
Eric (later on)

*Articulatory  
failure*

CONTENT: An introduction to the concept of control and information storing through the combination of words and actions.

FOCAL ACTIVITY: A dice making game - with the parents, to be used by them with their children at home.

VOICE: ....Oh, I'm on the rota for this Tuesday. The one that I'm on with has no intention of ever coming back, so Betty's going to be stuck wi' all those kids.

KATHY: Who's on with you?

BETTY: Frances White.

KATHY: And she's not coming back? Have you told Mary McSherry? Because she was the one that was making the rota and she could maybe put somebody else on with you.

BETTY: Well she was there when I was down with Joan.

KATHY: That's a shame, that is.

BETTY: Oh, I'm going back in to see them. (Laughing) Cannae get stuck wi' all they kids.

KATHY: For it to work properly, you've got to have ....

BETTY: This one's that fly, you know, in case she got roped in, she's going to watch Linda (laughter) .... I says, I'll just get Alec up .... No, no! ... (laughter)

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MARGARET: Oh, my hoose would be lost without a wee wean.

BETTY: .... likes it, though. I never - I never spoke to you except to say hullo (Margaret: Aye, I know) ... Same wi' Violet Edgar and you work three closes away from Violet.

KATHY: Do you know what happened to Violet? Because she said that she was definitely coming to-day.

MARGARET: Oh, she'd to go away a message. She said if she was back in time she would come up.

BETTY: ...And that was me. I got to the close and my friend came round and I made arrangements to go down the road with her. I mean, she was going for a new bath.

KATHY: (laughing) .. You were going out together. Actually, the sort of things we were talking about last time we're just sort of carrying on again - ways that you can help children by the way you talk to them - by giving them clues to the things that you're saying. You were there for the picture game that we had? Just that sort of thing. This is just a carry on thing ...

MARGARET: ...I was telling Mr. Locke you were cheating!

KATHY: That's right. You told me.

MARGARET: He said, what are you doing, cheating ...? (laughter)

BETTY: .... that comes under imagination! (laughter)

KATHY: He was able to tell me everything, and I thought ... (laughter)

MARGARET: You wondered who it was?

KATHY:/

KATHY: And then he said he'd been round to see you .... and I was cheating .... ah, well, I won't cheat this time, I promise! Actually, what we thought we'd do is just an exercise in showing the importance of doing things and giving the words at the same time with the children that, er, you know how they copy everything that you do - kids do everything - well this is fine, but if you're showing them things that they can copy, but if you're also telling them and giving them the words for the things that you're doing, how much quicker they learn. And I thought we'd try it and we can do it - it's things that you can maybe have games with the kids afterwards - is making dice. (Enter Doreen) ... We're just starting, actually.

DOREEN: I'm sorry .... we're supposed to have a library meeting next door, you see, and I was planning before we moved this to Thursdays and I had forgotten.

BETTY: I was all ready to come on Tuesday and then that wee note came through the door.

KATHY: That's right. I went round, sort of visiting and everything but so few people were in it was just amazing because ...

BETTY: Oh, I was in!

KATHY: On Tuesday? (Uh huh) .. Well I rang the doorbells.

BETTY: Well you never rang mine - I never heard you. Did you give it a wee .. maybe I've been doing a washing or something.

KATHY: Because I thought, this is a conspiracy - everybody's against me - nobody's in ... Tuesday morning?

BETTY: I'm sure I was in, because I remember David running and lifting - you know - the pamphlet.

KATHY:/

KATHY: She's had to go out for messages and if she is back in time she will come. (To Margaret) Is that what you were saying?

MARGARET: Aye.

KATHY: Now, we have to fold each square so that you have the figures facing you and then fold away, so all the time you're folding it so that it will fold round into one cube. Figures facing you, and you're folding them away from you. (All folding) ... Is that right?

DOREEN: It doesn't matter whether - yes, you'll find it easier if you fold them all the way from here, but it doesn't really matter as long as you made a fold.  
(more paper-folding)

KATHY: Right, all fold.

DOREEN: That we game was ... (?) ... as well. Now, the next time we've to try and fold them all so that your cross - so that you make the square - you make the cube.

KATHY: Right. Everything ... now the ones with the 'Xs' should be folded under the numbers so the 'Xs' don't show in the end and it's only the numbers that show.

DOREEN: This is where I get all fingers and thumbs.

KATHY: It should fall in, more or less, into .. right? If all your folds were the right way, it should fold into a cube like that. Were all your folds the right way? Ah, this fold was the wrong way.

MARGARET: Was that what it was?

KATHY: /

KATHY: Oh, well, as long as you got it anyway. But, the thing that we were doing is, as I was saying, actions and the words together. And we thought we could start by having, almost like a game, seeing if we could make a dice. Now I sat trying to work out exactly how you make them and everything and I thought maybe if we make one together, if I show you, and then you make one, and then see if you can do it with the children at home, but not just by showing them - by giving them the words as well, and seeing if we can do it - it's just a common thing - so, you have ... (demonstrating) .. a drawing - see if you can understand how it's to be made by watching and listening to me. If I make a mistake you haven't got to tell me I'm teaching or doing things wrongly! (Laughter) ... Alan went round to see Betty and told her how I was cheating ... (laughter).

BETTY: I said she was cheating I was on your teaching ..... "That goes under imagination!" (laughter)

KATHY: It's quite simple, really. Basically, what we have to do is to try - a dice has six square sides, so we have to make six square sides that are joining each other. Now we have four squares in a row, plus an extra one so we can fold it under - that's in one line there, and we have two squares joining on to the line to form a cross, plus one extra one, so in other words we've got, one, two, three, four, five squares in a line there, and three squares in a line there, to form almost a mod-shaped cross. Now, the easiest way to do it is when we have this .. so you know where you're cutting if you put the numbers on the card. Right. One, two, three, four, and to show which is the next one maybe we'll put a cross on it. Five goes above two, six goes below two ...

DOREEN: (trying to follow directions) .... Oh, wait a minute ..... far too quick for me!

KATHY: I'm sorry. Right. (Counting both together) one - one, two - two, three, four, five goes above two, six goes below two, then put a cross/

KATHY(contd): cross, one, two, three, four - that's right - a cross after four, right, and a cross below six. (voices in background counting)  
So we have one, two, three four, cross ...

DOREEN: I've put five in the wrong place - I've had to put a cross on top of it!

KATHY: We'll let you off - that's because you were late.

MARGARET: I've put the cross the wrang place.

KATHY: Doesn't matter ... (laughter) ... no, you're right there.

DOREEN: But you need another cross after ....

KATHY: No. (Margaret: Aye, that's right) .. (Doreen ... I need a cross.)  
.... So then we cut round the squares of these so that eventually we have cut out this sort of strange-shaped cross. See if you can do it.

BETTY: Do it? I've halved my six.  
(Sounds of paper cutting/folding)

BETTY: Oh, it's different.

KATHY: They are. (meaning scissors) Actually one pair is sort of brand new that I found in the bottom of the drawer.

BETTY: I think this is the pair I've got.

KATHY: That's probably it, yes.

BETTY: I don't think I'll come back, everyone's getting booby-trapped!  
(Sounds of folding and cutting)

KATHY: All right, so we're cutting out .. a cross ...

DOREEN:/



DOREEN: We've got two mums at the Playgroup to-day, haven't we?

KATHY: That's right, yes, it's Elizabeth and Ann. They're taking the kids to the Fire Station, aren't they? (That's right.)

BETTY: Think they'll be waiting for David?

KATHY: Oh, no.

BETTY: Ah well, I thought the rain was coming off, so the washing ....

KATHY: Looks like it?

BETTY: ...Still maybe it'll dry.  
(All folding paper)

KATHY: Right..... good thance to put these in Nursery school. Oh!  
I've done something wrong - no I haven't.

BETTY: I'm looking at that other one. You've got an empty square above the five.

MARGARET: Turn the other one round. You haven't got that, have you?

KATHY: Oh, it was below the six. Did I put the square the wrong way?  
I'm sorry.

BETTY: Well, we've all done it. (laughter)

KATHY: It doesn't matter which side.

DOREEN: It's only an extra square, that can tuck under. Now, do we fold them all? (Mixed voices .... when it's ready!) .....  
That reminds me, where's Violet?

KATHY:/



KATHY: She's had to go out for messages and if she is back in time she will come. (To Margaret) Is that what you were saying?

MARGARET: Aye.

KATHY: Now, we have to fold each square so that you have the figures facing you and then fold away, so all the time you're folding it so that it will fold round into one cube. Figures facing you, and you're folding them away from you. (All folding) ... Is that right?

DOREEN: It doesn't matter whether - yes, you'll find it easier if you fold them all the way from here, but it doesn't really matter as long as you made a fold.  
(more paper-folding)

KATHY: Right, all fold.

DOREEN: That we game was ... (?) ... as well. Now, the next time we've to try and fold them all so that your cross - so that you make the square - you make the cube.

KATHY: Right. Everything ... now the ones with the 'Xs' should be folded under the numbers so the 'Xs' don't show in the end and it's only the numbers that show.

DOREEN: This is where I get all fingers and thumbs.

KATHY: It should fall in, more or less, into .. right? If all your folds were the right way, it should fold into a cube like that. Were all your folds the right way? Ah, this fold was the wrong way.

MARGARET: Was that what it was?

KATHY: /

Thursday Afternoon.

T58.

This is the session known as 'The Train Game'

It was meant to show that a concept can be analysed & grasped if one gets hold of its salient features

Kathy:

I tried to make them and I couldn't. What we did last week.

All we did was we got bits of square paper, do you want to explain the rest? If you get stuck it doesn't matter.

unfortunately it looks as if Kathy may speak. But it uses a very amusing session with the responses & may miss some of this

Kathy:

Was it a cross?

That's right, yes.

That's it. It's more or less like that. In fact we found a way that was a bit easier. All you do is make a cross and you know how your dice is six squares all together to make a cube? Well, you make a line of four of the squares with an extra one with an x on it, and when we did it again we found it was much easier if we put an extra square on there with another x. 1,2,3 and 4 in a straight line, fold under. 5's on top of 2, 6 is underneath 2 with another cross there, so that made it an equal shape and with the figures facing you, just make all the folds and turned it all under. Cross on top of cross on top of cross, which did work a lot easier than that. The idea of the thing was partly just having fun making something, but partly the fact that we were able to follow the instructions and work it out because we were watching something being done, but at the same time as we were watching, we were explaining with the words, and it's funny that the the bit you remembered about the making it up today was the cross. So the idea of the word of the cross shape helps you to remember, and it's the same thing that happens with a child. If you do something with a child, and you break down all the little bits of how you do it, and you're giving him the words as well as the actions, then it's helping them to understand better, it's helping them to learn things a lot quicker. When they go to school it all comes in words.

Kathy: So you didn't get them to make any?

I just couldn't. My patience ran out. I couldn't get it to stick.

Kathy: I think that's the most difficult bit, the sellotaping, because you've got tiny little bits of paper that you've got to try and hold together. Then we thought of all sorts of games that you could play with the dice, with the children. Instead of putting numbers on, putting letters on and so we had at one stage that you had, say it was a dice with letters, and it came up on an 's', and that one was four. Try and think of four words beginning with 's'. Or do it with colours, and you can do all sorts of games with the children like that. We'll do it again next week. I'll bring some more square paper and we'll all make the dice together. The only reason I was able to do it was because I spent so long practicing it.

I thought what we'd do today is again a game sort of thing, but it's using words in a game. It's a sort of guessing thing. They used to have it ages ago - animal, vegetable and mineral and you had to try and guess what things were. Now I've got beside me here a child's toy, and we've got to guess what it is, not by making any sorts of wild guesses and saying that's wrong, but by building up a picture of what colour it is, what shape it is, what size it is, what we use it for, and see if by guessing all the individual bits you can build up a picture of what the object is. What size is it? Is it big or is it small? Start generally and then we can go down to....

It's big.

Big like what? Like an elephant?

Something like a doll.

Notes difference  
between 9.85 & the  
& 3 months later (May 25<sup>th</sup>)

George  
leaving the form  
"fill the main course"  
y. I don't think there is  
any explanation -

Wednesday am, 23rd February, 1977

Computer  
Dating

**PRESENT:** George Ferguson,  
Susan Ferguson,  
Pat ) Educational  
Graham) Psychology Students  
Kathy, Doreen.

Carole P 5  
& 19

**CONTENT:** The building of a concept  
by defining its salient  
features, and then putting  
the individual features  
together to form the whole.

T59.

**FOCAL  
ACTIVITY:** Making up our own computer  
dating forms.

Doreen: Does anyone know what you call an engine?

George: Well, you had to guess what it was.  
Just to ask what kind the object was  
get a nice picture of it into your mind  
it came through, what it was, after  
questioning!

Kathy: Then we started talking about round  
we?

Doreen: And it was oblong, and it had things  
instead of at the front. You know in  
motor, the engine's at the front, and  
the engine's at the back.  
We couldn't figure out what it was. The  
engine at the back and the engine at the front.

Doreen: It had 6 cylinders on it, didn't it?

Wednesday Morning, 23rd February, 1977

- Doreen: Well, you might like to glance at it, just to see the sort of conversation that's been going on. What we try to do is tape it, because when we have a number of groups we get kind of lost on who and what we've been doing with whom, unless we have it written down and are able to look at it before we start. That's actually quite good from last week. It doesn't half show how we went through all the business of making these cubes.
- Kathy: No. Last week was the train. The week before that was the cubes.. We had this game last week when an object was hidden behind somebody's back and you had to try and figure out what the object was by breaking it down....
- Doreen: Come on then, George, you tell us about that, eh?
- George: Well, you had to guess what it was. You had just to ask what kind the object was, and try to get a wee picture of it into your mind. Eventually it came through, what it was, after about 600 questions!!
- Kathy: Then we started talking about round~~xxx~~<sup>ness</sup>, didn't we?
- Susan: And it was oblong, and it had things at the back instead of at the front. You know how in a motor, the engine's to the front, and in a train the engine's at the back. We couldn't figure out what it was that had an engine at the back and was an oblong shape.
- Doreen: It had a cylinder on it, didn't it? And the cylinder on a petrol truck, for example, is behind the engine, but this was an old fashioned train with the cylinder was in front.

Susan: And it was red.

Kathy: We were trying to guess it by describing the individual bits and then putting them together. We got the individual bits, but we just couldn't put it all together!

Doreen: How useful were Kathy's cues? I think it's worth looking at that. How useful was the way Kathy was making us look at one particular idea?

George: The colour started something off. Everybody started saying things...you know, that are a red colour. Then all of a sudden the controls were to the back, and that put everybody right off!

Doreen: Susan, what were you saying was useful about it?

Susan: When she said it was oblong and the thing was at the back. It had four wheels.

Doreen: Now, how did we get the wheels? Remember the argument about trying to find out what she meant by these?

Kathy: The long cylinder, the red colour, the controls at the back, and the round things.

Doreen: There was a whole thing about trying to describe.... she was trying to make us guess wheels, and we were all lost on it. I thought that was interesting. When you read the transcript you see that it's interesting the way Kathy made us come to understanding it was wheels.

Kathy: And we went through flat round and round round.

George: We spent more time on that than anything else!

Doreen: But it was good, wasn't it? Did you do any of

Kathy: your ideal man? What you have to give is a total picture of you on these forms and you have to break it down into little bits, like what height are you, and you have a beautiful 24 inch waist, or whatever, and long blond hair, and you get the total picture of you just by naming the individual bits, and the things that you like and the things that you don't like doing, all your interests and everything like that. All these tiny little bits build up a picture of you, and it's exactly the same sort of thing with an electricity form. A picture of what this house is all about through the tiny little bits. I wondered if we could make up computer forms for ourselves. We can be anybody we want - it doesn't matter. I wondered if we could maybe get together and do it.

Doreen: Do it in twos, perhaps?  
Or just making up just one person?

Kathy: Shall we make up together what we need on this form? And then we can each take it and see if we can build up a picture.

Doreen: Right. You chart out the information and we'll fill it in.

Kathy: Well, what do we need to know?

George: Name and address and age to start off with.

~~Kathy~~: Is this for a computer dating?

Kathy: Name, address, age.

George: Height. Weight. Colour of your eyes. Colour of hair. Black or white.

Doreen: Ethnic origin, that's called.  
Somebody in America asked me that, once, and I had no idea what the question meant.

Kathy: Do we need anything else about hair apart from colour?

Susan: Length.

Kathy: Anything else about ourselves?

Susan: Measurements.

Ann: Hobbies.

George: Health. That covers everything - eyesight, one leg or something.

Doreen: So you would have to break it down, wouldn't you?

George: Well, the like's of saying have you any nervous dispositions or anything like that. Have you ever had any diseases? That covers most parts of that.

Doreen: You were saying about only having one arm. People could dodge that - they could just say 'fine'. You've got to have to be able to put it so that they've got to talk about each area of health. How do you make sure that the person has two arms, that you want to date?

Susan: It's like a passport, isn't it? Any special marks, or anything like that.

Kathy: So, if we want to find out anything like that we could ask any special disabilities, and we can ask for past illnesses.  
Do we want to fill out 'hobbies' any more?

George: I think if you were going in for computer dating you'd need to put down hobbies anyway, to find out what your special interests were. It's no use going out with a lassie that's interested in karate and you're interested in swimming.

Kathy: Suppose you're looking for an ideal man or woman,  
Doreen: You'd want to know what he worked at.

Kathy: Job - fine. I suppose you'd want to know whether they were married or single.

George: But if you were going for computer dating, surely you would say if you were married or single.

Kathy: Want a bet?!!! Unless they ask you, you just may not say.

George: Married, single or divorced.

Doreen: Maybe that's enough. Let's see what we get from that, because I think we can now try filling in that form in a kind of daft way. See if we can recognise the other person's person. If we try that, and see if you can imagine who it is.

Kathy: I wish we had somebody like Tony Hart who could draw the picture of the person.

(Talk about who is doing the form with whom).

Kathy: Right, what's your name?

George: My young brother - Edward.

Kathy: We want a surname and a Christian name.

~~XXXX~~

(Everybody's filling in their forms, and the dialogue is difficult to pick out).

Kathy: Well, are we going to read out what we've got, or what? Do we start with his name, or do we leave his name?

Doreen: Leave the names out and see if we can get a picture.

Kathy: Well it's a man - we haven't said what sex they are.

George: The name would tell you.

Kathy: No, with some it wouldn't. Pat.

We have a male, aged 20, whose height is 5'3" , whose weight is 9 stone, whose eye colouring is brown, whose hair is dirty fair, his hair length is medium, he is Scottish, he has vital statistics 34" 28" 30". His hobbies are football and outdoor games. His health is excellent, he has had no past illnesses, no disabilities, he is a furnaceman, he is married, he has a very cheerful character. Now there are other things that I think we really need to know about him.

Doreen: I've got a picture of a young, slim, married man of 20 who wants to go in for computer dating.

Kathy: Is there anything else that we need to know about him?

Doreen: I want to know why he wants to date somebody. I think you would need to know more about why the person has applied.

Kathy: We haven't got anything about his likes and dislikes.

George: The reason why you're asking is because he's already married. If he had been single you wouldn't have bothered to ask the question.

Doreen: Then he would have been able to say something like 'Looking for a wife', or 'only interested in a friendship relationship'. What are they looking for? It's like pens-pals - why do you want to write to them?

Kathy: We've got personality, haven't we? What sort of a person....reasons for applying.  
(2nd side of tape) 19-21, average height, weight - nothing over 26 stone, blonde hair, medium length, British person, outdoor athletic type, very good health, the job is unimportant, the marital status is unimportant - he can't say he just wants a single woman when he's married - and somebody who in personality is not shy.

Doreen: That's very good. You can see the sort of person. I can see that one better than I can see him.

Kathy: Nothing over 26 stone - you can??

Doreen: No, the personality thing. You didn't give me any personality for him. X

Kathy: I said that he was cheerful, but that was all. It didn't really give very much of a picture. Do you want to read yours out?

Doreen: Yes. I actually saw a series on T.V. the other day of old fashioned film stars, and so you might be able to recognise this one. Female, she's a film star, but you might just know her name later on. I've said 40, but I think that's being kind to her, she's probably a great deal more than that. Height, 4'11", weight about 8 stone, brown eyes, ethnic origin, South American, vital statistics I would guess are something like 36-20-36. Her hobbies are singing and wearing impossible hats, I should imagine from her health she's quite strong and she's no disabilities. Her job I would think is a retired film star. She's probably divorced many times.

? Is it Carmen Miranda?

Kathy: That's right. I have the picture of the hats, but I'd forgotten the name.

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Kathy: But I wonder if we didn't know Carmen Miranda, we'd have got a picture of the hats.

Doreen: That could have been anything, by impossible hats. All I said was that she was a film star and she'd been on television.

(Bit of talk about Coccasians(?) - I can't spell it because I've never heard of it!!!)

? Male, address Hollywood, age 28/29, height 6', weight 150 lbs., eye colour blue, hair colour blond, medium length, vital statistics - 40" chest, 32" waist, hobbies motor racing, swimming, travelling and cooking, sailing, reading, health excellent, past illnesses none, no special disabilities, job film star or motor racing driver, single, character kind, generous, passionate, faithful, interesting and fond of children. I haven't put the ethnic origin down - we weren't interested in that really!

George: That's between Robert Redford and Rock Hudson.

Doreen: I did happen to hear who it was, but has anybody else got a picture of who he is?

Kathy: Well, it could be Robert Redford. It could be Hutch.

George: Paul Newman?

Doreen: Yes (Paul Newman's married, is he not? - M.)

Kathy: Your turn.

? This is no-one in particular. Female, address Ireland. Age 25, height 5'2", weight 8 stone, eye colour grey, hair colour black and short. Ethnic origin: Irish. Statistics: 38-26-36. Hobbies: Camping, photographs, dancing, motor racing.

George: She wouldn't have much time for anything else!!

Susan: Past illnesses: measles, whooping cough.  
Disabilities: none. Occupation: Shorthand typist.  
Married status: widow. Personality: easy-going, happy. Likes excitement and adventure.

Kathy: It's funny how you build up a picture from just the odd little bits.

Doreen: It's quite interesting, because we have been able to build up pictures.

Doreen: What do you think about form-filling? Do you find it difficult or easy?

Susan: I think it's quite easy.

Doreen: Why is it easy?

George: The questions were made easy. You actually knew what you were looking for as soon as you read it out. On forms sometimes they ask you something at the top and then they put it another way round at the bottom, and they ask the same question again. But the likes of that, it was just straightforward because we knew what we were looking for.

Doreen: So we view the whole, and therefore we can understand the parts when we break it down? I think that's what's wrong with the form. I don't know exactly what they're looking for.

Susan: See, that's not for a person. We were were writing down for a person.

Doreen: And it's much easier for a person, because you know what a person is, and therefore you can break them down into parts. If you don't know what the whole thing is that they're looking for, it's much more difficult to follow the parts.

George: Like on an electricity form, it's a house you're actually trying to do....

Doreen: Well, let's have a look at some of the items on it and see what it is they're asking us to do. If we could see the general picture we would find the smaller bits much easier to do. Instead of starting filling in the first bit, you read it and find out what is the general thing they're trying to get from us. The thing's actually broken off in sections. There's a bit here: 'we require electricity as from' then there's a space, at adress, at the tarrif rulings from time to time subject to the conditions as to meters. That's simple enough,

Tuesday Evening, 1st March 1977

T60.

PRESENT: Mary Smith, Ann Kidd, Jean Campbell,  
Doreen, Kathy.

CONTENT: Identification and explanation of a  
concept/idea through the naming of its  
salient features.

FOCAL (a) Twenty Questions guessing game -  
ACTIVITY: guessing an object through taking  
its various features one by one.  
(b) "Black Pudding" type game.

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DOREEN: You like to make up crosswords yourself from words you think  
he knows?

VOICE: Just small ones. You know - words he's got difficulty - he  
can't spell very well. He can't spell "curtain" very well so  
I put in the word "curtain" maybe somewhere, and I've got the  
clue in, "it's on the windows" or "it covers the windows" or,  
you know, he gets the words quite easy, but it's more or less -  
he's got to spell it right. If he doesn't spell it right well  
it wouldn't fit in the crossword.

KATHY: That is fantastic!

DOREEN: I'm quite breathless at that!

VOICE: I've run out of paper - and felt tip pen!

KATHY: Got plenty of paper, haven't we? That's the one thing we do ....

DOREEN: Don't know if there's any felt tip pens ...

VOICE: /

VOICE:  
(Jean)

I thought it would help his spelling because if you just keep giving him it over and over again he'd get fed up but if you ask him to write it down ... he'd spell it anyway.

DOREEN:

Well, we were just talking about, you know, not only putting out our ideas but picking up everybody's ideas in the group because everyone's got ways and we felt we could share them among us - you know, we've got a whole pile of ideas. You know it's frightening me that Ann and Mary are not here. (Pause, voices off)

KATHY:

Mary said she would definitely be here.

DOREEN:

Well, I think - suppose they don't come - I think we might, just the three of us, try to find out some of the ideas ..... because this is what we're trying out ..... and to plan out the fourteenth. We'll start with the 14th anyway. On Monday the 14th - a fortnight on Monday, Councillor McMahon is coming to officially open the library or something equally helpful. It's been open for months but he's just decided that this is the day when it really happens and he's to come and so we thought we might as well invite lots of people down here ... anyone who comes ..... anybody that teaches in the schools, people from the library, anybody that any of us worked with, or that lend us books, or equipment.

KATHY:

Especially the Tenants' Association .. all the people who were involved in the community anyway.

DOREEN:

We've got the beginnings of a plan. We're going to have the Councillor - actually we're not going to allow too many at the one time - but we thought if we take the officials for a visit, you know, like Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Tenants' Association and we take the top two from all the organisations - the University and everything else. Bring them for the first time and then from 2 o'clock onwards we would really have it open for anybody who likes/

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DOREEN(contd) likes to come at any time .... and if, then, some of the mothers who already come here could work out when they could come, so that it was all the people who really used the place, because I think it's kind of vital that we have some of the people talking about what use they find it ..... if ... says, "What's this?" - well they don't want us to tell them; they want the folk in the scheme to tell them - so we - I want you to come morning, noon and night - I want you to come - open all the time. What about the morning? Are you out in the morning? Are you coming up in the morning?

JEAN: Uh huh. When the children go to school.

DOREEN: Really at half past ten we'll have to be ready. They're coming at eleven. We'd have to be here at half past ten.... Now, what are we going to do?

JEAN: I don't know. I haven't been at any .....

KATHY: As I say, when you were on the Tenants' Hall Committee, did you ever have to ..... have official people ...? What did you do?

(Reply indistinct. Doorbell rings. More arrivals.)

(Group settling in.) (dur 1'15")

DOREEN: (to small child just arrived) Shall we go and select a toy?

(Child has gone to select toy. Background chat, indistinct, dur 1 min 20')

KATHY: Councillor McMahon has decided that it's time that he officially opened the Library.

(This is very faint but the gist is that Councillor McMahon and one or two other Councillors and everybody connected with the Library etc. are all coming on that day to see all over the house.)

We don't know how to organise it. We were just wondering how to, and/

KATHY(contd) and we thought it would probably be best if people who were actually using the flat could be here part of the day or some of the time when they're actually doing the opening.  
(The child, Andrea, comes into the room with toy)

DOREEN: Andrea: Are you coming away over here, if you can find a space? Or are you going to (sit beside your mummy?) ...  
Now, are you going to make a picture? Put them side by side and make a picture?  
(Kathy is helping Andrea to make a picture.)

DOREEN: Were you talking about .....

KATHY: Yes. I was just sort of explaining about Councillor McMahon.

DOREEN: Yes. That's a fortnight on Monday. So if everybody who comes here normally in groups comes some time in the day so that they're around to be the hostesses because, you know, it's everybody who uses the place. They don't just want to see the team; they can see us any time. He wants to meet the people who use the place and see if it's any use. To some extent this is what it's about - the Councillors want to know if it's doing something useful - if there's any point in it or if we're just sitting here warming ourselves at the fire and watching the telly. So it's - they would like to know what - how it's used. Well he's coming for that..... and all the other things: let the whole scheme see it first of all - they might find use out of it, you know, more people might start to want to come - you know if everybody in the scheme would come in and look at it and wander away again, and while they're at it, all the people who employ us could come and look at it as well and give us their (opinion?) .... what they think of it. (exchanging remark about Kathy ~~xi~~ and the curtains)....  
So/

Wednesday Morning

2nd March, 1977

Circle containing:  
Audie  
Family Workshop  
Page 1. #16/6  
**T.G.**

Present:

George Ferguson  
Susan Ferguson  
Doreen and Kathy

*Q Helen Martin  
no daughter?*

Content:

Discussion and arrangement of future workshop activities based on art/craft material - as requested by the parents. Also the possibility of making our own films based upon this work.

*Handwritten notes in a box:*  
Helen Martin  
had at least  
two daughters  
one of which  
was Helen

*Susan on idea of family workshop  
& Helen Martin pg  
of an library after 12 weeks*

Kathy: We've had about 10 or 15 minutes trying to get this thing working, and George came in, looked at it, and it worked!

Doreen: Well, if we do that with the tapes.....

George: I think also if you have all the papers with all the things on it - give them that as well. *quote*

Susan: You've got to show them that you're actually taking an interest in the children, it's not just the parents, it's the children themselves. They can come up and take a toy out and bring another one with them. I think that would be interesting as well.

Kathy: ~~The thing is, its alright for us to stand there and say they can do this, but then.....~~

George: I was thinking as well, say you had the two *groups* ~~classes - both points of view is for the kids anyway.~~ Its quite interesting that two different points of view are getting put forward.

Doreen: So if everybody in each group decides what they want to tell them about, ~~it~~ it would all be different things.

George: It would not be just the same things - different things getting done.

Doreen: So you would like to talk about the toy library, ~~and possibly the swapshop.~~ I think that's a good idea, Susan. If you could take on the transcript of the tape from that particular week. If we could remember to get an extra copy made, you could take away a copy.

George: That's what I was thinking.

Doreen: So that you could say to them "There's a copy for you". That would be your job to do that. You've thought about it and you've planned it and you'll do that one, that would be great, because we've got all these other folks here as well.

George: I'll take that on, no problem.

Doreen: If there was somebody else who was keen to have a copy, we could make another copy. You can ask for their name, and get a copy made. Occasionally other people like the head of the libraries is coming, for example, the head of all libraries for Glasgow, because he wants to know how this library goes. He wants to see what people think about it.

Susan: I think the libraries you go into are dull and boring, but if you had something like that in a library, like a swapshop or something, kids would go more. They'd be more attracted to it. Some kids don't even know what a library is.

George: How long has the library been going now?

Doreen: Four weeks.

George: I would say that in the four weeks its been going the numbers are dropping down the road.

Kathy: But how many people went down to Elderpark before?

Susan: I didn't even know there was a library down there.

George: There is a few goes to it. My sister used to go and she's still going. My father still goes down because he likes to readd the science fiction novels. He said that he would finish the two books he has and then take a toddle down to the library. That's two that are going to stop going to the other library. You are open to anybody who wants to get a book, but you can imagine if another one opens, say, in the Boyne and another at Linthouse, ~~tht~~ Elderpark one would just close up.

Doreen: That would be a pity. If that happened I think the Libraries Commission would be very upset. What they feel is that while one or two people will drop like that, there's a whole lot of people who never went, like Susan. They might lose a few, but they'd actually gain to the whole library movement.

George: You'll find that there's more people interested in books than there was before. I don't mean it would go off the slate altogether. It's the warmer atmosphere. I come in here and get a book, no bother.

(Thomas comes in and there's a bit of chat to him about what day it is etc. Doreen fetches him a few toys to play with. Meanwhile conversation with Kathy about pros and cons of North Sea gas etc.

George: How did you get on with your form.

Doreen: I left it here and haven't filled it in.

Kathy: It's still waiting to be filled.

Doreen: Well, we were just talking about the fact the Councillor is coming here a fortnight on Monday. He's coming to do his thing in the morning, and a few people will come then - we thought maybe the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Tenants' Association should come. We can only have 20 people in the morning. Official people in the morning. The fire people say that we can only have 20 people at one time, so we have to watch that. In the afternoon, from half-past-twelve onwards people can just come and walk round and go away again. We are anxious that people like yourself who come to things here should come and help us, just to be around so that you can talk

about what you do here. The Heads of schools are coming, the Professor of Education of Glasgow University's coming.. We'd be glad if you could come along and meet them and say anything you think you've found interesting or useful or would like to have happen here. We could also talk about what we're doing, which is precisely nothing at this moment.

Kathy: Ellen said she couldn't come this morning, and then we had Kathy Hines last week and she said she was coming back.... (Thomas interrupts)

Mother: It was the same the last time. They all came the first couple of weeks, then it was only me and Chrissie turned up.

Kathy: We have seperate small groups as well.

Doreen: We've got 10 people come on Wednesday afternoon. We've got people on Tuesday night and we've got people on Thursday morning, so we've got quite a lot of people coming. They're all tiny groups because this is the easiest size to work in - about five. What we were going to do, anyway, was that we were going to move on ourselves. We were talking about things that you would like to do. Do you watch television at all?

Mother: I've got ~~in~~ on from dinner-time and that's me.

George: Ours is on from half-past-nine in the morning.

Mother: I watch it from dinner-time right up to bedtime.

Doreen: What about you, Susan? You don't watch much, do you?

Susan: If I've got a washing to do, I put it off and I go and do my washing. I say "Go and turn that off," because I can't be bothered with it.

Kathy: Do the kiddies watch it?

Susan: Susan likes it, but George couldn't care less if it was off or on.

Mother: The only thing mine loves is cartoons and Playaway. It's adults - there's no kids in it. They dress up, and tell jokes and they built things. They've all bits of string and metal and paper and they make mobile things. They make music out of daft things. They're good. There was a write-up in the paper about it being the best programme - even the adults like it. It used to be on on a Saturday on BBC2. I used to sit and watch it and when he came in he'd turn it over and I couldn't get seeing it.

Doreen: What would you say if we were to make one? We're going to buy cameras. We could make ourselves a kind of Playaway thing. What they're trying to do there is for adults to do things that would help children. We could make our own and just show it to ourselves. Would you fancy doing that?

Kathy: There was this thing that showed you how to make musical instruments from drinking straws. You know these long cardboard poles? The best one is a Ski yoghurt tub. I'm not sure if this one will work because it hasn't got ridges on it, but I'll see if I can make it work.

Doreen: What are you going to make us?

Kathy: I don't know if it'll work with this. All you do is basically.....

Mother: There was a bit in the paper saying that they're all crazy, but it's the best programme you've seen.

George: Letterman - it's like a throwback from Superman.

Kathy: It's this Superman kind of guy who changes 'butter' to 'batter' and all sorts of things like that.

George: It's an American programme. I think it's Tuesdays.

Mother: The only thing I watch in the morning is that thing -  
(or Susan) I don't know if you've seen it - it's on a Thursday morning - it's about the olden days, the war and that. It's only on for half-an-hour, and I like that.

George: That's repeats every day. Scotland Through the Ages.

Susan: I always think I just catch it on a Thursday. It's about the war and how a family grows up during the war. How the kids go to the pictures and how they.....(Kathy blowing her home-made instrument!)

Kathy: It's not very good because it hasn't got ridges. Take the two bits of the carton and sellotape them together at the bottom. You can make some incredible musical instruments just out of these kind of things.

Doreen: Well, do you fancy doing this? We were thinking that now we've got this far on, we've been talking about the fact that you give instructions in detail so that the child can learn. We might as well do something interesting at the same time. By the time Kathy tells us how to do that - it'll be the same kind of thing as the dice - she'll have to explain it very clearly in words. We could eventually do a programme with it and have it filmed. Just for ourselves. If you think that's a good idea we could start planning that.

Susan: I wouldn't buy that yoghurt. They don't like it either.

Susan: There was a good thing in the nursery. They got egg boxes and they made it into a .....

Kathy: Like a lantern.

Susan: They cut the egg shapes out, and put coloured paper round them and put them on the tree.

Kathy: There are so many things you can make, and most of them are so simple that the children can do them.

Susan: My kids do a lot of that in the nursery - cut shapes and decorate them with coloured paper.

Kathy: And they're all things that cost you absolutely nothing.

Susan: *Stella*  
t Say there's only four or five of us, and if you've got a young family, bring the family along and let them make it and you help them. That way you're not having to go home and show them, because you can't be bothered, but if you've got one night a week when you can take them with you.....

Kathy: Would you be interested in that? I'd love it.

~~XXXXXX~~  
Mother: You'd only need about five, because too many kids would be too much noise. How many kids have you got?

George: Three.

Mother: I've got two. If the other come and they've got them....

Doreen: That would be alright, because we've got a number of rooms. Before we reach that, we've got to think of some of the things that we can do (for the film?) Kathy knows a place.....open arts centre....

Kathy: I will. There's a man there and he's so keen on doing all sorts of things. Making models from junk from jumble sales etc. Making musical instruments from things like this and from kiddies drinking straws, and puppets from..... All from stuff that you would normally throw away. He's got so many ideas and everything he makes is very simple. Even candle making and modelling, and it was all stuff that can be done by children from about 3 to 15.

Doreen: I could borrow the car next Wednesday morning if we could get that arranged.

Kathy: I can 'phone him up this afternoon.

Doreen: We could go and see it. Where is it?

Kathy: It's in Bridgeton.

Susan: The things they make in the nursery, you'd never think of doing. They make dolls and everything. Whereas you'd go and spent £4 or £5 on it.

*Ella*  
Mother: My Paul always says "Am I coming with you?" when I come here, but he's at school. Whereas if it was one night a week he could make a point of coming.  
*Helena?*  
*m'Laughlin?*

Kathy: Maybe during the day we could talk about some of the ideas and do the planning.

*Helena*  
*Ella*  
Mother: You could still have your morning and have the following night or the next night, what you've planned at the morning's meeting. We could bring the things we need. Put it in a box and bring it with you.

Doreen: This has got great possibilities, hasn't it?

Mother: That way you wouldn't need the toy library - you'd be making all your own!

Doreen: These kind of toys are useful, but there's a whole lot of stuff you can do with just the junk. I wish we could 'phone at the moment.

Kathy: Do you want me to go up and 'phone? While you're making tea?

Doreen: We would have to meet at 10.30. We'd be better to meet at 10 if possible, so that we could be there for half-past-ten.

(Bit of conversation about when the children are able to be enrolled to the nursery).

Doreen: Well, we'll see you next week, early?

What's useful about this is that they can learn colours so well.

(George talking here about making things from boxes, toilet rolls etc. Binoculars).

George: If you put one of these musical instruments in it, what kind of noise you would get out of that.

Doreen: When they grow a wee bit older they find out that there are real musical instruments.

Tuesday evening, March 8th, 1977

T62.

Present:

Jean Campbell  
Ann Kidd  
Mary Smith  
Patrick ?  
Doreen  
Kathy.

Content:

Discussions centred around a) visit to  
Dolphin Arts Centre and puppet making.  
b) organisation  
of Monday's Open Day.  
c) Community use  
of the flat - including the opening of a 'cafe' on 2  
mornings per week.

Doreen: I want to start talking about what we're going to do. What kind of puppet..... television programme..... (Child shouting in the foreground).

Mother: (She's saying something about Jim making a puppet).

Doreen: (Somebody has come in). We're just talking about the possibilities of making puppets. We've got one glove puppet made very simply. We're talking about the possibility of how else we could make puppets.

Mother: Bobby was saying they were making puppets with (wood?).

Doreen: Who was suggesting this?

(Answer not clear).

Doreen: I wonder why people don't use.....light enough... (Talk about sewing up the fingers and making a slit in the material).

Kathy: We were just talking about puppet making, and there was another book.....puppets. I was talking about the Centre that showed you all about puppet making that I went to in Bridgeton, and they asked could they go and see it. We've made arrangements for Friday morning. Would you be able to come? Would you like to come? It's a Centre that, well, one part is sort of puppet-making and one part is candle making and just models from junk. Some of it is just getting bits of old clothes and bits of everything and making models from egg boxes, cardboard boxes. The other bit was sort of musical instruments from straws, from yoghurt cartons, and there's masses of stuff happening in this Centre. We're just trying to pick out how many people would like to come. Half-ninish, and we have to be back for some people to get their children from nursery school.

Doreen: Just before we go on talking about that, Ann was talking about the Gingerbread Group the other day. Could you tell us more about that?

Ann: It was quite good. She was just explaining how to go about it. I told her that four years ago I applied for ~~xxxxxx~~ and I was turned down, they said I didn't qualify. She said that if they said I didn't qualify, I've to ask for it in writing. (Something about needing the number of your book to check what you're getting and what you're entitled to).

Kathy: It helps to know. If people could (voice goes into the background here).helping you along, and able to explain..... Do you think it would be of any use to have all that sort of information here, because what I thought of doing was that on all these shelves....

Mother: I don't know what I qualify for. I went up and asked and they said I wasn't entitled to clothes. I asked why some people could get them and others couldn't.

Kathy: What I thought I'd like to do, only if people thought it might be useful, was to have that sort of form round here, so if you wanted anything at any time, or if anybody did, they could feel that they could just come in here and pick up some leaflets and information and if they wanted further help, maybe go down to .....or something like that. But initially the stuff would be lying around here. Do you think people would use it?

Mother: I think if they knew about it.

Doreen: I'll tell you something else we were talking about to some people the other day. A kind of course on this - what are people's rights? Have talks on people's rights.

Mother: Well, we had the Welfare visit us, yesterday. She was telling us about that. Your rights and that. The Social Security don't tell you, they just.....

Doreen: Does your husband work, Mary?

(Answer not clear).

Mother: If I went and claimed for Andrew, I'd get it no bother. And clothes for him, or anything.

Mother: Aye, I went up.

Kathy: But there's got to be reasons, unless you know the reasons....

Mother: (Something about not qualifying because they were at school). I went up....(Bit about not being able to argue with them).

Kathy: That's true, but there have to be laws, don't there? If you know the rules and you know why some people qualify and what the dividing line is,.....

Mother: They contradict themselves.

The first time I went to them I'd seen a receptionist and she was a bitch - I put her in her place. She told me to sit down and then I seen a man. The man said why hadn't I come before. I said that I didn't like coming. I told him what I had done, and he said "That's not your job, that's ours". So the second time I had to go up..... (Kathy interrupts here, asking what this was in connection with, and then the voices peter out).

*Joan*  
Mother: (Presumably explaining things to Kathy, but very faint on tape). He said it wasn't my job, it was his job (child screaming). The next time, come up right away, tell us, we'll go looking for it. So the next time it happened I didn't go up right away. Then I went up and seen the receptionist. She asked what had happened and I said "I didn't get any money". She said "Do you think he's still working?" She said to go to the garage - he's working on the buses - and find out if he's still working. If he's not there go to Bath Street and find out if they're still employing him. If they're not, go to the.....and see if he's signed on. If he hasn't, go to the Burroo (?) and see if he's signed on there. And I told her where to go actually. She said you'll have to do that before you'll get any money. The one man said it was his job to go looking for him, and she's telling me to go to the Burroo go to the sick, go to the garage. Fancy going there and saying "Are you still employing my husband?"

*Wm  
Kathy*  
Mother: When she was born I applied for.....and that. When they came out, I just put on trousers and an old jumper. I said that's all that baby's got. They need to be washed every time I'm going out. It means the baby's in for three or four days. She turned round and said 'Oh, the baby looks quite healthy to me'. That was that - I got nothing. No cot, no pram, nothing for her. The second time I went up to apply for money, because my money hadn't come, they said 'O yes, we're going to get in contact with the child's father and make him pay for her, or else you go out and get a job, or we're stopping your money'. I said that they couldn't do that, and they said 'Yes, we don't have to pay you'. I said that if they stopped my money they would need to take the child into care.' She said 'No we don't'. I said to keep the money, and not to bother getting into contact with the father, I would just get a job. And that's the only reason I'm out at work. I had to go out when the child was five months old, and get a job. I was left with three. One at four, one at two, and one at 11 months. My mother's in her 60's, and she couldn't look after them.

Doreen: I don't know the ins and outs of the law, but there must be a rule that you can measure yourself against.

Kathy: That's why we need some form of information.

Mother: A woman in Gingerbread was applying for clothes for the boys - big boys. A duffle coat for a child is £10. The big boys' would be dearer, and the investigator came to the house and he spoke to her and he went back and he wrote on the form 'Children's clothes were adequate'. But he hadn't seen the children's coats. The boys were at school, wearing their coats, so she asked for a tribunal.....(voices become faint again here).

Kathy: You have to know exactly what the limits are. What your entitlements are and what they're not. To argue it logically.

Wednesday 16th March, 1977

Morning session

T63.

Present:

- George Ferguson
- Susan Ferguson
- Helen McLaughlin
- Doreen
- Kathy.

No 33, 34  
 Transferred to  
 His point to  
 correct date Postcard

Content: Organisation and preparation for next week's puppet making. Also discussion on the erection of a poster to advertise the house to the scheme.

Doreen: We were talking about sharing the groups with more people. What were you saying you thought might be useful? Advertising something?

Susan: A billboard. Put a billboard up, maybe outside the Community Centre or outside the close. Put things on it that you've got.

George: See how you've got the wee ledge out there, above the close?

Kathy: Between the two windows?

George: Well, even just during the day, put the billboard up there and have a piece of string for securing it, and then through the day everybody can say 'O, that's where that house is'. Take it down at night when you go away again.

Doreen: That's got great possibilities.

Kathy: I think it would have to be where the house is. Do you think anybody from the scheme would object to a poster or billboard.

George: I think the only people who might object would be the people in the close.

Doreen: You would need to ask them.

George: You would need to ask them, plus the fact that you would need to ask the Corporation as well, for their permission.

Susan: Just on the ledge.

George: Just on the ledge through there, from 9 till 5. What I was thinking was if you had a poster you would maybe get the vandals coming round.

Susan: And then the windows would get it.

George: So what I was thinking was taking it down at night before you close. Just get a ladder and take it off.

Doreen: Tommy would have to do that. Do you think otherwise you might get things thrown.

George: I think it would get done at night.

Susan: If you left it out at night, the kids round here.....

Kathy: But they couldn't reach it.

Susan: They would hit it with wood or throw stones, and then the windows would get it.

George: If it was up through the day and somebody was throwing stones at it, I'd say 'Right, come on, out the road'. And Tommy would be able to see them.

George: But at night time, all they've got to do is run past, throw something at it and run away. But I think if it was up just through the day, until you were finished, and take it down then,.....

Doreen: Yes, even if we started it that way, then when people were used to seeing it there, people would forget....the local lads would have got used to seeing it.

Susan: Like paper, or clear cellophane or something.

Kathy: Or you could put it onto cardboard.

George: I was thinking of getting a sheet of hardboard and actually putting that up. Different colours of paint on it. Two pieces of string or rope tied to each window to hold it down.

Susan: Aye, it would be better if it was hardboard. If it was any thinner than that it would fall about.

Doreen: But that would be Mr. ?'s window next door.

George: Well, we would have to ask him for permission.

Doreen: That's the old man that's next door. He's an old blind man.

Kathy: I was just wondering if we could do a painting on the wall itself.

Doreen: It could be fixed to the wall. I don't think that's a problem. Two hooks or clips. It's taking it off every day that's bothering me. I wonder if we could put it up in such a fashion that if it got marked we could just wipe it and put it back up? So that it was a permanent thing but we could clean it if necessary.

Susan; You could just have a hose in the street and wash it with that. Save going up and down a ladder all the time.

Doreen: What would be put on it?

George: SEE Project, anyway.

Helen: See that programme? What did John Toye say about it?

Doreen: Education House, or something like that?

Kathy: Yes, but do you think it's a good name?

Helen: O aye, because if it was on the T.V.. they've heard that name.

George: I think on it should be 'All residents welcome'. 'To the SEE Project House'.

Doreen: But if it's going to be a way up there, you're only

Doreen: going to be able to put a title and maybe pictures that show everybody's welcome. Wee drawings round it, flowers round it, and a couple of people - a mother and father and child looking at each other. That's about all you would get on it really to give people an image of what education house is all about.

Kathy: Maybe a picture of a book and a toy or something.

Doreen: I think we would have the rest with pictures rather than words because of the impact.

Susan: You could have 'Bring your children here'.

George: I think that's just a wee bit too much to have just 'Bring your children here'.

Doreen: We could put a notice on the door, of that kind of thing.

George: The thing is, you're trying to get through to parents as well, to bring the children. 'Parents and children welcome'.

If they come up on their own, you could say 'You'll need to come up with your mother and father', 'but there's a library down there, come on and see if you've got any books that you want to change'.

Doreen: That notice we've had outside the door.....

Susan: How's that being kept up?  
(Doreen's answer not clear)

Kathy: It was only very thin paper.

George: Tommy was saying that there was something written on it this morning, anyway.

Kathy: That happened just before we left last night.

George: Then again, if it is up there, it's out of the road so nobody would be able to write on it anyway.

Doreen: The one above the close, you mean? I think we would have to have something that we could wipe off....(child talking in foreground).

Kathy: Thin strip of polythene.

Doreen: We've been thinking about all the things you've been saying there about people seeing the outside notice and they walk up and see another notice giving them ideas and times and what it's about.

Kathy: Well, I'm sure we can get to work on that, and do something like that.

(Susan talking here about somebody who died on Monday - not clear who she's speaking about).

Susan: Monday, wasn't it, he died? You know how he was well liked round here? Everybody liked him. Usually if somebody dies, they put a sheet round. Could they not start it from the Community Centre?

They were collecting in Princes Street, but they haven't been round here. I thought I would just mention it to you.

Kathy: It would be a shame if nothing happened.

Susan: He never got any appreciation.

Kathy: And was he somebody whom the children could approach easily?

Susan: He was that kind of person, you know?

Doreen: Do you ever go into the Centre, yourself?

Susan: I ~~used~~ to go.

Doreen: It just needs somebody from the scheme. It wouldn't do if we were to tell them they should do something. It would let them do something. Suppose you just say 'Are you collecting?'

George: .....wee collection amongst ourselves or amongst groups.

Kathy: The more people that went in and asked if there was a collection...

Susan: But who's going to go in?

Doreen: Well, you're going to go in.

Susan: They should have started collecting by now. There might be some people who don't know, and would like to put something - they don't know who to go to. I can't very well get somebody to go round the doors. I wouldn't know where to go, because I don't even know where he stayed.

George: I'm sure if we started something up, we would be able to find out where he stayed, anyway.

Susan: But it wouldn't look right if I went round the doors and you came too. People would say, 'They're collecting, but are they keeping it?' It's been done before. People have collected, and put the money in their pockets.

Helen: You could put a notice up in the Community Centre and maybe in some of the shops. 'If anybody's got

Helen: anything to put for a collection, go up to the Community Centre'.

George: That guy's coming up tomorrow, isn't he? Making the puppets and that.

Kathy: He told us to get ourselves organised first.

Helen: I think if we made a couple of puppets for him coming.....

Kathy: I have a piece of paper and a pencil, so we can make a list of everything that we need.

George: Clothes, anyway. Wood.

Susan: I've got wee dresses and that in the house that's no good to them any more. Wool.

Doreen: Wool. That's a good idea.

Kathy: Just old scraps that you would normally throw away. It's not worth buying anything.

Susan: Egg boxes.

Doreen: Did.....say that they put theirs together with string?

George: It makes it tighter.

Kathy: .....what was it he used? Foam, that was it. He got pieces of foam rubber.

Doreen: Could you have ears of foam rubber?

Kathy: That's right. noses.

Helen: See the wings? It was like material and in squares, and it was on wires. Thin wires. When you went like that, it would flap its wings. It had a big nose.

Doreen: You know these wee bits of chamois leather that you get in a spectacle case? .....cut squares out and got a big wide net with the bit that was left.....  
 .....on the end of the coat hanger, and then the edges of its claws were tied with elastic, so that when you moved it up and down you got this..... effect of the arms.

Kathy: So we want string. I think we might need some glue. Paint. A ball(?)

Doreen: You were making one?

George: Aye.

Doreen: Why didn't you bring it?

*He's got like a genius mother!*

George: it broke and I put the top back on again. The dog then got a hold of it.

Doreen: What we need to be able to do is get old boxes perhaps from the supermarket. Big enough that you could get a plate and cut a circle out.

Susan: Corn-flakes boxes.

Kathy: I kept things like this and I thought, 'I'm sure we could use that'.

George: They would be good for glasses.

Susan: Ear-rings.

Kathy: That's the beginning of a nose, isn't it?

George: And that could be an eye.

Kathy: Beer cans. You could even have a big nose. I'm sure you could have big ears or big noses or anything like that.

George: It showed them actually making (rockets?) out of Domestos cans and things. They were all painted up and that. Really good. The wee fella said 'Are you going to buy me one of them?'

Doreen: Could we be sure that next week we have the poles, the coat hangers and enough cardboard to make.....

George: I'll be able to get some coat hangers.

Doreen: Next Wednesday morning we can make a puppet each.

Helen: I thought we were going to get all the stuff first, and then arrange for a night.

Doreen: But this would just be a practice. We must get practice first. Then we can bring the children the next time.

Kathy:... ..and I'm going to have it as a junk cupboard. I feel more comfortable teaching children to do things.

George: We could start one next week, take it home with us and finish it in the house.

Helen: But there's two of you. My man goes out and leaves me and I've got them and I'm trying to get the housework done.....

Kathy: No, we'll finish one each here.

Helen: O, that's alright.

Jan 26<sup>th</sup> Transcript on Books removed to library file  
Made 2nd transcript removed to 'Reflected'

Wednesday 16th March. - Afternoon session

Present:

- Alice Meikle
- Mary McSherry
- Margaret Griffin
- May Dunn
- Mary McKay
- Edith Paton
- Doreen
- Kathy

T33

T63A.

Referred to  
off 63 - Council  
date written

19 77

Content:

Arrangements for the Parks and Gardens  
'conservation' exhibition to come to the scheme and  
prep. work to be done with the children beforehand.

(General conversation, and people coming in)

Doreen: Some of it came from the whole problem of trying to talk to reporters and people. We were saying that it's very difficult to find words quickly, and if we can do anything at all with the children that will make us get quicker at putting into words what we're talking about and help the children to do that. We all know it's important, it's just getting the skill.

Mother: You know what you mean, but you can't express it, and when somebody else says it, you say 'That's what I meant'.

I was like that way back years ago, and I'm still the same.

Kathy: I think whatever level you get, there's always somebody who can say your idea in much better terms. So I don't think you ever stop doing that.

Mother: I couldn't believe it last night, when I saw that on the television.

Was it BBC or STV?  
Most people watched STV.

Reporting Scotland. I think it was STV.

(General talk about the TV coverage of the project, and who appeared on the screen). (Talk about the interview which involved the story about the boy presenting a giro cheque at the post office and not having it accepted because he couldn't sign the form).

Doreen: The whole point is that we need to be good at putting our ideas into words and really it's any idea. I just wonder if in fact bringing young animals in a caravan - they can walk in the door and see the animals, and it tells you where they live in this country. Do you think they would be interested in that? It's all the conversation during it. Do you think it would be alright to bring the Conservation Caravan?

Mother: Yes.

Doreen: Maybe in a fortnight's time. If I find out what they'll put in it and next week we'll plan it, and the following week we'll have it. We'll probably still have the tapes here next week, so we can show them next time.

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Kathy: What's just been decided?

.....two weeks. wedding.....what about the kids from school?

Doreen: Well, we'll start with the younger ones and then go on with them afterwards. One of the schools might be interested. We'll talk to schools about it.

Kathy: There should be animals in it. Animals and their young.

Doreen: they don't know what they've got yet. The man I phoned up said 'Well write in and tell us your ideas and we'll tell you what we've got'. So I'll know by next week if it's coming and what will be in it, and next week we're going to try and see if.....'s got books.

Kathy: Yes, that's what I was thinking. We really need to do some preparation amongst ourselves, what we're going to do. And also preparation with the children, so the children are getting the ideas and the words.

Mother: Last week there was a programme about parents and children and there were books. I've never seen a book like this before. It kept on turning over and you could see the other two bits. Did you see it?

Kathy: I didn't see the programme, but I've seen the stick-on ones. You pull it and something moves.

Doreen: It's the kind of thing where the story continues....

Mother: It was a mother that was sitting with her child and the wee one was helping to read the story.

Doreen: That might be an idea, then. To find books on it. He mentioned Minah birds. He couldn't bring a Minah bird because the vandals had been at them. So I don't know what else he's got, but presumably he had Minah birds at some stage.

Mother: Is this a zoo, or the parks department?

Kathy: Parks Department.

Mother: I didn't know they had things like that.

Doreen: So, Minah Birds - I didn't think they lived in this country.

Mother: Would the zoo not help you, no?

Doreen: Possibly, but the Parks have the caravan.

Kathy: We could always go to the zoo afterwards, or to a farm.

Mother: Where would you go for a farm here?

There's one up at Parkhouse Road, Nitshill.

Haggs Road?

Pollock Estate. That's a great place.

Kathy: Have you seen the highland castle there?

Mother: Aye.

We used to go up there years ago. There was a good, good long walk.

It's different. It's a different park from Bellahouston and Elderpark. I remember the swans were there.

Doreen: There's all kinds of things you can do in the summer. We can be planning little outings - arranging to pick up the children maybe just a wee bit later in the afternoon. If we're going on an outing, we can be saying to the schools 'Can we take the children out at 3?' We could go out from 3 till 5, something like that. How would that work?

Mother: Even the big ones - Charles and Gary like to go to the Art Galleries. They've got all different things up there. He was fascinated by, I think it was the armour.

In the Art Galleries just now it's the Queen's 25 years.... It's all the Queen that's in it just now. Well most of it, but not all of it. It was on the television the other night - a special exhibition of the Queen.

An awful lot of places, exhibitions, the likes of the zoo or that, you've got to pay an entrance fee before you can go in. You don't pay in the Art Galleries.

Kathy: Do you pay in the Transport Museum?

Mother: I don't know. Mine went last week and I didn't give them any money. The schools take them anyhow, to the Transport Museum.

You could spend a whole day....

My kid loves the animals at the Art Galleries.

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Doreen: Well, that man from the Parks said there would be stuffed animals and live animals. Now, do your children like stuffed animals as well? They can't bring sheep and lambs.

Mother: Did you see Magpie last night? The lamb being born.

Kathy: It showed you a lamb being born?

Mother: It was lovely. It only takes about 10 minutes to get the skin off and then they're walking.

I think that programme's only on every second week.

I watch that quite a lot.

Doreen: Is it at night it's on?

Mother: No, it's on in the morning - STV1 - Monday.

I've got the television on from first thing in the morning.

Half-past-twelve to one, that's the parents.....

....Thursday 12-1.

Kathy: I recorded one of those and I thought it was going to be quite good but last week.....

Some of them are quite good, talking about children's development, and the one I meant..... the one I really wanted that talked about children from about 0 to about 4 in different stages of development, and when they're, say, 2½ most children will be able to do this. You can help them with certain toys....

Mother: I saw that one as well.

That's another good thing, doing it along with Nancy. Yesterday I watched it, and she's got a board up and it's lines and squares and she does a vase by working in between the squares and a wee round for the flower. I said 'I think I'll get one and try that'.

(Edith comes in at this point)

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T34

T 630

Wednesday, 23rd March.      Afternoon .6n

Transferred to  
after 63 - correct  
date Partin  
1977

Present:

- Mary McSheery
- Margaret Griffin
- May Dunn
- Betty Jones
- Jeanette Stewart
- Edith Paton
- Dolly McKibbens
- Alice Meikle
- Margaret Corr
- Doreen
- Kathy

Doreen: Last week we were talking about the possibility of someone from the Parks Department bringing a caravan. They have a caravan with animals, and things like this, and you were looking at the sex education film and saying that it's kind of difficult to start this kind of conversation with children. Maybe one of the simplest ways at this time of the year when the schools are doing all this stuff about spring is to look at animals and birds. I phoned the man from the Parks - you wouldn't believe it but his name's Grant. He said that the caravan wasn't on the road, but that he would 'phone the zoo and he would arrange for the zoo to bring something next week. As far as I know we're going to have someone from the zoo here next week. .... a cobra. He knows what we're after, so he'll bring something that is for the young.

(Talk and laughter about the possibility of the man bringing various sorts of large animals).

Kathy: They'll probably bring very simple things.

Doreen: It'll probably be birds, actually. He knows it's for helping young children. The other thing he offered us was Tollcross Park, where there are all kinds of animals. You could take the children, and it's animals that they could actually touch. But we have to make an arrangement, so I wondered if you would be interested in that.

Mother: O, the kids would like that.

Doreen: Well, would we go ourselves, see what it's about, what we think about it.....

Mother: If there's a lot, you could hire a bus.

Mother: We'd need to get permission for them to stay off school in the afternoon.

Kathy: Probably an afternoon would be lovely.

Doreen: We'd take them out, tell them about what we've found out about it and take it in turn to tell them what we see there. Look it up, find out where the animal came from...remember we once planned a thing at the Kelvin Hall zoo?

Kathy: That's right.

Doreen: For next week, then, if he's going to bring young animals.....

Mother: ..... so the kids will not be frightened.

Kathy: It's a different sort of ~~kk~~ texture, and feel that they don't normally.....

Doreen: They've also got to learn the whole business of not being afraid of them, and ~~not~~ to hurt the animals. They make a grab at it - grab its nose - so we've a whole lot of things to teach the children. I wonder if we could just start listing that kind of thing. What would you have to say to children if you were going to introduce them to new animals. Can we be thinking about the attitude of mind that we were talking about when we went to see the Riverside houses. These houses are right beside the water. ....a big high wall or something. His argument was that if you have a big high wall that causes people to want to climb it.

Mother: So it does.

Doreen: And it would become a daring thing. Whereas if it's a normal hazard like the streets are - you don't have high walls round the pavement - they would just keep away, like they do from the street.

Mother: It attracts people.  
Even the water in the park attracts them.  
A fence.

Kathy: Just a wire fence.

Mother: It's not the very young, it's the teenagers - they vandalise it all.

Kathy: Not a wooden one, but a wire one.

Mother: Forty pounds a month.....  
Some are fifty. Six apartments are over fifty pounds a month.  
A working man couldn't do it. There's a family we know and she's got five boys working for her, and the boys hand in six pounds a week and even that's not enough for her.  
Social Security don't help him a lot - they give him 30 bob a week off it.  
.....I'm not dressed, I'm just in my overall - not dressed up.

Doreen: This is your house - no-one's getting dressed up to come here.

Details of election at ...  
given here (part of thing group at ...)  
Begin ... of plan for  
200 ... & ...

Wed P.M.  
April 13<sup>th</sup> 1977

T64.

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1<sup>st</sup> section of the Transcript records  
Mph Carr's story of  
Maladjusted son  
I is filed in  
Local Column

MARGARET: I wonder if Betty Jones is coming or not?

DOREEN: I hope she is. She didn't seem too sure yesterday.

MARGARET: No. She said she was trying to get her washing done.

DOREEN: What we thought we would do was try and plan - just have quite a short meeting to-day and just kind of planning what we're going to be doing in the summer term - there's ten weeks in the summer and if we could just get it planned with one or two of you, if we could get a pattern from it. Oh, I'll tell you what there is to-morrow, if you've time to come in, and that's, you know, certain different people from Strathclyde Region are coming - you know, a bit like last Monday that we had people. There's only five people coming. I don't know if you know the Rev. Geoffrey Shaw? He's Chairman of Strathclyde Region. He lived in the Gorbals a long time and he's quite interested in the possibility of moving this kind of project to different places in Glasgow, so they're coming to see it, to see if this is what they do want, and we would be quite interested if a number of the parents who worked with us would come up so that they can ask you what you think about it, because it's all right for us saying we think it's working well, but we like to know if people in the district think that.

(To Kathy: Did you go for Mary, Kathy?)

(Doreen goes into library for Mary, etc.)

(Kathy is back in discussion room)

MARGARET: Did she get the thing? She was telling me yesterday she got the BBC film.

KATHY: Yes. She's got it. I don't know whether she's got it down here, but she got it yesterday. Were you in the BBC one?

MARY: Have you got the BBC one? I would like to see that one. But I mean work comes first.

KATHY: We've time to see it. I'm sure we have. Yes.

(A man's voice joins the group now)

MAN'S VOICE: .... know what was taking place, in the actual community. You could work something on the same lines here. I done the editorial bit for the social side and the Tenants' Association, they came in. I think that - it was only published for a month.

DOREEN: /

MARY: There was just one big pamphlet over at the supermarket.

MAN: That's no use.

KATHY: Nothing through any doors?

DOREEN: That was the Wednesday before Easter?

MARY: I know. I was hoping you were there, actually.

KATHY: There's no way - we didn't know about it. Who's on the committee, then?

MARY: Well, I think it's basically the same committee, apart from the first two, Mr. and Mrs. Smith. Did you know them? I knew they had (declined) so Tucker Dunn's the chairman now; I don't know the positions, but he's the chairman where they were before. But it's basically the same committee. A few changes. Nothing much.

DOREEN: Cath Arthur had a suggestion that there would be a series of committees, so the people running the Hall would not be asked to do all the jobs; there'd be a whole lot of different committees.

MARY: If you'd seen the crowd that was there last week, Doreen; you couldn't pick hardly one committee out, never mind two or three different committees. Remember the meeting you were at before? Well, that was twice as many as was there last week. There were very few there last week.

MARGARET: See, when you don't get a notice through, you don't know nothing about it.

MARY: Oh, it was half-empty.

KATHY: Some people ..... didn't even know.

MARY: And there was a committee picked out of what was there, so you can imagine.

DOREEN: Oh, well - I mean, you couldn't call that the Tenants -

MARY: .... should have been there .....

MAN: If they're going to classify themselves as different committees, they shouldn't - I don't think they should all be there. If it's a Tenants' Association meeting, then it should be the Tenants' Association Committee. Because when I was in that Hall, no social committee was allowed into another committee. Now I was in the two.

MARY: /

MARY: Well I think there was people on both the committees, but I think they came out. I think they're just on the one committee. I think - but I'm not sure. Willie Dunn was on both committees, wasn't he? Well now he's not. He's only on the one committee. He's only on the Social I think. That's football and that.

KATHY: So is the Social Committee the same?

MARY: No. I don't think so.

MAN: No. That ....

KATHY: ... That hasn't changed at all.

MARY: Bobby's probably still the head man, but there could be a few different ones on it; I don't know.

MAN: I think there is.

MARY: Did you not hear? I was there.

KATHY: Did they not have elections for the Social Committee?

MARY: They did. But I don't know who ... and what.

DOREEN: But there was only about fifty people there?

MARY: Well, there would probably be more than fifty, but there was twelve picked for the big committee and I don't know how many for the next committee.

MAN: As far as I gather, the attitude was to put that up in the shop and cut the cost.

MARY: And they've £5,000 clear profit since last June?

MAN: They must have that. Plus the fact that your fifteen pence - each contribution - fifteen pence for your Tenants' Association Committee covers them for stationery and postage and it's costing them nothing as regards postage - very very little. Any pamphlets that've been done - only one. The rest is done through the post.

MARY: But when we were there last week, that's what that meeting was for - for people that had anything to suggest - to say to them, because they read out everything that had been spent and you were supposed to contradict them if you thought that was wrong. But there was nobody there to do that. Because I couldn't. I didn't know anything.

MAN: /

MAN: For an AGM, it should have been put through the door, and on the Agenda each thing itemised on that pamphlet. It was always done when we done it with an AGM, especially a big meeting.

DOREEN: Aye - it's the AGM .....

MARY: Well I can guarantee there was less people at the AGM than there was at any ordinary meeting during the year.

DOREEN: Yes, of course, if they weren't notified.

MARY: It was a bad time, Easter week practically.

DOREEN: Especially if there were no notices out to anybody ...

MARY: Just the one round at the supermarket.

DOREEN: I wonder if - we were going to set up an Education Group but we would like to have put it up - we would like to have set it up under the Tenants' Association; you know, we would like to have said, a sub-Committee of the Tenants' Association was an Education Committee for the district. Now we'll set it up either way, you know - we'll set it up from this house if we can't set it up within the district, but it would have been nicer to have made it more public if we could. So what I was trying to find out .... I must go and see Bobby - no, not Bobby. It's nothing to do with him. Nothing to do with the Social Committee. Who's the new Chairman? Tucker?

MARY: I think you're dealing with more than Tucker, actually ....

MAN: They've all got their say.

DOREEN: That's the Social Committee? It's nothing to do with the Social Committee if we set up an Education Committee, is it?

MAN: The thing is, I don't think myself they're fully organised.

MARY: What you would need to do, Doreen, is go to the meeting of the Association only, whenever that is. If you want, I'll find out of Tucker when it is.

DOREEN: Yes. I'd be glad to know. And if we could come to that ...

MARY: It's usually every second Sunday, I think, but I'll find out for sure.

DOREEN: The second Sunday of the month, do you mean?

MARY: No. Every other Sunday. Twice a month.

DOREEN: /

Wednesday a.m. 11th May 1977

**PRESENT:** Helen McLaughlin, Susan Ferguson,  
George Ferguson, Kathy, Doreen.

**CONTENT:** Feedback session from Zoo Outing  
and start of planning for next  
meetings.

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*Handwritten notes:*  
The 11th May 1977  
at ...  
...  
**T65.**

**GEORGE:** See the sheep themselves? You actually thought they were goats.

**SUSAN:** What time did we get back at?

**KATHY:** Before five, wasn't it about that? Because we were supposed to leave at .....

**SUSAN:** Know what I was going to say last week? I was going to say we just could have even took Paul .. last week, because he was asking.

**KATHY:** We could have done, actually.

**SUSAN:** I thought myself, well, see all the kids in the school? And there was so many of them at the school went because their mothers were going, but all the other ones in the school knew about it, you know, and they were all kind of .. (Kathy: I know) how can we no' go?

**KATHY:** Well, the whole point of it is that it is a parent and child - I mean, you'd been in on it, so it would have been all right. We could have taken Paul.

**SUSAN:** But then, see how - I mean, Kathy, you know yourself, some of them that went to the zoo last week had just started coming that night before.

**KATHY:** No. Everybody that went to the zoo last week had been part of the groups, either in the Wednesday morning .....

**SUSAN:** But Mrs. Berry hasn't been to the group? (Kathy: Mrs. Berry?) She just came up on the Tuesday night and then she went to the zoo.

**KATHY:** Mrs. Berry didn't come.

**SUSAN:** Oh aye, she did. Aye, she was at the zoo I'm sure, because they were all talking about it outside the school and one of the women says to me, "It's no' right", she says, "I don't see", she says - "Put it this way: you can see the point of our weans no' going because we don't go to the meetings - the parents' meetings or anything like that," she says, "But some of them that went up on Tuesday night were away to the zoo on the Thursday and yet they/

- SUSAN: It's a shame you didnae have a camera, Kathy. (Kathy: We did!) But a movie one. (Kathy: Oh, yes) You know - you could have a film .. and you could have actually shown them, you know?
- GEORGE: See when we went back down and we were watching they big eagle (owls??) .... about the bus?? ... went right away down in the corner, next to the gate? We were actually ...? six feet from it and it wasn't even bothering us; you could actually touch it... that's the size of it. It looked at the motor(?) Its heid birlled right round, you know? And I'm standing and I'm trying to ....(?)
- (loud crockery noises over mic)
- KATHY: Did they say anything else about it when they got back? The children?
- GEORGE: Aye, they were talking about it, and saying, 'seen the elephants; a big, big thing we seen - the rhinoceros - a big thing.' Was it Joyce, or George, wanted to jump in the pit along wi' them. Ready to walk over!
- KATHY: I know. They were so open, especially the rhinoceros. There wasn't even a big pit, was there? You could have walked over just the little bit of grass.
- GEORGE: Just walked over and jumped down and that was it!
- KATHY: Right into the rhinos' enclosure.
- GEORGE: The thing was only that size. That's what I says to him, you know ... the thing is, they cannae jump - Rhinos cannae jump.
- KATHY: Yes, but kids can.
- GEORGE: But they can run.
- SUSAN: George, he kept saying, 'what's that big cat daeing in a cage? It's awfu' quiet. What's the big cat daeing in the cage? Can we take it hame tae my granny?'
- GEORGE: Know what ' thought was a sin? See the cheetahs?
- KATHY: Oh, that was awful - the tiny little -
- GEORGE: Cage? (Kathy: Oh, yes) They things can run, you know, they like room.
- SUSAN: They like space, they.
- GEORGE: Sixty or seventy miles an hour.
- KATHY: /

KATHY: I think at one stage Calderpark was all tiny cages and what they're trying to do is move them all out into big enclosures.

GEORGE: The lions had more space to roam about. (Kathy: Yes) That big black patch on that lion - I think that was good - I was just talking about the panther. That was good.

SUSAN: I thought that was terrible, having that big black panther in that wee cage. (Kathy: I know) I thought that was ridiculous. I mean, know what they should dae? Make it something like - know how a safari park? Well, they could make it something like that; they could put maybe a big wire fence. (Kathy: I think what they're intending ....) You know - make big open spaces. Because see if they done that? I think they would mate better.

KATHY: Yes. You know the first cheetahs - was <sup>it</sup> the cheetahs or the leopards? I can't remember which one. There were two, and they had a big open enclosure with the wire net. Well, I think what they're going to try and do is make sure that all the animals get sort of huge enclosures like that rather than - the cages are awful!

SUSAN: I mean, if you were locked up in a wee tiny space and you were an animal that could run for miles and miles, I mean, you would just go aff your heid.

KATHY: Because the cheetah's what - about ninety miles an hour it can run and it's sort of stuck in a cage.

SUSAN: I think that's what they were trying to do because you know how .... the wee lassies were cleaning that place up?

(Enter Nancy, looking for Thomas to say 'he can come in')

Know how they lassies were cleaning that bit up? I think that's what they were going to try and dae, you know, put maybe two animals in that big open space.

GEORGE: Say the likes of they've only got that wee cage? O.K. It's quite high. But they cheetahs can jump that, if they put their mind to it. If they've ta'en a mind to dae that then they'd go right over that, no problems - no problem at all.

SUSAN: I mean, I think it was - it was just a bit too wee. I mean, it would have been all right for maybe a lamb or a goat or something, but no' for two animals like that.

KATHY: I thought it was awful.

GEORGE: See the crocodiles and alligators? I went right round that place with that guy.

KATHY: That's right; you were talking to (?) at the time. I thought they could have had a bit more information about some of the animals, because some of them there wasn't very much information on.

GEORGE:/

*Handwritten notes of pages made by Alan & Teresa*

ALAN AND TERESA

**T31.**

**65A.**

READING WORKSHOP: WEDNESDAY 11th MAY 1977

*Transferred to this point of correct date*

The workshop was run as an attempt to show the parents the difficulty a five year old child has in reading, and the difficulty he has when first presented with reading materials.

Before the parents arrived, Teresa and I spent some time making out a new 'alphabet'. The alphabet had been designed by ourselves, making sure we used symbols that the parents would not recognise. We prepared flash cards of simple words written in this new alphabet then made up a story using these words and put it up on the wall, so when the parents arrived, they could see the flash cards lying about, plus the story on the wall.

#### Parents' Reactions on entering the Room

When the parents first came into the room, their eyes immediately turned to the story written on the wall. They discussed whether or not it was written in Greek, or double-Dutch, or some other language. When we told them that in the end they would be reading that story, they looked at us with disbelief.

From their reactions we then explained that this was how many children saw flash cards and reading material that they saw in school; their expressions of amazement and disbelief that they would be reading, with the fact that they could vocalise them whereas children cannot. We then started using some of the words that were in this story by making flash cards of the words and holding them up one at a time to the parents, just as children are taught in school. I displayed the words for a couple of minutes to the parents, asking them to repeat the word, then mixed the words up with some other words and asked them to pick out the flash card words and they were finding difficulties; the same difficulties that children find trying to distinguish one word from another when they first start to learn flash cards.

We also got feedback from the parents. Some of them were looking at the beginning of the word and getting a clue and some of them were looking at the end of the word. Very few of them got a clue from the middle of the word as to what it said. This agreed with quite a bit of the research that has been done in Open University and in fact Alan and I got our ideas for this new alphabet from some of the Open University work we have been studying.

When we had gone through the flash cards that were on the story with parents we then again showed them each flash card in turn and asked them to write it. This was quite a hilarious session because they had no recollection really of how to start each letter and where it started; the visual picture that they had of it in their minds was confused. We found reversals, a lot of orientation difficulties with parents writing it. In fact they found this exercise really difficult and it was a good teaching point for us on how a five year old, when he is asked to write a word, has the difficulties of where to start/

~~2-2~~ A

start, which way up it goes, whether the card is upside-down, back to front, whether to start left to right or right to left, and all these things were discussed as the parents were writing the words.

None of the parents managed to get the words right first time, but there was no tension at all in the group; everyone was really enjoying it, and realising as they went along just what was expected of children learning to read.

Then we went on to four other flash cards we had prepared, linking them to pictures this time: house, tree, boat and duck. They had a visual picture, then, of these words, because we showed them the picture first, as you do with a child, but we had used the symbols from the Open University for this and it was very clear; once the parents had gone through this, they found it easier because they had the pictures to help them. After they had gone through it, we then discussed the inversion difficulties, like the 'b' and the 'd', and which way they looked at it. This made them very aware of the difficulties the children have with similar letters, especially visually similar letters.

In designing these flash cards, we took great care to choose symbols which were very similar and differed only in orientation or, for instance, reversal 'b' and 'd'. Some of the pairs of symbols had only one small line either added or deleted, so the parents had to look very closely at these symbols and pick up a strong cue from somewhere to help them differentiate one symbol from the other. It was quite interesting that when we showed these symbols later on, these were the symbols that they mixed up most frequently - where it was either only inverted or only differed in orientation. We pointed out to the parents that the problems that they were facing were similar to the problems a five year old would face in, say, trying to differentiate between the letter 'a' and the letter 'c' or the letter 'b' and the letter 'd'. We had to point out to the parents that the child's difficulty in forming letters would be even greater than the parents' difficulty in copying our symbols, for the simple reason that the parent has background experience and finds it easier to form a mental picture of the symbol than the child has. For instance, one parent said that he always remembered a particular symbol because it looked a bit like a 'g' on its side. Now, a child would not have that experience to fall back on and would not be able to use that as a cue.

This discussion took quite a long time and perhaps thirty to forty-five minutes had elapsed since the parents had seen the flash cards. We then asked the parents to try and read the story which had been printed on the wall, using our symbols. Interestingly enough, the parents tended to recognise the longer words where they had shape of the word to help them. Their greatest difficulty was in recognising two-letter words and they confused all of the two-letter words; simple ones like symbols representing 'at', 'in', 'on', 'is', 'to' and a discussion followed there about the difficulties that young children would find in trying to read these letters written in T.O. (traditional ornithography).

We/

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We then discussed with the parents the ease with which a child can remember a word like 'aeroplane' or 'elephant' or 'hippopotamus' where they can remember the shape and maybe the beginning letter or the end letter and use that as a cue to help them remember the word, exactly the same way that the parents had been remembering shapes of the symbols which formed, say, 'library' or some of the longer words which we used.

With some of these longer words, like 'aeroplane', 'hippopotamus', etc., the length of the word helped the child and the fact that with longer words they tended to get a picture, for instance, of the word 'aeroplane', whereas if you are teaching a word like 'is', or 'here', they can't get a picture, so you have to relate it, like 'here is the aeroplane' to something they already know and put it in context more and in fact when the parents started to read the story, the first bit was 'here we ...'. Now, they managed to get 'library' quite easily but they then related the 'here we ...' in context but picking them out on their own, they found difficult - the 'here' and the 'we' and the 'is' and the 'on' and the 'to'. So then all the parents read through the whole story; not very easily the first time, because these little words were giving them difficulty, but by the second and third time they were quite fluent in reading it and they were feeling quite an air of success that this story they had seen when they first came in, that was completely foreign to them, they could now read. But when we asked them then to go back and pick out specific words, it was interesting because they had to read the sentence to put a little word like 'is' or 'are' in context and they took longer to pick out the smaller words than they did the bigger words.

We finished the discussion group by asking the parents to think of some of the problems which they had faced when trying to read the symbols which we had used and to try and think whether they had noticed their children having any of the same problems and difficulties in reading 'to'.

Probably the main thing then that came out of that was that now, when the children come home with their pile of flash cards, the parents say that they are going to be much more sympathetic to the time the children take to decipher the word and they will realise to some extent the puzzles that go through their mind when they are trying to make out just what the word is and they found this very valuable in giving them some kind of insight into how a child feels when he is faced with a word. It also helped them to point out to the child significant features of the word; the simple things like where the word starts, the direction the word takes, and the significant sounds in it - beginnings and ends - that will help the child.

For future meetings the parents said it would be helpful to them if we perhaps took some of the problems, for instance, the orientation difficulties, the reversal difficulties like 'b' and 'd' and show how we can help the children to overcome these.

Again for these sessions we will be using the Open University materials for the Reading Development Course which are in Block I, using their planning and implementation ideas. We found that the work from the O.U. which we had/



had tried to pass over to the parents had been very successful and the implementation of the units and the ideas contained in them, although planned primarily for teachers and for people who had gone through a course of further education, could be adapted very easily to suit the needs and wishes of parents, in fact, parents in Moorpark.

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Griffiths essentially said, that the parents were very interested in the units and the ideas contained in them, although planned primarily for teachers and for people who had gone through a course of further education, could be adapted very easily to suit the needs and wishes of parents, in fact, parents in Moorpark.

Alan Locke and  
Teresa McLaughlin,

11th May, 1977

The discussion went on for some time and Alan Locke and Teresa McLaughlin, 11th May, 1977. The parents were very interested in the units and the ideas contained in them, although planned primarily for teachers and for people who had gone through a course of further education, could be adapted very easily to suit the needs and wishes of parents, in fact, parents in Moorpark.

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Transcript of tape  
made by Alan & Teresa

65B

ALAN & TERESA

T32

19th May 1977

The second session of evening classes for parents of five year old children was held last night. Only three parents came, Mrs. Griffin, the Margaret of our parents' groups who comes to everything and is very good; Mrs. Berry, who is the granny of the child Berry, because the child stays with her - the mother came to the first feedback session but the granny has come to both of these sessions with Alan and Teresa; Mrs. Wallace, who has a child of four and another of six, arrived and asked if she might join the group.

The session began by listening to these three parents talking about the neighbourhood. This was really meant as a socialising start to the evening but it was very instructive for Alan and Teresa. When they arrived, three youths were racing past the close and as they listened to the discussion they realised that they had witnessed some part of a fight that had been going on in the Albion about half past seven. The police were going round the scheme, picking up suspects. The mothers were very excited and talked about a lot of the local problems, including a family called McInally in which there are two alcoholic girls, one of sixteen and one of nineteen, and a boy who had molested Margaret Griffin's daughter. This is, of course, all heresay; the impression it gave Alan and Teresa is really what I am recording rather than necessarily fact.

Margaret Griffin eventually said, 'let's get on with the work'. The first thing they did was to revise last week's work. This was to read a paragraph which Alan and Teresa had written in a made-up language. The idea was to give the parents the feelings that their children were experiencing in learning to read and the whole exercise was structured on the Open University Reading Development Course. Margaret was able to read most of it, but forgot a word or two. The discussion went on for a few moments, but Mrs. Berry had been studying the paper and eventually felt secure enough to say that she would like to try it. She worked her way through the whole section, but after every word she turned to Alan and asked if that was right. When Alan missed praising her after a word, she would stop completely and demand reassurance before she would go on to the next word. It was very interesting to watch the behaviour that is so common in the classroom being displayed by these parents. The lesson then went on to showing word patterns and ideas of writing. The parents were not very convinced of this process of learning to make patterns that began the writing process until the children were brought in from the toy library. The parents were given one child each. Some of them had no children of their own with them, but everyone was given one child to work with and instructed to teach the child this pattern-making. They became very interested and convinced when this happened. Alan and Teresa tried to show important, though very tiny points, like placing the child directly in front of the paper, teaching left to right patterns, the use of a thick pen in the initial stages. They then moved on to auditory skills. Parents were very keen to play 'I-spy' games with the children, using one letter, like words beginning with 'b'.

The/

The discussion with Alan and Teresa then moved on to talking about Helen Murdoch, who is coming next Friday. She will be showing some of her work and literature to Alan and Teresa. The teachers from the schools have already had this session. Helen will be working in the schools next year if the teachers wish her and Alan and Teresa both felt that it was important that Helen came and gave introductory sessions in the schools this term, in the same fashion as Jan Calderwood had done before the job creation girls came. This had been very much appreciated by the teachers. There was a further note that there was a need for Jan Calderwood to go into Copeland School as soon as possible since the job creation girls to Copeland School very soon.

Finally we began discussing the plans for next year. I suggested that Alan and Teresa both think out how they would like to work within the school setting next year and plan work well above the actual capacity. We will then discuss what job creation people would be needed to help out in this work, and which parts of the work would go to them. This will be the subject of next week's discussion.

... school, and we discussed the differences in school to-day  
... school when they attended it. They found it novel to see  
... was working with small groups of children and at first  
... thought that she only had maybe four or five children.  
... till the programme developed that they really realised that  
... and that the other children were very at various diffe  
... . Discussion on this went on for quite a while and then  
... decision based on again. We then watched the children practice  
... discrimination tasks. One of the first children writing a l  
... and the letter that the child was writing was the letter 'b'  
... ate that came up during this activity was that one of the  
... part was placed in such a position that because of seeing the  
... formed, he was seeing the letter 'b' being formed. He did  
... the parents; how is it really important that a child has

*Transcripts from tapes made by  
Alan & Teresa*

Reading Workshop held on Wednesday 24 May 77

run by Alan and Teresa

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T66.

Those Present: Mrs. Berry senior,  
Mrs. Berry Junior,  
Mrs. Armstrong,  
Mrs. Wallace,  
Mrs. Griffin,  
and 13 children

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Mrs. Wallace, who had come for the first time last week, brought Mrs. Armstrong this week and in fact the previous week Mrs. Griffin had brought Mrs. Wallace, so the parents themselves are recruiting from neighbours and people they know who might be interested.

We started with feedback mainly to Mrs. Armstrong and Mrs. Berry Junior about what we had been doing on the previous two Wednesdays. Alan and I spoke only very briefly on the feedback and in fact Mrs. Griffin did most of the feedback and brought them up to date on the alphabet that we had made up, and the great fun they had trying to decipher what it meant, and from then on we started watching the Open University first television programme, as we thought that some of the letter discrimination techniques and the fact that it was a group open plan situation might be useful for the parents to see.

As we watched the programme we stopped at each part that we thought was interesting and that we thought perhaps the parents would find interesting to discuss. The first part at which we stopped was one of the first scenes inside the school, and we discussed the differences in school to-day, as opposed to school when they attended it. They found it novel to see that the teacher was working with small groups of children and at first I think some of them thought that she only had maybe four or five children. It wasn't until the programme developed that they really realised that she had a full class and that the other children were busy at various different activities. Discussion on this went on for quite a while and then we put the television back on again. We then watched the children practising letter-discrimination tasks. One of the first ones was writing a letter in sand and the letter that the child was writing was the letter 'b'. One of the points that came up during this activity was that one of the children taking part was placed in such a position that instead of seeing the letter 'b' being formed, he was seeing the letter 'q' being formed. We discussed this with the parents; how it was really important that a child knew what was the top and what was the bottom of the letter and how if they used cards with the children they would have to mark the card so that the child would know immediately what was the top and what was bottom so that they had an initial cue in discriminating the letter, and in any work the child was doing with the parents at home, to try and make sure that they were squarely placed, right in front of the paper, whether it was drawing or writing, so that they had a correct view of what they were doing. If the parents were showing the children anything or working with them, again they should make sure that they were/

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in the right position. Mrs. Griffin very quickly caught on to the point of the 'b' which, if looked at upside-down, would be 'q' and she was very good at bringing the other parents into the discussion at this point. As the television programme went on, Mrs. Griffin in fact started talking - "Oh, yes, there was a particular part about tying his shoelaces." She then went into a story about how David always lost his shoelaces and there was a certain amount of distraction from the programme. We were a bit unhappy about it ourselves because we thought that the parents weren't relating to it too well, perhaps because it was an English school, English accents, and perhaps a little bit alien to their situation.

The next interesting part that the parents really got something from was the part where the teacher again had a small group and she was showing them a book from 'Language in Action': Bill and Ben, and it was just a picture book with no words at all. Then she drew the children's attention to another book that had words in it, and tried to draw from the children what was the difference between the books and this brought in the whole question of the vocabulary of reading, like words, spacing, sentences and the varied vocabularies that children have to get used to before they can start reading the printed word.

The film went on to show a view of a library that was run by parents; the children used this library in the school building. The view of the children coming into the library drew comment from Mrs. Griffin and another parent on how serious and quiet the children were on entering the library. From that, we discussed the difference of the children using that library - how serious, and probably more inhibited they were, in comparison to the library in Orton Street where the children see it as another house and it's very relaxed; noisy, perhaps, but a very relaxed atmosphere in comparison.

Discussion continued until the television programme finished then we briefly recapped on some of the activities that we had talked about in the previous week; things like playing 'I Spy' to develop auditory skills and various other activities and we had promised the parents, the previous week, that we would show them some more games which would develop the same skills. We asked the parents to think of a letter that their child had difficulty with - maybe a letter that they didn't recognise, or a letter that the child missed out in his own speech, or a letter that he would tend to miss out in spelling or use another letter in its place. Once we had got various suggestions from the parents, we showed how to do it with one letter and we tried it first of all with the letter 's'. One boy who was in the company used the word 'poor' instead of 'spoon' when writing the word and he tended to miss out the 's' sound all the time. We discussed this, then showed a game that we thought would maybe help. All it was, was building up a booklet of words starting with 's', but getting the child to draw the picture for each word so that it would be interesting to him and he would recognise his own picture and use it to relate it to the printed word. When we were planning this activity we started off first of all in the discussion room and talked to the parents about/

about why this activity would help and ways of making it as interesting as possible for the child, and as much fun as possible; again saying to the parents that anything they do, the children must find it interesting, otherwise they could in fact end up harming the child in school.

After we had planned out the work we were going to do, the parents moved into the library, collected their children and then sat down on the floor and started playing the games with the children again, building up a book for each child. When each child had made up his own book and coloured in drawings, we then played a matching game with all the children to try and bring the group together again for the close of the session. We took all the pictures and jumbled them up and then encouraged the children to try and sort the pictures to match the various books, so that pictures of 'spoon', 'spade', would be put in the 's' book and this game went on with the mothers mainly watching; not really joining in at this point. So that we could have a chance to speak to the mothers after the game had finished, we again talked to the children about all the different patterns that they could make, and asked them if they would like to decorate their book so that they could take it home and show their parents it. While the children were working on this, the mothers were brought together again with Teresa and myself and we discussed the work that we had done during that session and asked them for any comments that they had to make.

Most of the parents had enjoyed sitting watching the game because it showed them what they could do. It wasn't just the end, doing the pictures and the sound; they could actually play a game with all the family being involved in this and it could go on, and they were very quiet when the game was going on, very intensely watching just what we were doing, so when I was asking them for feedback afterwards, this was one of the main points that they brought up, that they saw how this could be developed. I also asked the two new mothers that we had, Mrs. Berry jun. and Mrs. Armstrong how they felt the session had gone, since it was their first visit, and they both said they really enjoyed it and they found it helpful for their children, and it did give them ideas of what to do. Most of them said especially on the long winter nights it's a good idea to get round with the kids and do games like this and they would be interested in any more games that we could come up with like this that would help their children in school and also in any way that they could support the work that was being done in school.

Although we had five parents there, seventeen people were there altogether. We had 13 children and little George, Mrs. Griffin's little one wasn't there at the beginning session, but the babysitter then brought him along and she joined in too with the parents, and joined the group with us. It was also useful having the oldest Griffin child there - she's eleven - because she did help in the toy library a little bit, by helping to occupy the children while we were talking to the parents at the beginning of the session and we found that useful, to have an older one there. So while the games were going on we had a lot of people, seventeen of them, in the library, and it was a noisy session, but obviously well enjoyed by them all. The parents are also supporting the workshop, apart from just being there and being interested/

interested in what's going, by organising the tea themselves and bringing biscuits and even sending out and fetching biscuits and collecting money for them, so they're really organising it and it saves us that kind of task, because they're taking it over themselves.

Interestingly, the parents who have been providing biscuits and sending out for milk and organising the tea are parents who are in the house more often than Teresa and I are; they are parents who are members of either two other groups or one other group and in many ways they seem to be making us at home in the house, rather than vice versa although, of course, we've got to make newcomers at ease when they enter but normally the newcomers that we've had so far have been friends of the regular users of the house and the regular users are making sure that they make newcomers feel welcome too.

We finished the session by chatting to the parents about some of the activities we would carry out next week. It would appear that they are most interested in finding out the different games that they can play with the children, so we promised them that we would try and work out some new games and take them to them next week, talk about them again, and show them how to make them up with the children and then do a play session using the games.

The meeting finished at 9.25 pm, having commenced at 7.20 pm.

Quotes  
Taking on partnership  
in leadership - Susan's story  
p. 5  
my toasts  
Open-ended quotes  
of 9

# T67.

Wednesday a.m. 25th May, 1977

## (Section I of II)

Whole sections  
of this show the ideas  
quite clearly  
(Geoff / us -  
David - Anna  
15)

1988 ch 7  
Photos used for P9  
about confidence

**PRESENT:** Susan Ferguson  
George Ferguson  
Doreen  
Kathy

**CONTENT:** Discussion of the  
possibility of  
training next year  
for para-professional  
work with Doreen and  
Kathy.

(The Muggum Gate?)

**GEORGE:** See the time when we'd went tae - the sun was scorching, you know, and that really made the day too.

**KATHY:** Yes, and you know you could spend your time outside - well that's what you did - there was the lake you bathed in.

**GEORGE:** It was only a couple of weeks ago we went.

**DOREEN:** Is the swimming pool indoors?

**GEORGE:** Yes. It's all indoors.

**KATHY:** But there's a beach - there's a sandy beach down on to ...

**GEORGE:** The twice when we went, it was at night, right enough, it wasnae at night, well, about four, five o'clock, the sea - the tide was out.

**SUSAN:** And he was trying to get doon to pick up wilks. I said, "We're no' here to pick up wilks."

**GEORGE:** Whenever I go to the seashore I want to get wilks!  
(Laughter)

**DOREEN:** Oh, yes. Well that's what we'll do when we start doing the preparation on the seashore. But could we just take a minute before that to talk about the possibility of planning for next year. You see, I don't know if you've noticed how Kathy and I work planning sessions but we, on the whole, one of us does the session and the other one takes part as if she was part of the learning group, and throws questions or insists on the other one clarifying it. I don't know if you've seen this but I'd like you to watch it from now on till you see what we do. It's not in as small a group as this, but when the group's bigger; one of us is explaining something. The other one will start saying, "What do you mean by that?" or, "Why did you put it that/

DOREEN:(contd) that way?" And it really is a way of asking the questions that people in the room - the other people in the room - maybe are only beginning to get together in their mind and they haven't got words for it yet. So we're not really so much asking - well, we are asking - I never know what Kathy's on about when she's telling me how to make things because I'm so slow with my hands; but it's not only that. It's an attempt to speak a wee bit before the others; not to answer for them, but to put the question that's in their mind so that other folk are encouraged to speak.

KATHY: I think the difficulty is when there's one person doing it on their own. You tend to think, "Oh, well, I know what I'm saying", and you carry on at your own speed and your own pace and you're not always aware whether other people are with you.

GEORGE: I think that's just ..... because I was at the college up in Townhead. I used to sit and the teacher would ramble on about something and see the likes of - I'd just wandered a wee bit; missed it; I lost interest in it. (Kathy: That's right, yes.) Sitting there, and then he'd come back and say to me, "What was it I said there?" - You'd say, "Er ....."

KATHY: Because you switch off.

GEORGE: Aye. You just lose interest, you know. But if somebody ...actually catching somebody else's attention to keep it going, there it's going through your mind.

DOREEN: That's right. So even if you're not yourself asking the question, if somebody else is asking - yes, that's right. That's what I wanted to know. That's where I got lost on. Is that the kind of thing ...?

GEORGE: Aye, that's what I was meaning, aye.

DOREEN: Well that's how we run as a pair - that's when we're running these groups. Now, next year more people are coming. We would have to split and we would really need somebody else to come in; and be somebody who'd been through the thing this year.

GEORGE: I see what you mean, aye.

DOREEN: ..Come in and work as partner so that when the thing is going on, there's somebody else listening and saying, "That's not all that clear." "I'll say some question that will show it's not too clear."

KATHY: Or help him with an explanation - but it doesn't matter if the second person is that much clearer. What they're doing is, they're putting it in different words.

GEORGE: Bringing an interest in it in other words, isn't it?

KATHY:/

KATHY: Yes.

GEORGE: I see what you're talking about.

DOREEN: I remember the day we were making puppets. I don't know if you were in that puppet session, when there was fur put out here. Somebody put out a fur coat.

GEORGE: That's right, aye. The black and white one.

DOREEN: Now, can you remember anything about that session with that fur coat?

GEORGE: I can remember mostly all of it. We started off and somebody said, "It's like a polar bear." It was because of the shape of it - it was like diamonds ... (KATHY: That's right, yes) at the bottom. Well, I cut a bit out of the black bit and Ellen was sitting and she cut out a bit and the two Ellens got involved in a conversation on it. They were talking about how it felt when they were touching it.

DOREEN: That's right. But do you remember before we started cutting it? Nobody would cut it because it was quite a big thing to cut into, a coat. You know, it was too good a thing to cut into.

GEORGE: That's true, aye.

DOREEN: And I remember Kathy - she was all right, she was cutting away at this and nobody else was touching it; it was so obvious they were afraid to touch it and I went to pick it up. And as I did a thought just went through my head - "Imagine cutting into a good fur coat." And instead of just letting the thought go through my head, I said it. Now this is the kind of task of the second person. I said, "Oh, it feels funny to cut through a good fur coat." And immediately it was like switching on a light. Everybody said, "Yes, isn't it funny." - and moved over and started cutting into it.

GEORGE: Aye, that's right.

DOREEN: It was as if it released everybody.

GEORGE: I think that the people were saying to themselves "I don't want to be the first one to cut it." - you know?

KATHY: Yes. And they were frightened of being the one who said it.

SUSAN: I thought it was somebody's jacket - I thought it belonged to somebody.

KATHY: Oh ... Nancy was given it.

SUSAN: I thought they would come and (strangle?) me up.

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: Yes. That's the feeling. You see somebody who's been through the thing before is in a position to put that into words, where Susan, you felt - you just felt that and you weren't going to say, "Is this somebody's?" or, "Can I cut it?" Now: that's the kind of job that I think we could be exploring the possibility of doing in a group and the point is that it could have been somebody's coat, so you see ....

GEORGE: ... could maybe say that - I mean to say it could be somebody's coat; it would be even more stranger if the coat had been sitting up there and, see the likes of yourself, took it doon and you were afraid to start cutting it - you know, I can imagine you saying "Oh-oh-oh..." you know, naebody else would have cut it; they'd have just left it there.

KATHY: And nobody would have come with their own coats next week!  
(Laughter)

DOREEN: But that kind of thing: you've got to be able to be wrong as well in that kind of situation and that's what the problem is to the person who asked the question. I mean, I could have said, "It seems funny cutting into somebody's coat" - and heard somebody say, "Aye, you're no' cutting into my coat!"  
(Laughter) You know - you've got to have the sureness in the group to be able to make the wrong contribution; you know, when Kathy and I are working together, I can say to Kathy - "So, you're really saying this ..... as well?"

KATHY: ... or is it often the other way round?

DOREEN: You know - you've got to be able also to make the mistakes if you're going to be working a partnership; I'm not worried about it: so I said a stupid thing? it doesn't matter because that's also part of what everybody else and new people feel like. They don't want to say the stupid thing, but if they see somebody say it, and it's all right, they have a go at trying something themselves.

GEORGE: I think that's how the Tuesday group doesnae want to get burst up, because if they moved into another group, now supposing ....

KATHY: Oh, you mean the Wednesday afternoon?

GEORGE: Wednesday afternoon are all right. Well, see the likes of - we're all the'gether and if they say something wrong and stupid well, we're all there. They don't say, "Aye, you're an idiot" or that, but if you <sup>new</sup> people come in and they're sitting with you and they say something wrong and nobody says anything to them, you know, they go, "I've made a mug of this", you know, he says, "I don't like this at all." and, you know, they fall oot, but if somebody's there to turn round and say, "Oh, you're an idiot you" and start laughing, then that breaks the ice on it. It's ..... got to be put down(?)

KATHY: /

KATHY: That's exactly it. And it takes a long time to build up enough confidence: "I don't care - they're people that I know, and they know I'm daft at times" .. and you just say what you want to say, but it takes a long time to build up (confidence) in the group.

DOREEN: Would you be interested in looking into this possibility of next year working as a kind of team member with either Kathy or myself, so that you were joining groups - new groups - and you were working with us, as being the people who could help to get the group going because it's a slow process.

GEORGE: I've noticed it has been slow.

DOREEN: <sup>Quote</sup> <sup>It is hard to</sup> .. getting people secure enough to try things, to try opening their mouth, - if you think how long it took you ~~to~~ Susan. I'll never forget watching Susan, start from saying not a word - do you remember?

GEORGE: That's right, aye. She came in and she sat there. I was talking to yourself - I was talking away and she sat there for the best part of an hour and never opened her mouth.

DOREEN: And you used to talk for her. Do you remember?

GEORGE: That's right, aye.

DOREEN: George used to say, "Well, Susan thinks ..." (Susan laughing) "Susan says ....." Do you remember that, Susan?

SUSAN: Aye. There's a lot of people like that.

KATHY: Oh, yes.

DOREEN: Well, tell me .. If you could help us see that, Susan, how people feel like that, this would help us plan next year.

SUSAN: Well I don't know - well a lot of people, you know .. "I wonder if I should say this" or, "I wonder if I should say that" - "I wonder what they would think if I said this kind of thing", you know, and they're just wanting to know - they let this other person keep on talking and they wait and see the reaction on the other person and then they step in.

KATHY: (and Doreen) That's it, isn't it? .. Yes. And you're absolutely ...

DOREEN: That's exactly what you need somebody for, then. You need a kind of partner who is obviously not as secure in the situation as the speaker, so if we were doing things that I know a lot about, then Kathy can honestly be saying, "Well, what is that idea, then?" And if it's something that Kathy knows a lot about and I don't know much about, I mean everybody can see I'm quite honestly saying, "What are you talking about; how do I do it?" You need somebody like that, who's less secure than/

Susan's story

not saying to themselves

end of quote

DOREEN: than the speaker - than the leader. (George: I see what you're getting at, aye, I see that.)  
(contd)

SUSAN: You see, it's all right for them that's in the big group, because if there's something that they're no' into, they'll say to them outside, "What was that all about?" (Kathy: Yes) You know? Ask them a lot of different questions instead of maybe them asking for themselves. You know? That's what happens when there's a big group. There's always two people or maybe one person that just doesnae bother, you know?

KATHY: Doesn't say anything, yes. That's why I prefer the smaller group because ... (Susan: You get everybody interested then.) You do. And maybe it takes quite a bit for the person who would sit there and say gothing to come out - who wants .....

SUSAN: I think .. they would come out quicker because I came out quicker because it was a smaller group, whereas if there had been a lot of people, I would have just sat there.

DOREEN: But let me tell you now, Susan, I worked hard to bring you out. I planned what I was going to do to make you come out and because we could see this - you see, this is what is going on behind the group. You have a plan of what you're trying to do, and this is what we'd be willing to show now - what the thinking is behind it; what the preparation we do for these groups, so that we could sit there and say, "Look - George is answering for Susan. Susan doesn't answer. How do we get Susan to offer her contributions, so that Susan could grow herself and also would have more to offer her children." And so we used to sit and think of "What had Susan got to say?" that we could make sure that Susan says it. But that didn't happen accidentally. That really happened because we worked at it.

GEORGE: When she went home with me she said, er, "What's such and such?" I said, "Listen, if you're no' (going?) to sit there and listen, I'm no' going to sit there and listen and then come out and tell you all over again. You sit and listen for yourself, and I'll sit and listen for myself." O.K. She comes home and says, "What was that word that Kathy said again?" then I'll say it, but if she says, "Listen, I never really caught that." I says, "Well you werenae really interested, so if you're no' interested..."

KATHY: No, I don't think it's a question really of not being interested. Very often you don't catch something and because maybe at the time you don't feel at ease enough, or you haven't got the confidence to say it .. and other people have got the same problems in their mind.

GEORGE: © Aye. But at the same time you can actually tell when a person's interested or isnae interested by the way they ask you a certain thing, you see, and sometimes when she asked me when we went hame, she just says, "What was that about?" .. You'd/

GEORGE: You'd just turn round and say .. she's no' interested,  
(contd) you know, she must ...

DOREEN: Didn't you say that when you went to college sometimes it was the way it was offered - it went over your head because you were able to dream during that point - I mean, you didn't know if you were interested or not.

GEORGE: Aye, that was because it wasn't really discussed, or else part of it was discussed. The thing was, it was just a teacher telling you, right, the likes of, it's different now in school, when you go like that - they say, "Right, now you tell me what I was saying." You know? Or the teacher says, "C'mon and read this wee bit for us." And then they'll get somebody else to read it. Well, supposing a child's missed one part of it, well, it's getting read over again, and over again and over again anyway, but likes of when we went to college, we were getting told it the once, and that was it. And if you didnae catch it, you didnae catch it and that was it. So if, actually the way it worked out, if you missed a bit of it at the college, you were as well just missing the whole lot, because ...

DOREEN: Did you have it in your mind that Susan felt like that at the first meetings here? That the whole situation was so foreign to you that ...

GEORGE: I think it was really her just meeting, you know, strange people .. and saying to herself, "How are they going to take me? How do I take them?"

SUSAN: I was like that when I met his mother an' all. I would never talk to his mother.

KATHY: But I think so many people are like this. And, you know, you're sitting there, and you've got your thoughts, and you know what you want to say, but you daren't say it, and somebody else will come in with a question, or somebody else will come in and say something, and you think to yourself - "Well, that's exactly what I wanted to say." And you just don't say it. But everybody else is going through the same sort of processes; exactly the same thing going on.

GEORGE: This is the same kind of thing ...

SUSAN: ...That's how I (felt?) when I seen the size of that group that day when I walked in.

DOREEN: The Wednesday afternoon group? Yes. That was a funny day when you came in. You'd no room anywhere ...

GEORGE: /

GEORGE: Aye, that's what I was saying. Well that was something like the exact same as when we were gie'd that place to come into the team(?) There's always going to be one of the committee or else somebody's going to say, "Well, gie's your haun', c'mon", you know, "c'mon and join the group", you know, there's always going to be somebody's been able to dae ... I've always felt that anybody that's come into .....(?) "What do you want to drink? What's your name?" You know, talk away to them like that. If he'll have confidence in you then you're actually mingling with the rest of the people and then they just fall into place; it's like a jigsaw puzzle in the end, it all just fits into place.

DOREEN: That's good .... but at the beginning you do feel like an odd spare part of the puzzle; you can't see whether you fit in or not.

GEORGE: This is how I says to her - when I used to go places, I used to feel shy and that, no' talk to anybody, take three or four weeks - maybe I'll walk into some place and say, "How do you do? What's your name?" and talk away to him, because, if you could make a good impression right away, then I say to myself, "Oh, here, he's all right to talk to an' that" - you know, come back and (ever) talk to when you come again.

KATHY: I think that takes a lot of guts when it's a strange ....

SUSAN: (indistinct) ..... (could do that??)

DOREEN: I think you could do that now. As I think of all those visitors that have come here and you've walked up to them and talked to them, you know, like reporters from newspapers.

SUSAN: That happens when you're used to it. They'll come down and they'll say, "that guy's coming up; that guy wi'the red hair"

DOREEN: Oh - Ian?

SUSAN: Aye, Ian. And he came up and he said, "Hullo". And I said "Hullo". And I said - "Where have I seen him before?" (Laughter) "How come he says 'Hullo' to me?" And then it just clicked. "Oh, I met him at that meeting".

KATHY: Yes, that's right.

DOREEN: Well, this is - you see, we think that this is the kind of thing that everybody's going to get out of these discussions - a security in themselves, a feeling of worth, that they have something to say that we want to hear, and secondly, the ability to say it.

SUSAN: I think it opens them up more.

DOREEN: Yes. You're getting better - yes and if you're better at doing it, you're doing it better at home with your children. Your/

Build a good Self image  
Self confidence

DOREEN:  
(contd)

Your children are going to be better at doing it. So they're going to get it two ways. One, you actually teach them things, but, two, you're actually different, and so you've more to offer them by the kind of person you've become.

GEORGE:

See the likes of you were saying that you were trying to explain to us about you and Kathy, how you two worked? I'd actually said to Susan already, "Well, Kathy does all the - tells you how to do things an' that. Sister Doreen comes in with the confidence, turning round and saying to you - you know - giving you a question - confidence to get an answer back out of you." This is what's - d'you call it a magnet? you know - when you ask the question, you're actually dragging it out of the person. And although the person doesn't really want to say it, they're committed to say it and they're saying it, you know, you know, just even ...

SUSAN:

Aye, they're opening theirselves .. and the next time when you ask them, they're more confident.

GEORGE:

.. and if you ask them a question again, it's, "Oh, aye", then eventually it just goes round and you're all just sitting there like pals - "Oh, that's daft, that", you know, and it just comes out like .... "I'm glad there's a bit of ....?"

DOREEN:

We've had quite .... just exactly what's behind it. The whole process of getting somebody to pull an answer out of themselves because they want to interact with you; you want to ask them something so they want to find out what you're going to say about their answer. (George: That's right.) But, you see, there's another side to that. I've got to make sure that the question that I ask is something that the person feels secure in answering so I've got to make that ...

GEORGE:

.. That's really where confidence comes in on your own part when you're asking anything else. You've got to be able to have the confidence plus the ability to actually do it. You've got to actually think before you open your mouth. (Doreen: Right!) Because if you say something wrong and you put your foot in it you say, "Oh - that's thick!" (Laughter)

KATHY:

Oh, yes. And if you make people feel that they can't answer anything - they don't know anything - then they don't go back.

GEORGE:

Aye. This is a good thing that you say, "What do you think?" It's no' just gie'ing an answer; it's "What do you think about that" sort of thing. ~~you know, or else,~~ say the likes of the kites: "What do you think between that wee one and that big one? // And you say - "But what's the difference between they two?" You know - that's the questions they give to you - "Well, what do you think about them?" // And then they'll start to use their imagination, and this is what it's all about: using your imagination for things.

KATHY:/

GEORGE:  
(contd)

pretending that he's paralysed, see, from the neck down, right? Well, he's on this stretcher and he gets taken up to Mexico somewhere and they've got this shrine and the miracles have worked in this shrine, you see, well, when he's lying there in this - and then you see him up in the house and he's walking about - and when he's lying, he's getting five hundred thousand dollars off the American Insurance company for it, well, when you're sitting there, my mind last night was away ahead in front, because I was saying, "Well, he's up in the shrine." Before I'd even seen any more, I was saying, "Oh, he's going to get struck paralysed", you know. Well at the same time I was thinking this must be going through the author's mind as well because, see when it ended up? there was a wee blind boy got taken up and the wee blind boy could see and when he came out of the shrine he was walking and then his sight just went. You see? And the sight was gie'n away from him and gie'n to the wee boy rather than him that was struck paralysed. What I'm saying is, likes of there, it's a play in progress. The author must have been saying to himself, "Oh, wait a minute. They're all actually expecting him to be paralysed an' that. So what I'll dae is, I'll t/wist it round," and then you can see the man carrying the wee blind boy and they're all praying for his sight an' all that. And then you can see - the wee boy sees all right and then you've got a couple of minutes and you see this guy - you see this man, he's up, walking about, puts his stretcher by, gie's the priest money an' that, and he says, "I dinnae want it. It's a miracle frae heaven" an' that. He walks outside and his sight goes. You know? And, well, his wife and everybody's amazed, naturally. But you can actually see how it twisted round like that. It's, well, as I say, my imagination run away with me. I was expecting him to be struck down. And then he gets turned into - blind. It's a trick to the imagination, you know. As I say, well, maybe he seen it the way I seen it, about the paralysed - mind I was saying it? But then again he's changed it.

KATHY: That's right, because he knows the people are going to be thinking like that.

GEORGE: Aye. Because they think he's paralysed. And then he's changed it to the blindness. No. I think .. that was very clever and if, you know, some of the points of view which you've been saying yourselves sometimes is, you're leading up to one thing and then all of a sudden it's changed; the answers come out, and you're all sitting saying to yourself, "That's very clever the way that worked out", you know. But as I say, it all depends on the kind of imagination you've got.

DOREEN: Well, what we're thinking of doing, then, is doing a little kind of training course next term for a handful of people who've been taking part this term; helping them to work with us to understand what's behind the courses so that they would be able to/

DOREEN:  
(contd)

to work, certainly as our partners this year; maybe in a future term, actually run groups, you know, because we - the Project's only here for three years. We've finished the first year now. So we should be working ourselves out of a job.

GEORGE:

Surely when you say "Working yourself out of a job" - you're actually leaving the scheme and if it's a hit you'll have moved on to another project.

DOREEN:

Sure. But within the scheme. It should be that we should go away and it shouldn't all fall apart.

GEORGE:

Aye, that's true.

DOREEN:

It should be possible for people to go on holding these wee groups on their own homes and things, saying, "Come on and we'll plan something, or some other objective" and we know that we're not just planning where to get the bus. We're planning ideas and we're able to offer ideas and we're able to bring new people that are in this scheme into the group and help them offer their ideas and express their ideas well. You know you're doing that as well as planning.

SUSAN:

No' just .... we're going to dae without ...? Let whoever wants to come, come.

KATHY:

That's right, yes. And it's maybe sort of three adults and a hundred children - and there's no way that you can talk to the children ..... but it's these processes .. and I think you've got to go through a 'trial and error' process, a sort of learning how to do them.

GEORGE:

Uh huh. Well, as you were saying, this is the first year. Well you actually know what like - well almost know how next year's going to be; they could have given you ... just now .. so the first year really is a trial period and as you say, the next two years are ...

DOREEN:

But there are five hundred families in this scheme. Now we're not ever, ever, going to work with five hundred families, but we should work with a lot more families, and a lot of the families that have done some work with us should be able to go off on their own and set up more groups going if in fact we're going to affect the whole (scheme?).

SUSAN:

Maybe even the night we're no' here we could have a wee group, in the house, you know, (Kathy: That's right, oh yes) .. instead of just waiting to come up here.

DOREEN:

That's right. That's how it should eventually work. It should spin off and people say, "Oh, we'll do it on a Tuesday night in/  
in/

Parents Group  
meets once weekly (Wed)  
to discuss informal educational  
activities  
for themselves &  
their children

Wednesday a.m. 25th May, 1977

(Section II of II)

T 68.

transcripts trace  
growth of ideas  
& confidence

PRESENT: Susan Ferguson  
George Ferguson  
Doreen, Kathy  
Nessie, Soc. Work Lothian

CONTENT: Planning for seaside  
outing.

DOREEN: (continuing) Now the last thing, anyway at the minute, is this seashore thing, and we're probably going to Portencross a week on Wednesday. Were you in on the discussion of this last week? No?

GEORGE: Sure we - we were ...

DOREEN: Oh, the Queen was here last week; it was the afternoon group only. You came, I believe?

GEORGE: We came up at half past ten, just after half past ten.

DOREEN: You see, I came here at twenty past ten and I said, "Oh, I'm away. There's nobody going to be here. They're all going to be waving to the Queen. I'd better go and join them." It turned out we'd been passing each other on the road. But what amazes me is that Tommy didn't let you in, because I said to Tommy, "Well, I don't know if people are coming." ...

GEORGE: I don't think Tommy even seen us, actually.

SUSAN: No, I don't think he did.

GEORGE: I don't think he did, because, well, we came; I just came up and put my hand up. Well, it was locked, so I says ... I said to Susan, "Probably they think we're away to see the Queen; they've probably nipped down along there themselves."

DOREEN: Yes, that's right; we went down to Riverside.

Well, what we did plan was to go to a place called Portencross. Do you know Seamill?

GEORGE: Seamill? That's where they go for the football. That's where the Celtic team goes.

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: Well, just beyond Seamill there's a little peninsula sticks out into the Clyde called Portencross and it's the word 'port' in the sense of a seaport and also in the sense of carrying - you know, a porter carries things, because it's the place from which the kings' bodies were taken across to Iona to be buried, oh, a thousand years ago, and it's always been a - there's been a castle there. There's only a wee bit of a castle ..

(Kathy, making introductions: This is Susan and George Ferguson - Nessie MacAuley from Edinburgh, and you know Sister Doreen.)

DOREEN: Well, we're just beginning a piece of planning of an outing for next week and it's to Portencross. I don't know if you know it, Nessie, do you? (No.) It's a little place on the Clyde coast that has great historic value but ~~gx~~ very little else really at it; a tiny little peninsula and it's got a bit of a castle and it's got a cannon sitting inside with a notice on the castle telling you that this cannon was pulled up from the sea in 1740-something; that it's part of the Spanish Armada. And so there's quite a bit of rocks and things to see.

SUSAN: Where is this about?

DOREEN: Portencross. It's opposite Seamill, West Kilbride, not too far from Largs. If you're an east-coaster you'll know Largs rather than those smaller places. And the useful thing to us is that you can't actually keep a coach there, so that it doesn't get great parties, because it's only got a narrow street down to it and it's got double yellow lines all the way along. But there is a beautiful beach. Not actually beside the castle, but about half a mile away from it. So we thought that we would go to the beach. Our object is to get a beach where there are no cars come near and there are no shops, so that the children aren't in danger - they're always in danger at water, of course, we always have to mind them with the water and the rocks, but at least they won't be in danger from traffic and they can't expect to go to a fair-ground or buy things in shops, so their attention has to be on what's on the beach and we're going to do a preparation now on what's on the beach. We thought we'd go to the sandy bit first, take our lunch with us, let them get the excitement of the sand and the sea, have a 'collection' process for each family and we'll have labels up with the family's name so that eventually we'll put up a display of all that family's collected, and the name of the thing, because we'll have looked it up in a book, and the name of the member of the family who found it, so that each person will be saying, "Have we got one of these?" "This is in my collection, mummy or daddy." Polythene bags - we'll need lots of them - each child's own polythene bag, with their collection - whatever it/

DOREEN:  
(contd)

it is they're going to label and when we've done that for a bit and they've got the sort of energy off them we'll go along and look at the castle because it's on rocks and it might be a bit more dangerous for children, so they'd have to be past the running stage and ready just to walk along and look at the castle, and look at the little harbour. It's lobster-fishing, so the castle - I mean, I don't know how old the castle is, but now all it's used for is storing lobster nets and pots. You can look through a wee keyhole and see these lobster pots inside it. So that's the plan. I don't know what's happening

with the other group.

KATHY:

We're also trying to bring back stones and shells and things so we can make things with them at following-up sessions here; boxes with the stones or the shells in pollyfilla, ornamental ones, but really I think what we're at the stage of doing is us trying to make lists of what we can find and trying to put them in categories.

DOREEN:

Have you just found the books? There's a collection of books there. If we all just shout out about what we find in the books. Just take one yourself and whatever you happen to find in it ...

SUSAN:

They ones there are lovely. See them?

KATHY:

Oh, they're beautiful.

SUSAN:

They make lovely ashtrays.

DOREEN:

They do. You don't find such big shells, actually, on the Clyde coast. Those are the ones you find on the Clyde coast. But that's just one interesting thing, actually. This is one of the few things I know about shells, that the Clyde Coast shells are all that formation. Do you see the lines going that way? In fact, the lines you were pointing out just now? That's a more usual arrangement of shell, the lines going that way on shells, but the ones on the Clyde coast all go that way, so we've got a special - I don't really know the actual names of them at the moment ...

KATHY:

This is a lovely book - the Macdonald Starters ..... they're barnacles. Are limpets the same as barnacles?

DOREEN:

No. A barnacle is open at the top. This is my college stuff coming back out. A limpet is a solid shell with a fish underneath it. A barnacle looks like the same. It's tiny. But it's actually open at the top and the barnacle is standing on its head. I remember our lecturer saying "and spends the rest of its life waving its thoracic appendages."

KATHY:/

KATHY: What I was wondering, are we going to need something that the children can identify with - some either books or charts that we've made ourselves? How are we going to try and be able to tell the children when they've picked something up and they've come and said, "What is it?"

SUSAN: You could make maybe a tracing drawing.

DOREEN: You could have a chart with a number of the most common things we're going to find, and the names, so that they could have a booklet and they could put their shell against the booklet and say, "Have I got one of those?"

SUSAN: Or maybe just a drawing of it, with its name on it and then you could make it into a book kind of thing.

GEORGE: That's - er - a sort of chart there with it on it, you know, such-and-such - there's a small drawing on it (take it) on the bus with us and then if any of the kids wanted to see it, even putting it on the outside of the bus - with sellotape on the outside of it - they could go up and say, "Well, that's like that one there. That must be such-and-such, and then they could write it down.

(Doreen pointing out (indistinct) disadvantage of notice on outside of bus)

SUSAN: Even a placard?

DOREEN: But that's a good idea to have it on some kind of board that they could all go and look at.

NESSIE: How old are the children that you'd be taking?

DOREEN: .... they might be from two to ten.

KATHY: And so we want something that - maybe we could have it, say you've got your basic picture and your basic sort of name in the different categories like the names of shells, the names of something, and maybe a little bit more information for the older children.

DOREEN: What about the books on the buses for them later - for the way back on the bus? So that they can say, "Well, I got one of those. Where is it in the book?"

SUSAN: And then find more about it? Make it more interesting for them? Where did it come from? How did it get there? - kind of thing. I wonder if it's always been that size or if it's been bigger or if it's been smaller?

KATHY: Mm - that's a point.

GEORGE: /

GEORGE: And if there's enough shells an' that which people have found, you could run a competition among the kids to see who knows the most about the shells.

KATHY: A good idea!

DOREEN: I'd love to see this kind of process going on - games on the bus - on the way back, and then, when we get back here, trying to put up a display thing with the family's name and all their things under it.

GEORGE: Stick the shells into the cardboard and put it up.

DOREEN: Yes, Kathy, I think when we take down the thing that's here ...

KATHY: Oh, yes ...

DOREEN: ... the family's name and then all the stuff underneath ...

SUSAN: You can make some lovely pictures with them.

KATHY: Oh, beautiful. Do you remember the people that remarked on that one of yours with the fish and the shells?

DOREEN: Susan did that collage up there.

KATHY: That's a lovely little book.

DOREEN: Yes, those Macdonald Starters ...

GEORGE: See the thing as well with the lobsters? Well, see the likes of if you get the shells an' that, you could say, "What kind of creature comes out of that?"

DOREEN: You see that's actually a hermit crab ... not a lobster.

KATHY: But its legs are ....

DOREEN: This is our problem, that we're going to have to say, "It may be ..." because, you see, the adults don't know all the answers. I think this is important for the kids to learn - that adults look up books for information.

GEORGE: That's a good thing there as well. See the .....(?).....  
Find out (how it got down there?)

DOREEN: You know about that hermit crab, George? It's a crab that lives in the shells of other animals, you know, it finds empty shells and goes in - and that's what's sticking out on that first page - but I said 'lobster' with you at the first because I just saw the front of it, and then realised the shell was the wrong shape; it's in a whelk shell.

KATHY: But this has a lovely .... (George: Hermit crab?) ....

SUSAN: /

SUSAN: (studying illustration) They things are in that sheep's liver!

GEORGE: That's what I said ....

KATHY: They're for the likes of ....(?)... or you could just put ..  
a thing like that, making shapes out of it ....

(Kathy studying book or objects with group - voice unclear)

Do you know, I was thinking, wondering whether it's possible for us to try and find categories - what are the basic things that we'll find? and then we'll have a look at the different, say shells is one thing, then we could have a look at all the different shells.

GEORGE: I think this book (makes it easier???) ... all the shells ...  
I think that mostly does give you the .....

KATHY: Yes, I think that ..... is a good idea.

DOREEN: I think we should be buying just two of those because we'll go to the seaside a number of times and we really could be doing with more than one copy.

KATHY: Yes. I was wondering, is there anything between the Macdonald Starters, but not as complicated as these?

DOREEN: I'm sure there is.

KATHY: Say, for the younger children that wanted to find out ....

DOREEN: What about some of the .... Susan and George and (maybe?.....) going to the children's library additionally and picking this out for themselves? I'll go and talk to Ann about that: the possibility of going to ..... Library and then see where would be a full collection of books like this. And I think we're going to need enough books for every family to have a couple of books at their disposal - which is something like forty books. Now, I have done this before myself with kids: gone to a library and collected tremendous numbers, but there is the fact that it could be pouring rain, you know, we could maybe get just a handful of shells and be rushing into a bus and be sitting there for hours. What we really need - we need boxes of books to be able to get them out and say, "Come on, it doesn't matter that it's wet. We'll look at this."

(Doreen making an aside remark about weather; someone checking the time.)

KATHY:/

KATHY: I was thinking, if we could do for next week - if you got some paper - I've got a pad somewhere - that we can try to figure out what our basic categories are, like, there's seaweeds. Seaweeds is one.

NESSIE: Gather different kinds of feathers. I find that very hard - to see which bird they belong to ...

KATHY:@ So we've got birds, we've got feathers, we've got seaweeds, we've got shells, (George: stones) stones,

GEORGE: I think that mostly covers it.

KATHY: What about plant other than seaweed - or ....(?) or if there are any little rock pools ...

SUSAN: Maybe .... a shell off a crab or something ...

GEORGE: The thing you'd need to point out to them as well, see if they see any crabs, don't pull the shells off or pull the legs off.

KATHY: This is part of the process, isn't it? The learning process, that you don't ..

SUSAN: Try and find they razor-sharp(?) things.

GEORGE: I think some of the younger ones anyway, you know, the six and seven year olds, if they seen a crab, you know, they'd to go "Oh, here, ..... shell ...!" maybe just pull it apart.

(Susan to Kathy - indistinct)

SUSAN: .... and you've got to tell them how many different kinds of thingmies you'd be wanting, you know, because maybe they'd just pick up all the different kinds of shells and shove them into the bag and say, "That's me got all my shells."

KATHY: Yes, but they've got to identify them - got to go back to the big card that we'll have, and identify them.

GEORGE: You could run a wee competition ... you know .....

SUSAN: I don't know if you can get them here.

KATHY: It depends; different places in the country tend to have different shells, you know, you won't get all of the different ones within the one beach. You'll get quite a variety of them.

DOREEN: And are we taking spades for them, to dig?

KATHY: Oh, I'm sure we'll have some spades - there are some tiny spades; we've been using them in the sand. We ~~dx~~ could take that.  
And/

KATHY: And if we want to make nets we can take the rods, and the buckets, and all you beed to do is attqch a bit of wire, an old stocking; a bit of net from a net curtain, and you've got your fishing net.

SUSAN: We've got one in the house.....

(END TAPE)

Appendix 1

*Transcript for  
tape made by  
Alan & Teresa*

**Jean**

Reading Workshop, 1st June 1977

run by Alan and Teresa

**T69.**

- PRESENT:
- Mrs. Berry
  - Mrs. Dorothy Berry
  - Mrs. Griffin
  - Mrs. Wallace
  - Mrs. Armstrong
  - Mr. Berry
  - Mrs. Smith
  - The babysitter

The babysitter was originally looking after Mrs. Griffin's child, but she came along about half an hour after the workshop started, with the child, and joined in the session with the parents. Mr. Berry arrived halfway through the meeting. He spent most of his time playing with the children in the toy library but he then came in and joined us for tea in the discussion room. This was Mr. Berry's first visit. He seemed very interested in what was going on, and in fact joined the library that night.

We started the session by first recapping on what we had done the previous week, which had been spent mainly based on writing patterns and developing left-to-right skills. We asked for feedback from the parents on whether they had done any writing pattern work with the children during the week and most of them said that they had. Mrs. Griffin remarked that she was 'going up the wall' with her children singing nursery rhymes as they were making the writing patterns, so it seemed that quite a lot of work had gone on during the week.

Then we discussed what we wanted to do that evening. The parents had shown the previous week that they wanted to know more about the games that they could play with their children which would help reading development and we had promised them at that session that we would try and find out some more games and come back and show them how to use them, what they were for, the skills that they were designed to develop, and then have a workshop making games ourselves.

We started recapping on 'I Spy'. One of the points that came out of this was using the sound names for the letters, 'a', 'b', 'ck', 'd', as opposed to the name of the letters, a, b, c and d, and one of the games we showed that could help with this was the footstep game. Alan had drawn round his feet in cardboard and we put various letters on the foot. The point of the game was that the children could move from the first letter to the next one after they had said something beginning with 'a' if there was an 'a' on the footstep, then move on to the next one. To make it easy, that was all they did originally but you could make this game much more difficult by asking them to tell a story about a word with 'a' in it, or 'b' in it, or whatever the sound was, and you could make up games like backstepping if they couldn't think of a word that began with a letter, so that the whole family could join in on this. Then we showed the parents the easiest way to make this; /

*Handwritten scribble*

this; how to take quite a few pieces of card at the one time so that they weren't cutting out individual footstaps ad infinitum and we discovered later on in the session that it was quite good to use fluorescent paint because it really showed up, but at that time, we had used felt pens and we showed the parents how to make them, and the different ways they could be laid out on the floor. Quite an interest was shown in this game and they also asked if we had any other ideas.

We had two versions of the bingo game. One was suitable for pre-school children and the other would be suitable for children at school. The pre-school bingo game was almost a picture lotto. The parents saw the children collect pictures, put them on card and then match the pictures, or cover them up, using four sets of cards at a time so that the whole family was involved in the game. We spoke about the importance of the parents sometimes showing the children that they make mistakes too, and don't always get it right, so that the child has confidence and says, 'Oh, I didn't get that one correct, but I'll get the next one right', and bringing in some element of almost competition into it, so that it is fun to win. The other version we showed was the school children's version, where you could use words that the child used in his reading scheme and put them on card and again show a card, and if you have the card, you cover it up on your own board, as you would in bingo; instead of a number being shouted out and a number covered, a word being shouted out and the word covered. We discussed with the parents what would happen if we used too many words which posed difficulties for the child, how he would feel frustrated and wouldn't enjoy the game and if the game was being used to teach the child new words, to make sure that on each card the child knew the vast majority of the words, with maybe only one word at which he got stuck. The position of the word and its shape should help them remember that word in future. Again we kept on reinforcing the idea that it was a game, and must always be treated as a game - so you can't play a game and scold someone for not playing properly, or make them feel frustrated by constant failure in the game.

The next game we showed the parents was to help again with sound work and language development combined. This we could loosely call 'the animal game'. We had large cutout cardboard figures of animals - Percy the Pig, Edna the Elephant, Molly the Mouse, Freddy the Fish, and Brown Bear. I showed initially how the parents could draw these very simply without having to be in any way artistic. Large pieces of card should be used and the animals should be as bright and colourful as possible. The children should be encouraged to help with the colouring in and drawing; if it was a nice, bright shape it would be appealing to children. On the front of the animals, we had written the name of the animal, like 'Percy Pig', and underlined the two sounds in Percy Pig. On the back, we had a game which said 'Percy Pig likes ...' and there would be a blank, so that the children had to add a word that began with 'p', or draw the picture that began with 'p', like, 'Percy Pig likes pears' and there were three or four of these sentences where the child had to supply the last word; writing it in or drawing it in depending on his capabilities. In this way the work on sounds was extended. Another use for these animal shapes was for stories. The parent might start a story about Percy/

Percy the Pig - 'Once upon a time there was a pig called Percy .....

get the child to supply some parts of the story; what would happen to the pig? where would he go? what would he like? just to make up little stories about the animals and get them talking about them, and really using them as widely as possible.

There was great hilarity throughout these proceedings; laughter at the different animals, and the fact that Teresa and I are not particularly great artists either. The parents could see that as long as the drawing resembled the animal slightly (the children were used to cartoon figures anyway, where it's not a particularly realistic interpretation of the figure being shown) then it would do. We then produced the card and paints. At first there was maybe about a thirty second pause when no-one moved at all towards the cards. I was a bit worried then, and thought it was going to flop. Then suddenly everyone moved, and grabbed cards and paint, and felt-tipped pens, and carried on. By this time it was about 8.00 pm. The flat was absolutely silent. None of the parents spoke; they were all so busy doing these paintings and drawings and cutting out games and card. While all this was going on, the children were in the toy library doing painting and drawing activities. The session did not run to normal plan. What we usually do is bring the children in at the end and they play the games with their parents. Unfortunately, the parents were so engrossed with making up the games, and they wanted to take so many home, that by the time we were aware of the late hour - it was after 9 pm - we had to say to the parents that on this occasion they would have to just take the games home and play them and let us know how it went at the next meeting. Most of the parents had made about five or six games each and we had actually run out of card, which was the only reason they were prevented from carrying on for longer.

While the parents had been making up the games, some of the children were drifting in and out and it was quite interesting to watch the number of children who came in and helped their parents with ideas on the games, i.e. the 'Word Bingo'. Some of the mothers were asking their children what words they wanted on the bingo game, so that the game was becoming a possession of the child's although it was being made by the mother, and the children were absolutely engrossed with what the mothers were doing, and were supplying great words - mainly words from the reading schemes, but obviously a lot of high-interest words too. One boy had been reading a story about stage-coaches and most of his words were about westons and horses and stage-coaches. The parents were also asking Teresa and I if we could think of any words that their child was having particular difficulty with in school and we were obviously supplying some words. He had taken along examples of the reading scheme so that they could look through, but unfortunately we didn't have one for every parent and for some children we didn't have a copy of their reading scheme available but they could say themselves what words they got stuck at or found hard. One of the problems experienced by some of the parents in making the bingo game was the actual script. The parents are used to cursive handwriting and obviously they were finding great difficulty in producing the type of print that is used in/

in school. But because the child was helping, and suggesting words to the parent, the children could mostly read the words that the parents were writing. We found no instances where it was illegible. Obviously we were helped by the fact that most of the children were at the end of their first year and the beginning of their second year in school and they are used to seeing each letter printed in various forms and it is therefore easier for them to adapt to the form of writing that the parent was using. All of the parents attempted to print.

One thing which became obvious was that for future workshops we will have to ensure, if we expect the parents to write anything for their children, that we put up a chart showing the script used in schools, so that they can copy it down. The parents were very aware that their writing was not the same type of writing that the child would be reading in school, and that the child was not writing the same as the parent.

One of the parents with whom I worked closely on this was Granny Smith, who is the grandmother of little David, in the Infants School. Granny Smith was very interested in the bingo game but obviously very, very wary of the writing side of it, so in order that she would not feel threatened by it, I wrote the words for her bingo game although she, in consultation with David and myself, chose the words. But she spent most of the time in making and cutting the card up and suggesting what she wanted and when it came to the actual writing, I did that for her on this occasion so that she would not be 'put off' the workshop. Another parent who was very good to watch was Dorothy Berry, who really did a lot of talking. Her little one Karen came through and joined her and she talked a great deal with Karen, especially when she was making the animal game. She herself was taking great pains with the artwork. Obviously she really enjoys drawing and painting and she spent a lot of time on it and gave a lot of worthwhile chat to the little one. Mrs. Berry, the grandmother, hardly said a word during all this activity; she was so busy cutting out and learning all the skills about what she could write and how she could do it so that it really looked attractive and she was totally engrossed. She found it difficult to find time to talk to anybody while she was working like that.

This activity session did carry on for quite a long time and at about twenty to ten we started having tea and biscuits. Most of the children had by this time come through and some of them were actually painting in the room, so the room was very lively and crowded with people. During tea we asked for the parents' opinions and feedback on the session and they found the games activity interesting from the point of view of doing this at home with the children. They were very willing to try them out at home and very willing to have some more sessions on reading games. They all mentioned in some way or other how absorbed they had been. The session finally ended at about 9.50 pm.

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LEARNING THE ALPHABET

T70

Result of  
our interviews  
Read  
within 11  
Context of  
Hogay show  
Sept 78

Extract from transcript of a discussion with a young man  
from the district who is beginning to emerge as a leader

Tom  
chr7

1st June 1977

T70

(I had spent the first part of the session trying to introduce the idea that parents should show children that they don't know everything. Otherwise, they can't pursue learning with their child, and this stops the child's learning. I had given a number of examples in which the parent kept his prestige with the child and, in fact, enhanced it while at the same time showing that he had still something to learn. George refused each of these examples, countering them with side-issues rather than direct criticisms or disagreements. Suddenly, at the end of the session, George offered a perfect example of his own learning with his child. It was obvious that in some way he felt secure now in displaying his ignorance to us as well as to his child.)

B. J. D. H. D. H.

DOREEN: Tell me that thing about the alphabet again, because we were talking about how you learn with a child and the excitement it gives them.

GEORGE: Well, what I was saying was, when she came in - Susan came in with the book - it was the alphabet - first of all, I wasnae too interested. She says to me, "Daddy, are you going to teach me it?" Well, rather than turn the wean away, I says, "Well, come on, then", // you know, and I didnae know most of the alphabet myself - well, I knew up to 'r' or something like that, you know: after that, it was 'x, y, z' was the last of it. So I said to her, "Right. Come on and we'll sit down." // Well, I was quite interested at the beginning, but see when I got after it, I got interested and she seen that I was getting excited you know, because I was learning as well as her - she says to herself - "I've showed you that, Daddy", you know? Well, I was saying, "Aye, that's right, hen. C'mon we'll carry on and carry on." // Well, after a while I began to get the hang of it and she knew some of it as well. She knew some letters that she didnae as well. Well, my self-achievement was knowing the whole lot of the alphabet now. Her achievement was, she knows some of it but she's taught me the rest of it. You see. That's what I said to her: "Oh, Daddy knows the alphabet now." She looked at me as if to say, "Did you nae know it? I've taught you something!" And this is it. Self-satisfaction for the kid. Knowledge of me giving her a hand, plus the fact, me learning something out of it as well.

Continue next page

DOREEN: That's great. I think this is really important for the children to see this, and the fact that you were kind of sitting watching the television - what were you saying about watching the television?

GEORGE: /

GEORGE: I was watching the television and I was more engrossed in the television at first than that. And, well, the wife's got an awful habit of saying, whenever we're teaching the weans, "Switch the television off. I don't dae it. I just leave the television on and if it looks interesting it'll distract you, so it just so happens that it really got me interested, and it got the wean interested. We didn't bother about the television, we just carried on doing this, and it was really great to see her wee face looking up and saying, "I'm great - I'm a big hero", you know? "Me and my daddy's learned something and it was me that taught him."

quote

DOREEN: That's great!

GEORGE: Self-satisfaction, plus the fact that the kid got something out of it as well. I think if a wean gets nothing out of it, the interest just isn't there.

DOREEN: That's right. If they don't see that it matters to you - I mean, that's what gives them their satisfaction to a great extent, isn't it?

Sister Doreen Grant  
6th June 1977

Correct dates  
Maa 8/3/84

handwritten notes: \* ~~handwritten~~ ~~handwritten~~ ~~handwritten~~

T77

local advice on management Problems when Parents come drunk to meetings

Problems in Moorpark  
23rd November, 1977

DATE \* Trust Act

1. Drink and the specific problem of a drunk mother at the panto rehearsal.
2. Theft and the sale of stolen goods.

The following conversation took place at the end of a NEWS Training meeting attended by Margaret Griffin and Betty Wallace, with Kathy and Doreen.

MARGARET: *Molly* Her that was making the tea? Very cheeky. She came down to my group and she says "demanding to play Aladdin. And I said, 'Excuse me, but you're not in our group. Who are you with? Are you with your mother?' 'No.' I says, 'Well, you shouldnae be in at all.'

DOREEN: Perhaps she didn't understand that each group was having its own Aladdin, and she was her own Aladdin, you see, and she maybe hadn't understood. But I was really - *It was the drink* problem that was really a worry to me, *because that was the* only adult up there.

MARGARET: But even when I went in and youse were all talking after tea and I went in to watch the children, she came in and she was telling all the kids - well I mean you cannae tell kids to sit down. I was playing at 'I Spy' wi' them, you know - 'Sit down' and 'Do this' - I felt like saying, 'Oh, my God.'

BETTY: *Elgie* You can't tell her - I mean, you'd need to wait until she's kind of reasonably sober and tell her. Because, imagine coming to the pantomime the night like that!

DOREEN: Well, what shall we do? You see, this is what I'm asking you - what should we do about someone who's drunk?

BETTY: Maybe that's how her man never came.

DOREEN: She said that he'd gone to get a carry-out and hadn't come. And she thought that he, you know...

BETTY: At nine o'clock you go up. From nine o'clock to eleven o'clock if you want to have a drink.

DOREEN: So ~~what do I say to her?~~ *What do I say to her?* Or do I wait and see if next week she comes drunk?

BETTY: *Elgie* I'd give her another chance. Another chance, and then if she is drunk next Tuesday night ...

MARGARET: *Molly* ... don't say anything to her on the Tuesday night. Maybe go round in the morning.

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: Don't say it at the time?

MOTHERS: No... no.

BETTY: *Elsie* Go round the next morning.

MARGARET: *metley* I think she'd only kind of - youse would get kind of abused. I don't know her personally. I only know her wi' seeing her - 'Hallo' an' that.

BETTY: *Elsie* I don't know her at all. I only know that they do drink a lot, even the other couple, the Harveys, you know, they drink with one another, you know. Because I'd my experience with the mother - bringing her up the road. I thought she was ill.

DOREEN: You mean the grandmother?

BETTY: The grandmother. I thought she was ill. You know how it's all barricaded off now at Broomloan Road, just at the wee school? She was at the railings there, holding on, crying, 'I can't see - I can't see.' 'I want Dave.' - or whoever the person was. I said 'Where do you stay?' And I says, 'Oh, you stay up in Kellas Street' I said, but I don't know. I know your daughter stays in 4 Rafford Street. I'll take you round there. So I took her up the road. 'I cannae see, hen, I cannae see.' And then when she came to my mouth - smelling! Oh! Blindness wi' drink. I says, she's getting - what do you call it - hallucinations, you know, white elephants an' all that, I says. I took her in and the son-in-law came to the door. 'What in the hell did you bring her round here?' I says, 'What would I do wi' the woman? She can't see. She's blind.' She says, 'She's blind wi' drunk.' I says, 'I know she is.' I said, 'But what can I do? She might have fell in a motor or something on the roadway.' I says, 'I thought I was doing good bringing her round instead of you maybe having to get her up the street.' I says, 'But I'll not do it again.' I said, 'I'll leave her there.'

DOREEN: We're aware that any areas of life have problems. But we really don't know how much we should .. We've tried up till now not to know what the problems were in the scheme - stick to our educational remit. That's what we're here about, and *But* it's none of our business what else goes on. And we still - that's how we want to run it. But at the same time, if there's more problem than we understand, we maybe are being a wee bit too innocent. If we understood it, we'd be in a better position to cope with the children, or to try and suggest things.

MARGARET: /

MARGARET: Do you no' think that they're thingmying there - the Hall - the Committee? I mean they're doing nothing and yet they're still saying, 'Put a bar on and they'll all come up.'

BETTY: Aye.

MARGARET: Every time you mention that, it's 'Oh aye, if you bring a bar.' I mean, a lot of people go to they jumble sales and they're no' drunk. I mean, there's only one or two that I know.

DOREEN: You don't in fact think, you see, we wondered why some parents didn't come to things - was it in fact because they had a drink problem and we were maybe pressurising people to do things that they weren't actually capable of doing, and we would be better staying out of the way. But you're saying you don't really think there is a big drink problem?

MARGARET: *medly* They all drink in their house. It's just the odd time you get the outburst, you know.

BETTY: *Else* The battle in the street - more in the houses, you know. I mean, it livens things up a wee bit, a wee battle in the street now and again!

DOREEN: Would it happen at the weekend?

BETTY: *Else* Mostly at the weekend. I mean, that's no' during the week, you know? In fact you very seldom see anybody drunk during the week, don't you?

MARGARET: *medly* .. I don't know about this side of the street. I never see them. I only know that woman that come in the house - really last night I was surprised + I ~~didn't think there was anybody~~ in last night and I said, 'Where are they all?'

(someone unnamed enters room; Doreen summing up discussion for their benefit;)

DOREEN: I'm just saying that we perhaps need to see how big this problem is and how much it affects what we're trying to do. You're saying, ~~Betty~~ <sup>else</sup>, that you don't think there's a drink problem during the week?

BETTY: *Else* No..

MARGARET: *medly* Only one or two families have got it every day.

BETTY: *Else* Aye. But it's no' - maybe on a Saturday night, well you expect that wi' men no' working, a wee drink.

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: I'm not so much talking about a wee drink as a drink problem. There's a level you get to where it's a problem.

BETTY: Two or three have got this problem, aye.

DOREEN: But you say it's quite small in the district? It's not really - you don't see it as a big thing keeping back the ...?

BETTY: No, no. I don't know about - I only see Kellas Street, but I mean, I know that bit. Mrs. What's her name? Mrs. Harvey - McKinley and Mrs. Harvey - I know they do.

KATHY: I've never met Mrs. Harvey.

MARGARET: She came the first night. Remember her and her man came? And he was dooking for apples the night of the party?

KATHY: No, no, he was there. I didn't know she was there.

MARGARET: Oh, she was there the week before it.

DOREEN: Oh, they take a week each?

MARGARET: The two of them were there the first night together?

DOREEN: No. I think she came with Mrs. McKinlay the first night.

MARGARET: I think she went out and (?) went in. Nice crowd we've got!

DOREEN: So you would say a couple of families like that, maybe? But apart from that there isn't really - it shouldn't really interfere with anything we were trying to do?

BETTY: No. I don't think so.

MARGARET: I see Robbie's making a big song - I mean, I don't see much. It used to be when I come up here, you used to get fights every .. but that was teenagers fighting, it wasnae adults. You get that an odd time, but .. I mean, after Easter the scheme's been a lot quieter.

BETTY: Aye, it has been.

KATHY: One of the worst problems was about a year back.

DOREEN: Was that when people were put out?  
The people who knock off cars are inside waiting trial?

MARGARET: Oh yes, breaking into shops, the shops and all that, have been caught.

DOREEN: So the scheme is actually a lot quieter.

MOTHERS: Oh yes, it is. At least our end anyway. Uh huh.

DOREEN: /

Transcript of tape  
by Alan & Teresa  
400

Dover

Reading Workshop, 8th June 1977

run by Alan and Teresa

T72.

PRESENT: Mrs. Berry  
Mrs. Dorothy Berry  
Mrs. Griffin  
Mrs. Armstrong  
Mrs. Smith

(7) transferred  
to correct  
date place  
23rd  
83/84

For various reasons, such as people arriving late, we didn't start the

session until about 8 o'clock. We began by recapping on last week's activities and asked them how they got on with the games at home. All the parents present said they had used the games and would like more of them. They said that all the family had taken part in some way or other in the games.

I had just started talking then, and we were going on to talk about books and the importance of reading to the children and making the children aware of words, and of the fact that they can tell a story, and the importance of sharing books with the children. We had just started on this session when Mrs. Smith arrived.

Mrs. Smith came in, interrupting, and saying, 'Why was my David not on the trip to-day? We never hear about these trips. They never tell you anything and my David's never been on the trip.' She was really addressing Mrs. Griffin at this stage, and saying, 'Oh, you've been on one or two trips now and down at our end we don't go on any trips. They never tell us things.' And she came in like this. At first it took us a few minutes to realise she was perfectly serious and very irate about this whole business. We managed to work out eventually that the 'they' to whom she referred were the Tenants' Hall to a great extent, but she was also talking about trips that were run from the house. But she said that she had been under the impression that we were run by the Tenants' Hall; she hadn't realised that we were a separate entity.

I think what made Granny Smith particularly angry was the fact that it appeared that the only people who were being given help and who were going off on trips were children whose parents didn't work. Mrs. Smith actually works during the day and as far as she could see, if you worked it meant that you couldn't go on a trip and you couldn't do anything with your child. The only trip that she'd been on with the Project was the one to the Puppet Show in the Theatre Royal and Mrs. Smith was furious at the fact that she hadn't been allowed to take David to it. We tried to explain to her that the school needed a week's notice and unfortunately permission had not been given by the school as we had approached them too late. Mrs. Griffin began to become quite aggressive during this conversation.

At this point Teresa and I felt very threatened. The atmosphere in the flat was very unhealthy and there was a lot of tension. We had no idea whether the group was going to break up there and then or whether we would succeed in calming it down. We spent some time trying to take some of the heat out of the situation. The problem was basically that Mrs. Smith was not conversant with/

A simple example would be watching the birds that fly about Moorpark. There is always something in the environment that you can relate to the ideas in the book and try and use this as much as possible, without limiting the child's scope of reading.

We also tried to encourage the parents to come up to the library with the children. Many of them send their children up for books and the parents say, oh, they got such and such a book. One mother, in fact, said that her five yearold son had brought home a book on having a baby. We discussed the suitability of books and how it would help if the parents could come up and assist the child to choose books, always offering them a selection from which to make their choice, rather than saying, 'These are the books that you'll take home'. There was a great deal of discussion going on through this, and it actually took quite a long time to present the books and the different ideas we had because many of the ideas had to be presented on more than one occasion, and in different ways.

By this time it was 9.30 pm and we were drawing near the time for closing up. We had tea prepared but three of the mothers decided that they would prefer to take their tea through to the other room and make up some more reading games. Two mothers stayed behind and sat chatting to us about school, and various books. Those who had gone to make up more reading games took their children with them.

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm. As the parents were going out, Mrs. Smith seemed much more relaxed and she mentioned the fact that if only the information had been available that we had given her earlier on, she wouldn't, as she put it, 'put her feet in it' and have been so aggressive. Margaret Griffin commented, as she was leaving, 'I don't suppose I had better go on another outing.' This has obviously raised points that will have to be discussed at a Project meeting, i.e. how families should be offered outings and the importance of explaining to the rest of the adults who use the house, and to the other adults in the community, why these parents are going on an outing; it's not just a trip - it's something that has been planned towards - it's an end-product.

and how you can bring in the vocabulary of the different kinds of shoes, different kinds of clothes for hot weather, cold weather, and how really there was a great deal in these books that depended on the mother talking with the child, and then both looking at the books together. This was very important in these books because there was so much they could extend, rather than just leaving the child to turn over the pages and turn over the pages, though they might go through that stage initially, but really to try and extend it and get the child to talk about things, and introduce new words.

We then talked about choice of books and how important it was that the mother read through the book and decided for herself whether she thought it was a suitable book to read to a child, pointing out that if she read a book which she herself didn't like, the chances were that her feelings would be carried over to the child and he would dislike it too. To build up something positive between the mother and child, it would be much easier if she chose her own favourite stories, or stories that she was sure he would like and that she at least can tolerate. We also discussed illustrations in books - how not to choose a book just by its colour or by its size, but to go through it and decide whether the type of illustration used was a type that the child would appreciate and enjoy. We pointed out that just because a book is a book, it doesn't mean to say it's a good book; you can get bad books too, or you can get books which for some children are exciting and can stimulate them and for another child the same book might just terrify him, or bore him. One of the examples I used was Kipling's book, 'Joseph's Yard', where the illustrations are very very intense and I find very beautiful but I know many other people get very upset by them and many children are frightened by them. We discussed these pictures with the book on hand and you could actually see the parents shiver at some of the illustrations in the book but I pointed out that I had used it with some children and they thought it was fantastic and it was a springboard for ideas and creative art, and gave them many ideas; but for other children you may well get no response, either that or a very negative response.

Also I gave them books that some children can really identify with. One of the books was 'The Big Orange Thing', which started off with a little boy coming home from school, rather upset because he'd drawn this beautiful kitten and the teacher had said, 'What a lovely cow'. This was a very sympathetic book for some children. They could really identify, and from the little bits of it that we read, the parents were obviously identifying with it as well. Another book of this type was 'The Very Tall Little Girl'. The children could identify with somebody who maybe at the beginning feels a little bit different. As long as this difference in the end becomes an advantage, and has a happy ending, children are able to identify with that. We also discussed how you could extend the book through letting the children draw something from the book; talking about it, maybe playing games; maybe if one of the books was about birds, following it up with a visit to the zoo - really using the books as well as they can, and extending them as much as possible; as long as the child is interested in the book, as long as the child is giving some positive response to the book.

with the Tenants' Hall and Project work and the only way that she could express it was by shouting at Mrs. Griffin. Mrs. Griffin was obviously upset by the proceedings too but we felt it better to have talked the process out with them. The other mothers present in the group sat very quietly and didn't say one word. Mrs. Dorothy Berry at one point tried to keep on talking about the books that we had begun to show when this business all blew up. The aggression in the group turned towards the Tenants' Hall and away from the Project. It transpired that most of the complaints were that there was nothing on in the Tenants' Hall for five-year-old children; they were barred from outings, from discos; they didn't get going to the Christmas party because they were too young and the mothers were all very angry about this. Mrs. Griffin suggested that they all go to the next Tenants' Hall meeting and say exactly what they felt about it, and try to get something done. There is obviously a feeling that Robbie and Matt run the Hall and make up their own rules and the mothers are very unhappy with it. They pointed out that it is the children in Moorpark who pay for the Dads' entertainment; they all pay ten or fifteen pence for the disco and a lot of them go to it.

When this positive suggestion was put forward Granny Smith became a lot calmer and much more like her old self. She said, 'Trust me - I always jump in and put my feet in it - but if they'd only tell you these things...' And really it all petered out at that stage, so then we started on our Reading Workshop session, at last.

It must have been near half past eight by the time we got back to the books and to talking about how we could best use them at home for the children. I had divided up a few of the books into different categories and we started off looking at some of the very early picture books. I had also brought the book that Alan and I had borrowed from Woodlands - the 'Make up a Story' book with all the different flaps and the parents were very interested in this and said how difficult it was to get a book like that. We said, yes, we had experienced the same difficulty ourselves, but were trying now to get some, so that we could put them in the library for the very young children. I spent quite a while talking about this book because the parents were so keen on it and they themselves suggested ways in which it could be used, and how they could encourage the children to talk about it. It brought in areas from other reading workshops; it brought in the 'left-to-right' sequencing; it brought in visually discriminating one picture from the other and how the child could change the story by lifting one of the flaps, so other areas that we had discussed in previous reading workshops were brought together in this book.

The next book we discussed was one that a lot of the parents had seen and were quite familiar with - one of the Ladybird 'Talk-About' books. Mrs. Dorothy Berry said that, yes, she had used one of the earlier stages of these books with her little one Karen, and Karen was very interested in it. She explained different ways in which she had used the book and how Karen could pick out the various pictures and talk about things in the book. This particular one was about clothes and we were talking about how you can use this in a practical situation; how it's something the children can relate to, and/

school/community  
Contrasts

The group was shown a series of slides in which children did craft with adults. But in one case the adult was a teacher slowing a whole class step by step while she wanted a paper case all her families were all to the house & in its other work all to the house & in its other work all to the house

good in parents sort of what they want for the future relations - a to come from

First NEWS Training

Wednesday a.m. 14th September, 1977

PRESENT: Betty Jones,  
Susan Ferguson,  
Margaret Griffin,  
Kathy.

T73.

KATHY: ..... explain why we were doing (?) and what they were all about and see if we could talk them out between them all, so you got the ideas of the actual content; the stuff that we're doing, why we're doing it, and how you can help take over the groups yourself. And - shout if you don't understand. What I thought we'd start with to-day is the introduction that we would like to do to people. I mean, if somebody said to you, "What's the Project all about?" How would you go about explaining it?

MOTHER: <sup>may?</sup> I'd say it was to help the children and help the parents to understand the children - how they grow up and to bring the weans mair forward.

KATHY: Yes. What would you say, Betty?

BETTY: (laughing)

KATHY: .. what the Project, or what the group's all about? Why do people come up here? What do they come up here for?

BETTY: They learn to help their children to further their education.. explain it better to them.

KATHY: Yes. Why is it needed?

BETTY: Well there's - perhaps in school there might be that many children in the class and the teacher can't get round them all; she's just doing it roughly, well, we're kind of helping with what the teacher left out. I think it's to maybe ...(?).. and it's to help the children with their language so that they see that you're interested in it; they'll be interested too.

SUSAN(?): .. and it's to help maybe if somebody's stuck at something, to try and help them to bring themselves out more.

BETTY: Yes. I think they'd have more confidence.

KATHY: Yes. And if the parents have in some ways more confidence in themselves, and know what they're doing and why they're doing it, then you're going to have more interaction at home, especially, as you say, in language and words. But an easy way of/

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KATHY(contd)of explaining it, if you're starting with a group, rather than having people there for, say, about a term, wondering, "Well, what are we doing and why are we here?" or anything like that - Doreen's got a set of slides. I don't know if she ever showed them to you. Did any of us start with slides at all?

MOTHERS: No, I don't think so .... the zoo?

KATHY: Well, we've collected these and what I thought we'd do is, if we went through the slides ....

MOTHER: Oh no, we did dae it. Did you no' bring them to the house for us? .. A couple of wee boys, things like that.

KATHY: Ah, now, we did those. I think one of those is in there, yes. But I thought if we went through them and we explained why we're showing these slides and what the slides are all about and what they show - about the difference between home and school and why it's important, and if you think that any bits are difficult to understand or to explain; that you couldn't explain them or, well, "Why am I showing this slide, and what's it all about?" Just sort of interrupt and ask. But it does form quite a reasonable introduction.

(Slides being shown)

Now that was the one .. (Mother: The Robot Competition) .. Uh huh, the Moorpark Festival. In actual fact ....(?). ....

That's a picture from the Moorpark Festival. Now, this is the children working together and working in a sort of home environment. If somebody said, "What's that picture all about?" what sort of things would you want to pick out from it?

MOTHER: Show how they're using their hands, and they're using their heads as well.

KATHY: They're using their heads and their hands very very much, but it's essentially a 'making' thing; a time for making things, actually in the home. What about - it's Alec isn't it?

MOTHER: Alec. Look at his expression on his face, isn't it ..?

KATHY: Uh huh; what does his expression show?

MOTHER: As if he'd seen something that's ..... attention to him.

KATHY: Mm. Do you think he's interested in it?

MOTHER: /

MOTHER: Yes, very. He's got to think, you know?

OTHER: ... if he's daeing that right or no.

MOTHER: If he's going to get it done, and ..

SUSAN: How it's going to turn out.

KATHY: Mm. He's so totally caught up in this ..

MOTHER: He's listening, you know, as if - I don't know if it's a girl, or whoever it is, you know, is talking ..

OTHER: It's his mother - see her hand in the other box? Aye. - No - trying to see what .. fancy no' knowing your own wean!

KATHY: I thought it looked like you.

MOTHER: No, that's that girl - the wee lassie - no, I'd my light blue dress on that day and I was (pink?). She's a young girl, dark hair, I havenae seen her; I never seen her - I havenae seen her for a long, long while. She went about with the girl - got a wee kind of a limp - what do you call her? (Voice: Margaret McArthur?) One of the McArthurs. I don't know the lassie's name but I know her to see.

OTHER: Is it Isobel from the flats?

MOTHER: It might be, because I don't see her in the scheme that much.

KATHY: Yes. But I think the thing that that picture shows is how caught up little Alec was ..

MOTHER: Oh, he's away in a world of his own, you know, he's mesmerised.

KATHY: Completely. And it's a world where he's working with people that he's familiar with, that he knows, that he lives with, that are basically his friends. And he's - it's in a world where he's making things, actually putting things together. And o.k., words are important, but what was really important there was that you make something, you build something up, and so he's really working with his hands there.

And the next one; the other one that we first saw. Now, what's Mary doing there?

MOTHER: She's ... (indistinct) ... back of the head, isn't it? On her boy(?)

KATHY: Yes. And he's ..

MOTHER: .. He's actually doing - taking the part ... isn't he?

KATHY:/

KATHY: So Mary in that picture is actually helping him by doing things with him .. so it's partly words, but it's there the mother is actually helping here by doing things, by her actions, by actually making things with him. And do you think the interest is still there?

MOTHERS: Oh, aye .. uh huh.

OTHER: The two of them are showing interest. She's showing interest - and he knows she's showing interest.

KATHY: Yes. And I think, when we're going through these slides, regardless of who the person is there - it just so happens we've got the one of Mary - that the thing to point out is that everybody knows that the parents are interested in what the children are doing, because I think some people were a little bit frightened at first by us, thinking that we were saying that parents aren't interested, and we're saying, "Well, yes, we know parents are interested" - I mean, these things show; everybody knows that parents ...

MOTHER: ... For a start, the children knew it was a competition into the bargain. They knew that they were going to win something, and they were all in the same kind of age group and, that picture to me, you know, she's finished it and that's him getting prepared for to go in the competition, and he's inside the box although you cannae see him, but he's mair or less making himself like a robot wi' his hands.

KATHY: That's right, yes, because the way he's holding - you know - he's living his part and she ..

MOTHER: Uh huh, she's helping him on.

KATHY: Uh huh, very very much. And it's the family working together, as a family. We've got one photo, but it's not included, where you do see a whole family that are actually working away together, doing things and making things with the children. So this is what it's like in a home setting. That's just another example of children ...

MOTHER: Look at George .....? (other, faintly: Oh, yes, a great difference.)

KATHY: But again, I mean, do you think they're interested in what they're doing?

MOTHER: Oh aye - they're pulling the two of them the'gether, you know, they're for explaining.

KATHY: Mm. Just look at the concentration on their faces - they're completely caught up in it, aren't they? And this is a world where it's important that you can do things with your hands. Now,/

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T74.  
Second NEWS Training  
Wednesday a.m. 21st September, 1977

① Betty on door  
Kathy to talk to  
rather than me.  
(see clock's face)

PRESENT: Betty Jones, Margaret Griffin,  
Jean Campbell, Kathy,  
Doreen (part of the time)

② Good pieces on  
effect of praise on  
child's school.  
of harshness  
& of putting children  
back in reading

On helping  
emerging leaders  
to see that they  
must help others  
to talk

**KATHY:** Can we just talk again about the film. What about your own bits - the bits that you were in in the film? Do you want to have a look at it again, to have a look at them, or do you want to just talk about it and then have a look at it again? What did you think - you weren't in an awful lot, because you were in the workshop situation, and I think there was so much happening that you couldn't see anybody. What do you think of your bit?

**BETTY:** Maybe if you show it again, we'd be able to see.

**KATHY:** Uh huh. Would you rather have a look at them again now? Well, can we think of points to have a look at? We'll show it again and when you're looking at it, look at the bits that you were involved in, and look at the shape of the group and try and think, well, "Are there any ways that maybe that was either a bit unnatural" or you would like to try and change the group. Remember that bit that Susan was saying, at the end, when we were talking about discussion groups - about people's feelings, about involving people in the groups, and new people when they come in, how you make them feel at home, and how some people just never come back because they didn't feel at home, they didn't feel right the first time round. Now your job, and my job is to make them feel welcome and at ease. And how to get people to talk about these sort of feelings that - "I didn't feel, you know, right" and to express them, to say them rather than just not coming back.

Supposing we were in a group and somebody wasn't obviously joining in, wasn't at ease. How do we approach that person? How do we tackle it? What do we do? To try and make them feel good?

**BETTY:** Just keep asking questions.

**MARGARET:** Aye, especially if it's a film. Ask them what they thought of it... you say, "I thought such and such a person explained themselves better ..

**BETTY:** ... the likes of ... Margaret .. if you see a person sitting that way, you go over and approach them and ask them what they actually think on it and maybe just keep on it and maybe when she comes back the following week you could maybe say to her, "Well, there's somebody over there that felt the same as you last/

BETTY(contd) last week. Why don't you go over and speak to her?"  
(Kathy: Yes) .. "And make her welcome."

KATHY: Yes, I think that's part of it; letting people know that everybody feels ...

BETTY: We're just the one group.

KATHY: Yes. You're one group and you feel a bit strange - you don't know what to say the first time. And this is part of a process that everybody goes through.

BETTY: I think it goes wi' maybe the way - the likes of our Ladies' Club there on a Wednesday night, when there's me, Ernie and Janette, Mrs. ... (Jean: Mrs. ? ) Me, Janette, Ernie and Mrs. Duncan, right, and you've got about maybe twanty-one women in your club, right? Now we heard that me, Janette and Ernie and Mrs. Duncan was clannish, you know, and yet, to us - to me, I can make friends quite easy, I can talk to anybody, I think - (Kathy: Oh, yes!) I've no' actually got just the one individual friends; just as you're saying in this group, maybe somebody thinks that, that they're kind of ...

KATHY: That they feel out of it, uh huh.

BETTY: ... clannish, you know. They've never said - the likes o' me, they said I was o.k. but, "Your friends - I think they're a bit clannish." I said, "But you don't know them." I said, "If you come and sit up", I says, "We cannae just walk in", I says, and say, "I'm going to sit beside her" .. "If you come over and speak," I said, "and get to know them, they're no' really clannish."

MARGARET: They expect every to sit at the one table. You cannae do that.

BETTY: That's what I mean. This is the same as your group, I think. I mean, if you're just going to come up and say - just say, for instance, the likes o' this morning, "Well, Janette and Ernie's no' going to go - I'm no' going to go." That's no' my nature. If I've got the feeling there for myself and I like it and I like the people that's going and I think it's doing me good and I enjoy it, it won't make any difference who's going. But there's some people say, "Such and such a one's no' going so I'm no' going to bother going."

KATHY: I think it's partly a confidence thing, you know, that they feel sort of shy or they don't feel confident when they're on their own.

JEAN: I'm like that. When I go to a party or anything I'm liable to sit in a wee corner, where naebody'll notice me.

KATHY: /

KATHY: But you'll come here. You'll come down here, because, I mean, you've been involved in different groups, where you've maybe - where you've known people not that well. I mean, how did you feel when you first came round here? What was your first impression of us? I can remember the first meeting ...

JEAN: "I'm no' coming back!" .. (laughter)  
I just sat quite quiet, listening, you know.

KATHY: Uh huh. But when you got out and you went home, what did you think about it? I mean, be honest! You've got to be able to say ....

JEAN: A lot of tommy-rot. (laughter) ... A lot of mumbo-jumbo at the beginning.

Well, to me, I started in the middle of it. And all them ....? they were there before me, a year or so, something like that, before ..... things that happened last year ..

BETTY: Me and Janette was coming from the start, and to me, as I said to Sr. Doreen when she came up that morning, there was quite a few people said that they were probing into your business; they were just out for information, and they were gie'ing you an IQ test. Well, to me, I mean, it was just like, er, what you're doing; it was just like a project, you were trying something new, and I always remember how I came, was that Moorpark was getting this bit of education and if they were getting it, for to take the opportunity of taking it, and to me it was just like an educational thing; it was just - there's quite a lot even yet, they'll still maintain it's the same thing.

JEAN(?): Yes. I was worried about the oldest boy's education and that was how I came up the first time. Maybe if I hadn't been worried about that, maybe that gave me the nerve to come up.

KATHY: This is what we often wonder ..

JEAN(?): I knew Ann Kidd was coming ..(Kathy: That's right, yes) .... I wouldnae come myself.

BETTY: That's what she means. The likes of now, you could quite easily come up without Ann now, couldn't you? (Mm. Oh, aye.) You could go maybe more or less like if there was ...(?).. going, you could go yourself; you wouldn't need anybody to take you, because you know you can make friends, you can talk. (Jean: Aye, well ..... wouldnae come) .. That's what I mean - I mean, it kind of pulls you out .. you know, as you say, you go into a wee shell; you just sit there, and you feel embarrassed maybe.

KATHY:/

KATHY: It's a question of encouraging people to come in the first place, of making them feel at home - and it's not all tommy-rot! (Laughter) .. and interested enough in what we're doing, and feel that they've got something to offer, because, I mean, everybody has something to give; some ideas or something, and making people feel that the bits that they're saying are as important as the bits that anybody else is saying, you know, and so that eventually they feel much more confidence to come any time they want and join in and just say what they want. I mean, about a year ago, you wouldn't have turned round and said, "That's tommyrot!"

(Laughter)

Why did you think it was tommy-rot?

JEAN(?): Ah didnae know what you were talking about..... It's that long ago.

KATHY: We started in the Tenants' Hall(?) these huge, big meetings, before we got the house here.

(producing pictures) Do you remember these pictures? - I don't think you were in at that time. (No!) And we had the two pictures (Jean(?): Aye, that's ... they with the gloves and all that ... didn't - you kind of explained them to me; that was what it was in the house; you were talking about that) Uh huh, the differences. And I think the very first thing that we did was ..

(Jean(?): What can the baby do that the boy can't do and what can the boy do ...?)

.. and the rest of the things; that's how we first started.

JEAN(?): The boy's walking and talking and ... (indistinct).... the mother's feeding the baby.

KATHY: What did you think about the content of it - I mean, how did you feel? What were your personal feelings about it? Did you enjoy it, or did you think, "Oh, well, it'll be good for the kids, so I'll go." What made you come back?

BETTY: I thought it was quite interesting, the subjects that you were on, I thought it was ...

MARGARET: I found out things that I never ever knew.

JEAN: Well, I came back because wee David was three and I was having George and I was going to try the experiment out on George to see how he came on, and I found that he's come on, you know, everything that's happened is progressing with him. I mean there at Christmas time he wouldn't even hardly talk - but (now) you see the difference. He's walking away, chatting. Last year he was in with me all the time. He wouldn't leave my side and now he's in there ...

KATHY:/

KATHY: Jumping off the chairs!

JEAN: He says "Good morning" and "Good night".. goes out to play all the time. Even for reading and playing with different toys - he did that jigsaw this morning. (Do you want to take it home and do it?)

KATHY: What made you come back - Jean(?)

JEAN:(?) I thought it was quite interesting.

KATHY: Wasn't it just the two of you on that first night? Mary didn't come. (Uh huh.)  
I know - I felt strange at first. I was terrified when I first went down to the Tenants' Hall and the community centre and there was a mass of people. I think it's because I didn't know anybody and when you're first talking to people that you don't know that well, I just sort of tend to clam up and I let Doreen do most of the talking, and I just came in with a few bits. And I was nervous again that first evening when you came and when Mary and Ann came. I didn't know - you've no relationship already with the people, you know. You don't know them - you know - something you can talk about but you don't know how people are reacting and so sometimes you almost try too hard and make a mess of it, and sometimes you just don't know what to say. And it's getting over, I think, this first few weeks. If you can get over that and if you can establish an interest and a relationship with who you're working with, then I think the rest is plainsailing - well, not plainsailing, but much easier.

Susan pinpointed very well that, you know, some people ...

MARGARET: To me I feel that - you know - discussion groups; it's no' the one person that's speaking, everybody's getting their chance, to speak on their own.

KATHY: Yes. And you've got to be aware that there's probably somebody sitting in a corner who's got things to say, who's got things to offer, but if everybody else is chatting, won't say the thing, and so if you're partly leading the discussion or helping within a group discussion, then you've got to be able, without saying, "Somebody shut up!" for you to do your bit of talking, allow them to say what they think, and not feel a fool in doing so - and that's difficult. I don't think anybody really gets on top of it; I think Doreen's excellent at it - she's fabulous like that. Do you want to have a look at it again?

MOTHER: Aye, well, it'll gie' us a rough idea.

KATHY: I tell you what. I'll put it on.  
It is something, actually, that is quite important when you're starting to lead a group or organise a group, just how people are sitting. You see, if you get a whole row sitting along one wall and you're sitting in isolation, then the person at this end/

KATHY(contd) end isn't going to talk to the person at that end; it's all talking to you. Now if you - what you want is a discussion where everybody's talking to each other; a circle that's not too formal, but where you can communicate as easily to Jean as you can to me. Now at the moment you're all facing me, you're not facing each other, so it's easier to talk to me. And it's just little things like that when you're starting, making sure that people are sitting in a way - and you're quite relaxed where you're sitting. I mean, sometimes quite deliberately Doreen and I will sit on the floor, to make it more - I mean, I do sit on the floor at home anyway, because I haven't got any chairs apart from ... (?) (laughter) I mean, I like it, but sometimes if I feel that it's a bit stiff and a bit too formal, I do that deliberately, you know, just to make people feel that it's not sort of "all up straight" and you're back at school. It's little things like that; how you organise your group, how you make people that are way off in the corner and don't want to, come out of their corner without feeling frightened, to do so.

Do you think of it any differently? Did anything new come out of it?

BETTY: Well we noticed that bit about the newcomers ... Kathy and Agnes ... the one in the library and the one in here. None of the two of them spoke.

MOTHER: There was only one and she was talking about her two boys (Mrs. Jones?) Agnes ..

KATHY: She said the little bit, uh huh.

BETTY: She was here longer, aye. But the other two never spoke.

MARGARET: Did you notice that, the two of them sitting together and there should have been somebody in between them.

KATHY: Uh huh. Or somebody right by them.

MARGARET(?): By them, uh huh. But they were two at the end and the other people were there.

KATHY: That's right, yes, because, I mean, we were all ... I mean, places were ..

BETTY: Sometimes, right enough, when you just come in, you just see a seat and you just sit in it. You don't actually sit in it because you actually want to sit beside that person.

MARGARET(?): We don't treat them like strangers, 'cos they're your neighbours, you know, but it's just that they've been strangers coming up here, maybe you only see them twice or something ..

KATHY: /

KATHY: Yes. I mean, you don't think of them as strangers, but they may feel a little bit awkward.

BETTY: You know them and ..... say hello.

MARGARET: I find that they're talking more often now ..... the afternoons you don't see the difference.

BETTY: Well it's just natural, I mean if you're coming for the first time you don't know what it's all about so you've got to sit.. for a couple of days and then once you know what they're on, then you can ...

MARGARET(?): Even in the Wednesday groups when we came to it, the first couple of weeks, it was new to us all but at the third week, we were all ...

KATHY: Doreen and I can't get a word in edgeways! But the problem is, how do you get people to feel comfortable in the first weeks, so they won't go away and not come back - so they will come back. That's the difficult stage. And then once the people have been coming for a few weeks, then you've got the problem of how do you keep the group balanced. But first of all you've got to think, well, how do you make them feel comfortable enough to think that they've got something to offer, that they will come back. And then once they do keep on coming back, how do you balance your groups so that everybody is saying their bits, and then you've got to think of the material you're actually using; the content of it.

BETTY: As you say, it's getting your group made up.

KATHY: You think Doreen's good at that?

JEAN: She's good at getting people to talk. I don't know why, I just know that she is.

KATHY: Yes. Sometimes I just sit and watch her and think, "Now what is she doing that I'm not, that other people are?" I mean, I can't say it sometimes, and I don't know. I'm just wondering what you think that Doreen has that she ..

JEAN: .. I don't know. I just know that she's good at bringing people out.

KATHY: I think she's marvellous at it. She's really good. She's one of the best people that ...

JEAN: .. Well, you see, she's good at it. Some people come down and she can sit and get them to talk.

KATHY:/

KATHY: That's right. And one thing that actually Doreen will always do, which is important, she will always listen to whatever anybody has to say and if a point is worthwhile and anything interesting - I mean, there's always something interesting in whatever somebody's got to say - she will pick out the bit that is either what we're talking about or is relevant and she will say, "That's interesting ..."

BETTY(?): And she'll put it into one of her sessions ..

KATHY: Uh huh. That's right. So she's actively - she's really making people feel that they have got something that they can offer, because everybody has.

BETTY: She's listening as well as us to what we're saying.

KATHY: That's right. And I don't know how many times you've noticed that she'll sometimes say, "That's very interesting. Can we talk about that?" You know. And, I mean, if you've offered something or you've said something, and somebody says, "Oh, that's interesting!", then you feel, "Oh, maybe I have got something to say." And you'll carry on saying it.

But it's a difficult thing to do, to be able to listen to a whole - you know - if somebody's talking for quite a long time, and just pull out the important bits that they're saying and take those and offer them as an idea to everybody else. It's difficult. We're going to have to try and put it in practice some day, fairly soon maybe, of either ... (?) terms or some of you come to some of the different groups and see if you can see either how Doreen and I do it, and then I know - one of you and Doreen or one of you and myself - see if we can do this.

BETTY: What she means is if we make a group up, say the likes of Jean goes with you..

KATHY: Or take it in turns who's going with who.

BETTY: It'll be just you and Jean there, with a different group of people coming, to see how Jean can pull somebody out.

KATHY: Uh huh. And how you can help people with their ideas and talking and just feeling at ease and everything and then maybe we could all do - we could come back and see how it worked, and see what we did right and what we did wrong and how we'd go on from there, because, you know, we can talk about it till the cows come home, but the only way you'd really learn how to do it is by doing it (Betty: That's right), and by making your mistakes and coming back and saying, "Well, I won't do that again".

BETTY: /

BETTY: That's right, aye. We're no' coming back! (Laughter)  
We're just going back to our own wee meeting.

MARGARET: Well it's just going to start off the same way as we started  
off, isn't it? (Kathy: Oh, yes.) I mean, we didnae know you  
in the beginning, so if we get a group of people here and we  
don't know them ..

KATHY: Uh huh, but at least you'll know them.

MARGARET: It's more or less putting the likes of my judgement up against  
yours, in other words, with another group of people, isn't it?  
to see how you can react maybe with just your neighbour and them  
that's in your thingmae.

KATHY: Yes. It's very much like that. You know, but before you  
actually feel confident in a group like that, you've got to  
know the material that you're using. We used the slides last  
week. You know. I mean, supposing we went to another group  
and we were using the slides. Would you feel confident? Would  
you feel o.k. if you knew ... (Margaret: The answers?) .. what  
we were talking about - what were the answers - and you knew  
what sort of questions to put in, and how to bring people out  
talking about those slides. We can work through them again  
and, supposing what we were doing was the beginning of a group  
on using this material? We'll go through this again, but if  
we work through all the different material that we will be  
using, and talking about the sorts of questions, the way you  
can explore people's feelings and people's ideas and how you  
can bring them on. Then Doreen and I will be out of a job!

BETTY: (Laughing) I don't think so.....

KATHY: Well, we'd just sit back and you do it.

BETTY: But it's amazing if you go into a group of people and maybe  
one person does start talking, that person could actually catch  
your (conscience??) in other words. You know, and it's just an  
ordinary person .... you feel you could actually capture your -  
you know - in a conversation you can take your memory, you know,  
maybe you're saying to yourself, "I'll go up to the house this  
morning", or something like that, then all of a sudden you find  
that this person is talking, I mean, she's quite interesting.

KATHY: A lot to offer, yes. And sometimes it gives you a bit of a jolt  
to think - "That's just an ordinary person that I ...."  
(Betty: Just a housewife... she's just .. an ordinary person)  
Yes. But I mean, I think, to me this is what the project is  
all about, that everybody, any ordinary person, has got a lot  
to offer. And it's just making the people - making everybody -  
giving/

KATHY(contd):giving them the opportunity to realise that they have got a lot to offer, and when you know you have, you start to offer it.

JEAN: When I came here - it was the day when you'd a teacher - you said, "This is Mr. So-and-so from Govan High. Mr. S..., Mrs. Campbell." We two stood looking at one another for about ten minutes - "Who's going to speak first?" and after that I met a woman teacher from Govan High.

KATHY: That's right. Mrs. Richford or ...?

JEAN: She's tall.

KATHY: Tall...? Blond? Yes. She's one of the Guidance teachers.

JEAN: I ended up going all over the place with her.

KATHY: But after you'd done it the first time - you'd talked to somebody - you don't feel as bad doing it again. And it's this sort of thing, and you know that, I mean, o.k. they may be Director of Education or whatever, but George had said that he didn't think he'd be able to talk to .. on the open day, but he just found that he could do it. George is a chatty person anyway. But once you've done it once and you think, "Well, they're as ordinary as I am; it's just that they've got a different job."

BETTY: Sometimes it goes with a person's ... (mixed voices) .... some people can approach a person different. You know, you could maybe look at a person and say, oh - just say Doreen, for instance, and it was me - well, I think I could speak to you - I don't mean that I don't like Doreen or anything like that, but to me, I think I could speak to you maybe - just say I'm on to a question, I say, "I'll go and ask Kathy that question".

KATHY: Yes. But I mean there's always personalities involved anyway.

BETTY: But, as you say, maybe you go into a group and there's somebody sitting. Maybe suddenly you'll say, "I'll talk to her ..." and maybe somebody else looks that wee bit more intelligent , and you'll say, "I'll no' ....."

KATHY: You do. Every time you go in a group.

BETTY: It's just a person's appearance. I mean, to me, I go by people's appearance. I find I can talk to, I mean, I can make a conversation quite easily with people.

KATHY: Yes. But there's always some people that when you look at ...

BETTY: Maybe there's so many going like that (?) and showing off (?) Aye. There's some people you can get on with and some ....! I mean, I don't mean what I said about Doreen, if I was .... (Kathy: No. I know.) But actually if I had my choice, just say/

BETTY(contd): say I was in the group, for instance, and I was stuck with something, and you and Doreen were there, well, I'm liable to say, "Kathy, could you help me here?" But if you werenae there, I would say Doreen. But it's just that you go to individual people.

KATHY: There's always personality things. I mean, there's no way you can find a proper explanation ...

BETTY: I think it's your confidence, really. It's what you actually hear from yourself. If you ...

KATHY: Doreen's got all the answers ... anyway.

BETTY: No. If you know you ~~you get worse~~ can go to two people, you'll only have the one. It's the same as a child with a teacher. If it's got a student for the day it'll come in and say, "Oh, I had a student. She was great." And then they'll say, "Oh, I got a new teacher and a didnae like her." It's just that their appearance - what the child sees in their mind and what .. you know - it must go by the looks of the teacher.

KATHY: Oh, yes.

BETTY: .. like my Joe once came and said, "Oh, I got this ....? and she was a big fat thing..... a shame .....

KATHY: Yes. But you know, you do. And it's only sometimes when you get to know people you make an effort to get to know them more, that you don't notice some of the things that initially .... some this, some the other, and I think that's something else that you've got to be able to do, which is the bits that you don't like. There's somebody maybe you think you wouldn't get on with and you have to make an effort to make yourself get on with them.

BETTY: Well, there Joe yesterday, in fact, came in and said that the teacher said, "You're coming on lovely, Joe - Joseph" whatever sum it was, I forget the sum, just say, it's no' £ s. d now, right enough, but just say it was that, and your reading's coming on better and - he says, "I can dae all them, Mammy", he says, "with that other teacher", and yet she never, ever said that that was good. She always made out that I was bad. So it really goes, to me, on their appearance and what the teacher's actual - the way the teacher approaches a child.

*Home/s. in front*

KATHY: Actually that is ...

MOTHER: They should actually tell them, every so often, if they're daeing well or give them a wee note home.

OTHER: ... Jake(?) gets that. When they come home at night time and I go over ....

BETTY: /

BETTY: Jim .... he'd a teacher that used to have knuckles. Maybe she didnae mean any harm with it. She must have been - that way. I said, "Well, she cannae be hitting you that much, Jim," I says, "because it would be black and blue." Whenever he got .....(?) I said, "Well you must .. you cannae be doing ... she's having the right to dae it if you're no' learning." I said, "I'm no' going up to any teacher," I said, "because you're no' getting checked for nothing." He's probably away daydreaming. So he thought this wasnae right that she should ...

*effect of harshness*

JEAN(?): My Brian - Miss (Patten?) gave my Brian a - no' the belt, I think it was a hand ..... I says, "You're lucky ...." (Mixed voices) .....

BETTY: ... you're no' concentrating or something like that. To him, I think it was sore at the time, but I said, "She cannae be daeing it that sore," I said, "or you'd be black and blue with the constant thingmy."

KATHY: Uh huh. But that point you were making I think is one of the most important things and again it's sort of central to everything that we do, that if you reinforce, if you say good things, that people think, "Oh yes, that is great" - you know, it's back to all ..... that we did last year, more or less.

BETTY: The likes of him yesterday, to me, he was all taken in with this, right up to about five o'clock, and he thought this was good - "Oh, that's me.." And then ..... (indistinct) ..... these big books, and then put them back to these wee books. He said, "I done that big book" - just say 5 or whatever it was, "And then she took me off it and then she put me on to this wee baby book; I said, "But you've still got to go back on it", I said, "that's just - it's different from your other teacher. She's got ..." I didnae know what to say to him, I mean, he couldnae see how he ~~4~~ read all this book before and he made it up to Big Book 5 and then they put him back down maybe to Book 1 and then they gradually go through it again. I don't know what it was.

*effect of putting back.*

KATHY: No. I'm not sure either, unless it's - he's got his class readers or the books that they're all reading through - unless the others are supplementary, or extra reading.

BETTY: Well, this other wee boy, he said that he was on the big book and he is - Joe says that he is a good reader - he's the best reader in the class and she still ... I said, "Well, it must be there for to do, if the whole class is doing it." This wee boy said, "That's right, Mrs. Jones. "She took my big book off me an' all and put me back down. And yet they had moved up a class.

KATHY: /

4/11 T75.

*Language Categories  
Good piece from Susan  
on effects of  
conscious responsibility  
on the level  
of one's participation*

NEWS Training

Wednesday 28th September, 1977

PRESENT: Susan and Doreen.

DOREEN: We were talking about Joan Tough's categories. She has made these categories out for four areas and we thought we might use them for any age group of children and for adults, beginning with the self-maintaining one. We ran that off. Now, you started to say how you felt you would use these at home.

SUSAN: I would watch what I'm saying and watch what the children are saying and see how much you use these kinds of words and if they were using them too much I would know how they were going to be; if they were going to be bullies, if they were just going to be quiet or just stand there and then try and calm them down - and make them all equal.

DOREEN: Mm. You're talking about these things like projection of self and self-interest, justifying behaviour, threatening, criticizing, these categories in self-maintaining. What about your children at the minute? How do you feel about them at the moment? Which categories do they fit into?

SUSAN: Well Joyce, she's a bit of a nark - you know - she talks all the time, and Susan, she's quiet.

DOREEN: What about George?

SUSAN: George - he's in between. He's quiet - one minute he's quiet and the next minute he's loud. Letting himself go when he wants - I've got to just watch him, I've got to say, "Right - that's enough!" And he knows when to stop.

DOREEN: He does. Now that's what Joyce doesn't?

SUSAN: No. She doesnae know when to stop. She must have too much energy or something. I've got to tell her about twice to stop what she's daeing and then she stops - when she sees that I'm in earnest, then she stops. And then when I tell her what I asked her to stop for, then she'll say, "Well I'll no' dae it again." Wi' Susan, but, I've got to try and bring her oot of her shell. You've got to actually speak to her and she answers you when she asks you questions "What have I got to dae this for?" "What have I to dae that for?" I've got to tell her. I say, "Now, you cannae just stand there and let people hit you. And you just cannae stand there and let people talk to you like that. You've got to talk back and you've got to react."

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: What were you saying about children ruling their parents?

SUSAN: Oh aye, if you let them get aff with it when they're small, when they get older they'll rule you, because some boys and girls now, they think they can rule their parents. They say to their parents, "I'll go oot." And the parents say, "Where are you going out to?" "Never you mind. I'm just going oot, right? and I'll be in when I want to come in." That's it. The parent's nae say. And then when they dae come in, the parents will say, "Where did you go?" "Never mind. I was oot." That's it. They go to their bed. Because the parents know that they've done wrong. They didnae learn them when they were small, so now when they're older it's too (late).

DOREEN: I think that's very right. And you see that the language @ the way they speak to them -

SUSAN: It's got a lot to dae wi' it, and the way the child reacts, and the parent would need to watch the way the child reacted because if they didnae dae it the noo, what like are they goin' to be when they're older?

DOREEN: So you think that this might give you a pattern along which you could judge how your child was reacting? (Yes) Do you think the rest of the group might be interested in working on this?

SUSAN: Oh aye, I think they would.

DOREEN: What about the group itself? You know we started talking about the actual group of us working together here - this group of parents who are learning to be leaders? I thought you said earlier a very important thing about responsibility.

SUSAN: Well it is a lot of responsibility because they don't realise they're going to be left theirselves to dae this wi' somebody else. They think it's going to be you, Kathy, them, all the time. They don't realise maybe you and Kathy have to go somewhere some day when there's supposed to be a group, I mean, they're going to be left to dae that theirselves and I think when they realise that they've got to dae this theirselves, they'll come oot there and when the rest of them realise it, they'll need to dae it themselves. They'll ask mair questions because it'll be their turn and they don't know when their turn's going to be, and then they'll need to concentrate and they'll need to ask questions. If they don't ask questions, how are they going to find oot what's going on? And it'll bring it mair alive.

DOREEN: Yes. I think it might do that. So we could perhaps plan a session so that from now on half of a session was led by a member of the group.

SUSAN:/

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News from Susan

SUSAN: And then the second session could be led by you and Kathy and then the parents would know where either they went wrong or were o.k. And then they could ask you questions. They could say, "Did I do that right? Is that the right words I used?" And if it wasnae right well she could maybe speak, showing them what kinds of words to use, and how to put more spirit into the conversation, and ask them to ask the group to speak up, you know, to bring more questions into it.

DOREEN: Oh yes, that's got very good ideas in it, and we could use these categories again for looking at how we are talking to each other and why people take part and why they don't take part.

SUSAN: And you could watch the reaction.

DOREEN: Oh, I think that's got great possibility. And certainly if people take their turn. What about the planning with the person who is going to take that turn?

SUSAN: I think you'd dae that - if you'd get them to come up maybe a night before it or a day before it and show them and explain to them and ask her what kind of questions she's going to ask, and get her to write it all down and take it hame and then she'll know what she's going to ask the next morning and then she'll no' need to bring any papers, she'll no' need to look up anything; she'll know.- what she's going to ask the next morning.

DOREEN: Yes. I've certainly seen youth groups work like this - the YCW had a whole training course like this for their leaders and then the person who was going to lead the discussion came up the day before and planned it with someone - but I hadn't thought of using that yet - it's a good idea.

Right, then, we'll do that. I think, Susan, you might just be the first of these leaders that's going to be doing your turn since you've got it all planned out already!

END TAPE.

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Very good material here.

N.E.W.s Training  
Wednesday a.m. 5th October, 1977

T76.

PRESENT: Betty Jones, Betty Wallace,  
Susan Ferguson, Margaret Corr,  
Kathy, Doreen.

- Content :
- 1 Repeating an introductory exercise - the game of using what a baby can do compared to a 3-5 year old.
  - 2 Becoming conscious of internal feelings during the, positive & negative.
  - 3 Discussing how 'under-surface' feelings affect group members. This turned into a 'real-life' discussion because Betty Jones was worried about my reactions to her rebellion last week that she could approach Kathy better (Sept 28th)

DOREEN:

... we've got something, you know, going on under it, all the time, and if you can bring those to the surface - I mean, you don't have to bring them all to the surface - but if we can bring even some of those to the surface, if it was spoiling someone from being able to take part - that's sometimes the end of it. You know, if someone can actually open their mouth on it, and the example I think I may have given to all before, because it's an easy example to use, is the one about the night we were cutting up puppets here. You were making (indicating puppets) .. these things - this puppet up here is one of them. And if you look at his head, that's a perfect hair, that black and white piece of fur coat. And Kathy had brought this fur coat that somebody in the south of England had given her, with no notion of what she'd done with it; it was just 'away' from there. But in the room we weren't aware it had come from the south of England. We were just aware of a black and white fur coat, a perfectly old fur coat. And Kathy cut into it and said, "This makes good hair". And nobody else used it. I thought, because I was conscious of feeling - "Now, I better use that and kind of demonstrate that we're all meant to use this." This is the kind of thing I would suggest that you would think about as you're going along.

Now that was a first-of-all thought; just an idea in my head, "I'm going to demonstrate this.." - which was going on underneath. I wasn't talking about it. But as I lifted the coat, I got something else. I got a feeling about cutting into a fur coat. I thought, "Oh, it seems terrible to cut a fur coat." Now, I immediately knew that that was also a feeling in the room, that not only had I to show the idea, I had to show that feeling so that other people could cope with it going on inside themselves, so I said, "I feel terrible cutting into a fur coat. Kathy - are you sure it's all right? We can cut this fur coat?"

(Laughter)

And/

DOREEN(contd) And immediately, everybody cut into that fur coat. Because they'd aired this feeling that was in them but they hadn't even told themselves they had (that was just pulling them back from it.) Now it's that sort of situation that I want you to explore this morning. To explore what's going on underneath; while we're doing an exercise, what you're doing as well - your thoughts and your feelings. Now if we do both and go right through the exercise and then we start saying, "Now, can you remember anything you felt, or that was going on underneath?" And we try, just throwing them up, what we actually felt; it will also help us to see what happens to other people in a group. Right? (to Kathy:) Now would you like to set us off?

KATHY: I'm sure some of you can remember this from last year. Basically we've got two pictures. We've got a mother with a young baby and a child of three, four, maybe even five. And it started off as a competition, so we're going to do it together.

DOREEN: In two's? Did we do it last time talking to each other?

KATHY: We did, using groups. How many have we got? a three and a two?

(Laughter) *are one group in this*

DOREEN: Jean and I had a competition .... We wouldn't cheat, Jean, would we? ... So, are you going to join our group? ....

KATHY: Rather more groups of two.

(Laughter)

Two into seven doesn't go!  
Essentially, what you've got to try and do is list what things a two-year-old - what things a five-year-old can do that the baby cannot do. Did we start with saying what kind of ... Did we start by saying what a baby can do? I can't remember. (No.) We just started saying ...

MOTHER: What can the (K: older one) do?

DOREEN: Supposing a new-born baby ...

MOTHER: What could the baby do that the boy doesn't do - the oldest one ... and what does the boy do that the baby can't do?

DOREEN: That's right. We listed both. What can a baby of that age do? (K: That's right.) And at first we don't mention the other child - you see - we don't know our own lesson!  
What/

4 2 4

DOREEN(contd) What can a baby - a new-born baby do? That's the first thing. And we get something like two minutes .. so you can talk about that.

(Kathy timing the groups)

KATHY: Work in two's <sup>with Carol & Susan</sup> .. work together, and three of us will work together.

MOTHER: What can a baby do that the boy can't do?

KATHY:£ No. What can a baby do? - to start off.

MOTHER: Movements.

KATHY: Right. Move.

MOTHER: Cry. (Laughter)  
(background discussion, more laughter)

VOICE: Did you ever ..... at that age?

KATHY: I think he tries.

MOTHER: Aye. He keeps going.

MOTHER: Turns its head.  
(background discussion. Kathy: Right, half a minute left!)  
(laughter)

KATHY: Time up! Right! Will each group please elect a spokesman?

DOREEN: I've got a beautiful picture of you - it's just as I saw you do that, I've got them. They're not good photography because it came off the video. It's just lines. The picture's not good; it's not well taken, you know -

KATHY: I've not seen these!

DOREEN: No. You haven't seen these. They took them to get - thinking they could use them in the video and they couldn't because the lines weren't ..... well that's - coming up - that's some old pictures back from long ago. That's the princess - that's your daughter! (Carol?) No, it's Ann. (Kathy: I mean Ann.) It's just when I saw these two looking at each other like they're looking at each other in the film ... (laughter) - mixed voices - ..... yes maybe it should be reserved for (?)... you're quite right. And maybe something else - I don't think I've brought it - I remember I left it out and it's not here - so it is reserved for the next one..... those are all the old pictures. Are you ready?

KATHY: /

KATHY: Right. Can you remember .. (Doreen: Think about what you feel?)  
Yes. Just try and .. can you read out what you put down, then?

*Juan* MOTHER: I've got, sucks, cries, opens his eyes, moves, stretches, wets  
(other?) his nappy, sucks his thumb, grasps things and makes 'goeing'  
noises, (and I've got down smiles.)

KATHY: I wonder where they got smiles from? Right. Susan. Sorry -  
who's the spokeswoman?

*Susan & Margaret* MOTHER: We've just got mostly the same as what you've got but we've  
got it gets a cradle cap on its head whereas a boy doesn't get  
that and we've got - it grows up - as its weight goes up ...  
it cries, takes bottles, it's teething.

KATHY: Sorry - what was the last one?

*Susan* MOTHER: Teething..... some of them early - some of them when they're  
born.

*Billy* OTHER: Movements, cries, sleeps, turns its head, he can see, good grip,  
and drinks.

KATHY: Uh huh, that's right. Can we have a look at one of the ones  
that Margaret - that you said - had a cap on.

MARGARET: Yes. It's like, er, some children ... (Other: Cradle cap)

DOREEN: Cradle cap is just an extra layer of skin. It comes off.

MOTHER: It's something like dandruff - it flakes off - you've got to  
get rid of it.

KATHY: Uh huh - I was just wondering if it fits in?

DOREEN: Well, we're really talking about what he can do and I think  
perhaps we didn't make that clear. Now that's one of the  
interesting things about the way we proposed the thing.  
As we proposed it, we obviously didn't say, "Well, we're talking  
about what he can do" and this will come up very often in a  
discussion, that when you hear the answers back, you see that  
what you said wasn't clear, because you were saying what he is  
like and what he can do over a period, like 'cuts his teeth',  
when we were really looking at one static moment, as he is, in  
his mother's arms, that day when he is two days old, or some-  
thing - what can he do? But we didn't make that clear! We  
said, "What can he do?" We didn't say .. "At the moment .."

MOTHER: /

MOTHER: We've got walk, talk, sleep, cry, eat, drink, play, run, climb, ..., swim, draw, write, dress, undress, rips his clothes, gets dirty and gets things for himself.

KATHY: (Keith)? and I also had that we did put on the bottom he can, if not read, look at pictures in books. Representative from the next group, please? (Laughter)

MOTHER: Dresses himself, washes himself, cleans his teeth, brushes his hair, eats, drinks, talks, sings, plays football - don't know if we'll put this in - goes to school, reads, writes, draws, dirty, I've got - runs about, you know, plays outside, goes to the toilet himself and ... has conversation with his mum and dad.

KATHY: You've got a lot! A representative from the third group, please?

MOTHER: Runs, shouts, talks, ties shoelaces, conversation, climbs, sings, counts, go messages, hold a book, goes to school, (starts?) things by himself and dresses himself.

KATHY: So it's a much, much longer list, isn't it?

DOREEN: How many of the things on that second list would you say that he could do just because he'd grown up? Supposing he had been born like the first one and been left in a jungle, brought up by an animal? You know - you keep hearing these stories - how many of the second things would he be able to do ....

MOTHERS: Walk .... I think he could run about and everything, because if he'd watched animals they would bring him up - he'd probably be able to swing from trees (Mm) and climb trees and ...

DOREEN: Uh huh. Well what things could he not do?

MOTHER: He couldnae read. He wouldnae be able to read and maybe no' talk. (Other: No' talk.) He wouldnae be able to talk. He might no' be able to stand right (Other: Or dress) .. or walk right (Other: Undress, or wash, or) or anything.

KATHY: What about - is there anything else?

DOREEN: If we'd some ....(?) would he go a message?

MOTHER: No. He couldn't do that if he's in a jungle.

KATHY: So it's basically things - skills like dressing yourself, reading, the ability to talk to people .... following instructions - going for messages - and actually doing the things and bringing it back.

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: Now let's look at those - those particular skills. You were saying if he'd been brought up with the animals he'd be like an animal. So the other skills are particularly human skills, then, that he can't do. So all the human skills that human beings in our society need to be able to do, he has to get - he has to be brought up by human beings to do. So how does he learn them?

MOTHER: His parents would teach him? (Uh huh)

OTHER: Imagination?

DOREEN: His imagination as an animal - if he was living with the animals his imagination wouldn't be stimulated to do those - would he? (No) You know - his imagination does come in on it. Now what - how does he get started?

MOTHERS: He would just probably ... imitate the animals.

DOREEN: Yes. So if he's going to be a human being ....

MOTHER: The nearest ..... animal (?) wouldn't it? (Other: It would be, uh huh.) .. he sees the monkey using his foot - paw - to open a banana, well, he'd be using his hands.

DOREEN: But he wouldn't get things like - beginning things himself - that initiative of making up his mind to do something and holding a conversation about whether he could do it or not.

MOTHER: Maybe he would have his own language to the animals - you know - maybe he could talk to the animals - you know what I mean? Whereas we couldnae. We wouldnae be able to understand it but he could make out what they're saying and he could have a conversation with them.

DOREEN: But if you look at the level of an animal's way of living, you know, his house-building, his road-building, his ability to to ...? they're obviously a very much lower level than we are; I mean, they don't build houses, set up societies, like we do, so there's obviously something that human beings can do that animals can't. The child needs other human beings to be able to do (them) - you know, he couldn't reach a human standard without other human beings - at least it seems to me like that - that he would be at a lower standard than we are unless he got something .. so he must need to learn from people - so your children before they reach school must have learned from you.

MOTHER: They're learning all the time.

KATHY:/

KATHY: So what they've learned are the basic skills of being a person that's being different from an animal.

MOTHER: Well they're getting taught. When a child's getting taught how to do it, so you .. I mean, if it wasn't getting taught it would just be like the animal, isn't it? You'd be like a dumb - say a dumb animal; the likes of a child, when it goes to school it learns, and from there it just naturally grows ...

DOREEN: But before. It actually hasn't gone to school. We're talking about a child who hasn't arrived at school. He's also ..... he's also been taught. Maybe the parents haven't seen it as teaching - you know - you may not have said "I am teaching him to tie his shoelace" or "I am teaching him to understand what I am talking about" - if you're standing over a cot going to him ...

MOTHER: Well that's just the same as, you say, a boy in the jungle - I mean, the one that's at home's getting taught it but the one that's in the jungle, I mean, it does just what the animal does, but the animal, you know ...

KATHY: Yes. There's still a learning process in them both but the parent is teaching human skills; the ability to sort of be like other human beings.

DOREEN: How well do you think most parents appreciate that they are actually teaching their child at one, two, three - you know, how much were you aware? Were you thinking to yourself "This is going to make a difference to the kind of person he is"? How much is that a conscious thing or how much is it that you just get on with it because that's what everybody does with a baby?

MOTHER: It's conscious but the child's no' picking up some things you don't realise they're picking up.

KATHY: What sort of things are you conscious of?

OTHER: You've got to speak to them and that.

MOTHER: And learn them to do (simple?) things with the children. The child could still pick up by watching the adult - it can pick up itself.

DOREEN: So that learning and teaching don't go together necessarily? The child is learning even when you're not consciously teaching. But there is also a process of teaching, of saying...

MOTHER: Telling right from wrong. (Uh huh.) No' to cross a road.

OTHER: /

OTHER: Things like that you teach them.

KATHY: I think that right and wrong is very important because it's something that, I mean, unless you are specifically taught it, it would be a difficult thing to grasp.

OTHER: No. I think a child can pick that up quite young, if you learn him the difference between taking something and asking for it.

DOREEN: But you are teaching him ...

MOTHER: You've still got to tell him it's wrong if he takes it, you know, but as .. if he does something, you know, that's right, he'll say, "It's right", you know. You've got to teach them right from wrong; I mean, they don't know what's wrong and they don't know what's right but if you tell them, then maybe the next time, just say they go to lift a biscuit and you say to them "That's wrong - you've no' to do that" (Other: You've to ask) .."you've to ask for that".

DOREEN: You've thought through that this is an important idea to teach your child. When you think that you're really teaching them something for their whole life on a wee thing like a biscuit - it really quite excites me to think that the whole attitude to other people's property is being settled at that stage... (laughter).. but it really is being settled, isn't it? ... on absolute vital things ...

KATHY: And if it's missed, even by the time - before they're five - or if the wrong ideas are sort of implanted there, that can ....(?).. their life in some ways.

MOTHER: Well see how, the likes of the wee boy down the stairs - I used to watch that wee boy (Mark Carrol). Now if he came in to me for me to watch him, he was all pointing, you know, he hadn't any words - "Uh - uh .." you know, for anything he wanted, this word was used - "Uh - uh.." and he was just pointing at it. So I actually said "That's no ah - ah - that's a motor. What is it? A motor?" But he couldnae get the "motor". Well, each day he was coming up he was learning. He got away from this kind of pointing all the time. (Doreen: I think that's .....)... and when my husband was raking the fire he said "Go ahd get me the shovel" - he actually knew what a shovel was and he went away into the kitchenette and brought the shovel back to him. You know? And he used to help me to clean the fire and things like that. But he really ...

KATHY: I'll bet you saw a difference very quickly in him.

MOTHER: /

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MOTHER: I seen it in him more than I did my own. You see, I had still Sandra in the house at that time, and I seen it; although she didn't start her speech with pointing "Ah - ah" and things like that, you know. It's just that I noticed that in him and I says to Ann, "He's no' very good at talking", I says, "You're no' actually talking tae him" - you know, things like that that I noticed in him that maybe I wouldnae notice in my own.

OTHER: (indistinct)..... even adults go like that - they point because they know they get the thing - they don't have to ask for it.

MOTHER: Well he's an only child. That was just her wee one, right enough, and he still - and yet he's a great talker now.

DOREEN: Well now, I wonder if we could stop this bit of the exercise now because what we said at the beginning was we were going to do two things really; we were going to do something and then we were going to try talking about what was going on underneath that doing - the whole exercise. Now there was a number of pieces that I personally was putting into that exercise just now that I'm conscious I was doing but I want to see what other people saw was going on there before we lose it, because if we go on talking about the detail now we'll have lost the bit we had earlier. So if we could just stop it now, and if there's anything at all that you were conscious of, feelings that came up during that - let's look at feelings first of all that were going on underneath. Can you voice them now at all?

MOTHER: *Betty* Well on the baby one, I was just thinking back myself when I ~~was~~ had a baby.

DOREEN: So you really were able to feel back .....

MOTHER: ... and just picture what the baby was doing.

KATHY: Uh huh. Could I take it one step further back when I sort of said "We're going to have a competition and you've got to write down ..." What was your reaction?

MOTHER: (Laughter) .. Oh - my writing! my writing!

DOREEN: Yes. And you're saying "Panic!" *(from)*  
Now, was that a general reaction?

MOTHER: ... took me back to school ... (Other: writing rubbish!)

DOREEN: Yes. A sense of "I might not be all that good at this." Now, everybody feels like that, you know, we feel like that. Everybody feels like that in that situation. But most people think they're the only one that feels like that, and I think that's a thing you've got to be able to be aware of - that everybody feels "My level of production in this is not going to be as nice as I would like it to be." Is that a general feeling for everyone?

MOTHERS: /

Hand of Kes  
would make straight  
note into thesis  
Betty Jones very good

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Ann/Mary talking of  
how much more confident  
they are in conversation

NEWS Training

Wednesday 12th October, 1977

Prep for Blairwood

Betty on her lack of  
knowledge of trees

PRESENT: Betty Jones,  
Betty Wallace,  
Jean, Doreen.

Quite a good example here of  
Betty Jones noting that the transcripts  
show the conversation to be following  
a logical pattern - & my attempt  
to show the connection between  
the kind of disorganized talk  
& the Readers planning

DOREEN: ... Susan's not here because she's going to take wee Susan to the doctor. And I don't know why Margaret's not here.

MOTHER: I didn't see Margaret this morning - no I havnae seen her this morning. I see her taking the children to school, but I havnae seen her this morning ...  
(remark about some houses having new panels fitted to bath) ...

DOREEN: How did you enjoy Monday - oh - you weren't there!

BETTY J: I was the only one that was there!

MOTHER: All my relations were (searching?) for a coffee morning; they thought it was in my house. Everybody came to the door! (laughter) ... my mammy's here and he's no' working and I couldnae leave for half an hour. If she'd been working she would have spoke to them.... teapots - we'd no teapot!

DOREEN: Well how did you find it, Betty?

BETTY J: I found it interesting. It really was; especially Alan with that camera! (laughter)

DOREEN: Yes, Alan with the camera. You'd be able to see how it worked. You must come up and see the display up, because we'll leave it up for a few weeks and if you like to just come up and have a wee look round the room and see the whole discussion groups and all the works we're doing with the different age groups. The display showed it quite well.

BETTY: It did, uh huh. They were all interested in it, you know, the ones that was there. It was really interesting - and you and I's up on the wall about half a dozen times. (laughter)

DOREEN: Yes. Were you not there that day when the man came to take the photographs, Jean? You were there? (Uh huh) Oh, well, you must be in that group. Certainly came and saw you on the videotape - you know the tape that shows us Kathy's workshop? You see you getting on with making the kite.

Well now, what about - to get back to last week's thing - what about the transcripts you've just been sitting reading for/

DOREEN(contd) for the last twenty minutes? Have you any responses to those?

BETTY J: Well, I think it's quite good, and it makes sense. If you actually know what you're talking about.

MOTHER: If you actually know ....  
If you remember what you're talking about ...

BETTY J: You know that you're no' just talking a lot of rubbish, I mean, when you read it, I mean, you really get carried away with it.

DOREEN: And you really see the pattern in it, can you? (Uh huh.)  
Oh, I'm glad to hear that, Betty, that you really feel that you're getting - you can see that we're really working on something, not just sitting gossiping.

BETTY J: No. I think it's - well you could say that - well, me, I come here every Wednesday; a lot of people'll say, "Och, that's a lot of nonsense." But when you actually read it after you've said it, you know, you can see that you've more less got a story attached to it, as you say.

DOREEN: That's good. What did you see, Betty? - Oh, I'd better tell that tape it's Betty Wallace I'm now talking to! (laughter)

BETTY W: Well I found that when you maybe forget what you were talking about, you can thingmy the notes - consult your notes - and then you would know what you were talking about.

DOREEN: Yes - I thought you were probably getting that particularly, Jean, because you've just come in this minute. You'd have a quick resume of what we've been on about - even the first page would give you that.

JEAN: It brings back your memory of what you were talking about last week.

DOREEN: Uh huh, but I think also there was more to it than just that memory work. I think that maybe the thing that maybe Betty Jones was saying just now was the feeling that you began to see that you were expressing ideas - your own growth of thought.. thinking ...

BETTY J: On what you were saying and what other people were saying. No, it wasnae just - what a group - you know; it tells you 'laughter' in it, but I mean, you can actually see that it's making sense. Somebody talks about something and then all of a sudden the group follows in and then they see the - what you're talking about - you know?

*of folly*

DOREEN: /

DOREEN:

Now, that's exactly what we're on about, this particular group, because what we're trying to do here is use this as leadership training. Why does that happen here? - and it doesn't necessarily happen when we're sitting with the same group of people over a cup of tea somewhere else? It happens because we, Kathy and I, are sitting there with a plan in our head of where we're trying to go, and so we're ready for picking up the situation. And that's what we're trying to offer you, that skill that, when you come in on a group, you should be able to wait for the moment when somebody offers you something that's in the line of what you're trying to look for, and pick it up, and we go on. Now you're saying, Betty, that you can see that's been happening there, and that's maybe the moment to pick up this step - how do you do that with people?

Well, I was going to suggest that we plan now how we'll do that next week, at an outing. You know that next week the children are off school? (Uh huh, that's right) .. and we've offered the people we're working with in the Tuesday night group and the Wednesday afternoon group - we've offered them an outing with their kids. Now if this NEWS group goes with them, and if we plan how we're going to move that outing on so that it's the kind of outing we had at the seashore, or any of those other outings that we've done - that something really comes of it, and that this time, you're in on that, sort of, 'inside' of it - 'Why was that seashore outing different from other seashore outings?' - you know - on that videotape we see you saying, Betty, 'Well it was different from other outings; they weren't just - the children don't ask you questions normally at the seashore - but they asked us questions.' Now, this group here, the three of us - four of us - should be able to plan: 'How do we get that kind of outing to happen the next time - next week?'

First of all, the place of the outing. We've worked out that we'd try and do something on leaves and trees.

MOTHER:

Do you know where to go? There's a big fossil house over in Victoria Park in Whiteinch.

DOREEN:

Uh huh, that's right. No - wait a minute - we've actually offered them the places to go and they haven't come up with *that one* someone - and I'm sorry about that, because you're quite right; that's something we should ...

MOTHER:

And the goldfish are about - this length!.

DOREEN:

Yes. Victoria Park is beautiful.

MOTHER:/

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MOTHER: It is beautiful.

DOREEN: And that fossil bit inside it is very interesting.

MOTHER: It is.

DOREEN: Well, I think that's something maybe we might do ourselves as a small group. We've now told the people who are doing the outings to choose the place and they've done their choosing. But I think we could perhaps, once we've done that, go back ourselves to a place we could run the minibus to - that Fossil Grove's no distance from here. (It is not!) .. And do it as a kind of discussion among ourselves: 'How would you lead people into talking about this, and this, and this?' So we'll hold the Fossil Grove for ourselves for later on, but at the moment they've chosen to go to Pollok Estate - it's a small group - this was chosen last night. The people who're going on the Thursday are only going - leaving here at half past one and are going to be back for half past four - that's on Thursday afternoon.

The other one is all day Wednesday and by 'all day' we mean leaving here about ten and being back about four, half past. Now, which of those could you go to?

MOTHER: It would have to be the Thursday one ...

OTHER: I start work at five.

DOREEN: You start work at five?

OTHER: Yes. I leave at about quarter past four to get the bus.

DOREEN: Uh huh. Well, what about coming to one that would definitely be back by that time - we'll just cut our coat according to our cloth ...

MOTHER: You see, (they all go to dinner??) on Wednesday.

DOREEN: So you could only do the Thursday.

MOTHER: I could only make the Thursday.

DOREEN: Your children would go with you. It's a holiday, you see; it's a school holiday - that's why we were suggesting Thursday(?) this day(?)

MOTHER: Of course some are older, you know, and I've got the girl that works in the supermarket, she comes in for dinner, and they're no' ones that would do it theirself.

DOREEN: No. So you would do the Thursday.

MOTHER: /

MOTHER: It would have to be the Thursday one.

DOREEN: Now the Wednesday people are going further than that. They're going to a place outside Helensburgh called Blairvadoch, which is a residential place. We thought we'd go and look at it; just see what that did for folk to see a residential site like this. I've not seen it actually myself yet, and they're going to put on a cup of tea. We'll take a picnic lunch and they're going to put on a cup of tea there for us; but we could easily say we're going to leave there at three instead of four if you could cope with that. What about you, Jean?

JEAN: It's all one to me.

DOREEN: So you could come the whole day one, the Wednesday one? (Uh huh). Right. Well how do you feel, then? Would you come that Wednesday one or would you rather do the Thursday one as well - or both?

JEAN: I'm trying to think.

DOREEN: Well, let's plan it at the minute and leave you some time to think through your home situations and what you could do. What we're trying to do now is to plan - How do we get people cued to particular areas of discussion? And we're not going to say what they're going to discuss, for example, I never thought of Pollok Estate, and when I said to those parents last night, 'an outing', I wasn't thinking of - 'We'll go to this place'. I knew that they would come up with something, or if they didn't I'd suggestions in my head to come up with. What I was trying to work towards was areas of idea and then leaving the people, within that idea, to settle the specific detail. Now that's what we're trying to do. We're going to say, we want people to start looking at variety of names because this helps them to <sup>cue</sup> (cue?) their children into noticing detail. Now that's the exercise. We're trying to get people to put things neatly in words, noting the detail, for example, if children begin to notice that that's got - that's actually seven separate leaflets, though they look together there - in the Horse Chestnut - and in the Sycamore it's five points. Well it takes the child ages to remember which of them is the seven and which is the five. They don't look a bit alike <sup>because</sup> because the numbers are quite big and you're teaching a five and a seven, they get all lost on that and it's one of those kind of things where it helps the child's mind to realise that there's a pattern - the leaves of trees have got patterns. Each tree you recognise because it's got different leaves and if you could know the pattern of a leaf you could say - 'I'm now looking at a Horse Chestnut'; 'I'm now looking at a Sycamore'; 'I'm now looking at a Beech.' It's not only teaching them about trees; it's teaching them that/

DOREEN(contd) that life has got a pattern and you understand things if you understand the pattern. So that's the kind of exercise we're doing and it doesn't really matter, within that, what they do. Now can we help to work out a kind of game situation - a process a bit like the seashore one or - what outing have you been on - you weren't at the seashore, Jean?

JEAN: I've not been on the outings.

DOREEN: That's right, because you were doing - what you were doing last year was planned stuff - was the puppet-making and the ?-making. Now that again had a lot of planned stuff and it was the same exercise as this tree-spotting thing. It was a thing of saying: 'Can you show children that you've got to put the right-hand top to the left-hand corner' - you had to get precise statements in order to produce a kite and this is the same kind of idea: can they get precision in what they are saying and can they begin to see if they can name a thing precisely and get a good grasp of it. Now, that's the exercise. Now how do we do it through an outing to trees? Have you any suggestions and I'll write them down?

MOTHER: Well, see how many different kinds of leaves they can gather.

*This shows the principle demonstrated at seashore / more than this being applied to trees*

DOREEN: So we do a .. can we turn it into a competition? Well, how many would you suggest? We mustn't make it too hard - and here's another problem. These booklets show you the main varieties. But there'll be half a dozen types of that, you know. There'll be a whole lot - I mean that's called a Sycamore, but actually the Maple leaf is the same as it, only smaller. So you go on with this kind of problem in it, that we don't want to get into all that, because we don't have to be high-class botanists to be able to do it. We want to make it reasonably simple, so that it's just the big, wide, groups, for example, Fir: I keep meaning to learn that. I can't tell a Fir from a Spruce from a - you know - they're all Christmas trees - but in fact there's about twenty different kinds.

MOTHER: That's right. There is.

DOREEN: If they come and say .. if you start making it too many pieces by bringing in six different kinds of fir tree, I don't know about you, but I won't be able to ... (laughter)

MOTHER: (Betty W) Well the only way that you can tell the difference is get them to try and get the seed as well; the likes of the Beech; the cones, you know -

DOREEN: /

DOREEN: Yes. Can you tell one cone from another - see - there's two separate cones there, aren't they? (Yes.) Well I don't know one of those from the other. Do you?

BETTY W: That one's the Scotch Fir and that is the - that is the Douglas Fir and that's one of the foreign ones.

DOREEN: Yes. Well I would be lost on that, you know -

MOTHER: *Betty* Aye, me - I'm no' too thingmy ...

BETTY W: You see, I belong to the country, so I know (laughing) ..

DOREEN: Well ~~wouldn't~~ <sup>we're going to</sup> have to make it so that we're going to say to them - 'A cone' aren't we? And it doesn't really matter whether it's a Spruce cone or a Fir cone - it's a cone! And if they've brought a cone, they've made it ... the same with a number of leaves, perhaps; if we ask them to do something very different. Now can we find a process - at the seashore we said 'the roughest shell, the largest shell, the smallest shell' - they were quite simple divisions.

BETTY J: And what like will the leaves be at this time of the year, but?

DOREEN: Well there are a lot on the ground, aren't there? There's all those fallen leaves ...

BETTY J: Different colours the now, you know, how you can get maybe in the autumn a (rusty? twisty?) one.

DOREEN: Oh, uh huh, different colours, maybe.

BETTY J: Brown, reddy brown.....

DOREEN: That would be quite interesting to do colour as well as shape; again it gives you another way of identifying objects. If we say - that's identified by colour; that's identified by shape. So colour would be: ask them for a green, and a brown, maybe a red?

JEAN: They're kind of hard to find.

BETTY J: No' the mauve? No?

DOREEN: Some of the red would be almost going towards mauve - if we just look among the reds. - And a yellow. They'll have great arguments, actually, as to which they are, because a leaf turns yellow at one end and brown at the other (That's right!) .. we'll see. So that's four colours. Well, let's not name the colours. Let them name the colours. 'What colours of leaves?' and then let them maybe play around .. uh huh, let them/

DOIDOREEN(contd) them worry about colour. If we name it all, we'd done the work. (That's right!) So it would be better if say, 'Four different colours.'

BETTY W: Four leaves with colours in them - and then tell them - ask them to describe the colour.

DOREEN: Yes. And then they'd spend their time saying - 'are those two different colours or are they the same colour' - and it makes them think about colour.

Now, what about shape? I think we might get five. Five shapes of leaves? You know, when you think of an oak leaf - I've got lots of pictures of stuff here.

BETTY W: There's the oak, and the ash, the elm,

DOREEN: Yes. So that would give us a number of possible ones but things like the elm - the elm and the beech and the lime are all too alike for the child who doesn't know the difference. (That's right!) .. you know - I know an elm is much rougher and a lime is very much softer, but they're not going to see them the way we see these kind of differences; you know, that's an oak leaf. Now if we took that kind of picture with us and, you know, ...(give them a rough idea of what they were looking for?) .. Uh huh. 'Now, can you find that?'

BETTY Just something the same as we did at the seaside?

DOREEN: Right! I think that would work very well, wouldn't it?

JEAN: It would.

DOREEN: And if we try and find - we could do one on berries as well. We could do one on fruits. We could try and get the wee ones talking about the beech nut just now - we could try and find acorns, we could try and find brambles. We should have to come in our oldest clothes! Get them ripped to pieces! .. Rose hips - somebody was just saying last night, but I'd forgotten about rose hips. Remember we used to break rose hips and put them down people's - the back of people's necks?

BETTY J: That's right, uh huh ....

BETTY W: We used to collect them for the school - pick them for the schools, you know -

DOREEN: Yes - to make rose hip syrup. (That's right!) .. We had - we collected them last week just for a decoration, and I'd long forgotten .. (laughter) .. there were other things you could do with the decoration .. you could annoy folk with it. But if we took a series of these pictures, then, maybe get Tommy once more to do us a drawing of each kind of leaf, and see/

DOREEN:(contd) see if they can find one in each of the main obvious types, and so, see who can find five different leaves. They were complete because at this time of the year the leaves are apt to be broken - you know - fallen on the floor and the bits come off them.

BETTY J: Could you no' give the children maybe a bit of paper and let them draw a leaf?

DOREEN: Oh, great!

BETTY J: You know, with the name on it, see if you know what leaf it is?

DOREEN: So we should take paper with us. Let's get this thing - this is the kind of thing in our plan, you see, paper and pencil with us. And we could put the leaf down.

BETTY J: And draw round it, uh huh.

DOREEN: And see if we can make a pattern from that, and we could put that on the wall just as we could put the leaves on the wall, really - we could put a drawing of the leaves up, you know .. So they've to find different leaves and they've to draw ... Now, some of this we're going to just keep, without competition - just put their name on it and put it up, so that everybody wins. You've got to be careful about this - that within the situation everybody gets some success, because it's success that makes us cope. We really - you know - nobody wants to go back to a situation where they felt a failure. (That's right!) I mean, everybody's got to get some kind of success. And yet the fun of the competition: can we think of how we would shape the competition so that they don't feel too isolated .. that one at the seashore had some interesting ideas in it that helped people to feel secure in it. Each child wasn't having to do the competition by themselves. We did it in family groups, did we?

BETTY J: We did. Aye, there were so many, you know.

DOREEN: So the whole family was trying to find the thing - and it meant you weren't isolated. Do you remember last week we did our own exercise here-on purpose we isolated Margaret and Susan - it's interesting that none of them's here this week! (laughter) Now I'm sure they've not consciously made any connection with that, but that is very interesting - that they are in fact the people who are missing. (That's right!) Wait till they hear that, when they read the transcript! (laughter) No - you see that's exactly what happens in an ordinary group - that you do a piece of work and everybody else was successful and we question them on theirs and they didn't/

DOREEN: contd didn't have either Kathy or myself working with them - and they're not here! Now - Susan actually told me this morning she was taking wee Susan to (?) but that's the kind of thing that happens in any group - that the people who didn't get anything out of it aren't back - and we're going to watch for that, so we've got to watch it in this competition that we make it so that the whole family works as a team, because they get - the child gets success within his family group then. (That's right, uh huh) .. even if he doesn't get public success; he has brought a pink leaf or something other that somebody else hasn't found, and the fact that as a team they didn't happen to win isn't so bad, because within his team he produced something that was good.

What kind of things can we give as prizes that are so small that again they don't raise that group above their fellows too much?

BETTY J: Could you no' get a book on the subject that they're on, just for a prize?

DOREEN: Oh, that'd be great!

BETTY J: You know, if they picked the leaves, maybe a book about leaves; trees, or something kind of ...

DOREEN: But that would have to be a kind of 'one overall prize', you know, for the final. I was thinking of a prize for each of these little areas - unless of course - we might manage to produce a book almost for each family that goes. You know, we have to have the prize. For the last one, what did we give them? (Smarties?) .. You know, it was something terribly tiny.

BETTY J: But what I mean, if you gave them a book, something that they can keep, they can always go back on that, maybe to another child, or something like that.

DOREEN: And it might get them going more during the winter to parks and things, looking at stuff.

BETTY J: Interested in these kind of things.

DOREEN: Now I wonder what these books cost? It would be this size of book we'd be dishing out, wouldn't it? - Macdonald Starters are better than those, in fact.

MOTHER: These are twenty-four pence.

DOREEN: These are the nature books: Macdonald Starters - Book of Trees - which would be the kind of book ... I would pick the dearer one - fifty-five pence - but Ladybird is in fact not as good as this - These Macdonald Starters, they cause you to work; Ladybird do the work for you. They're very enjoyable for a child, because they/

DOREEN(contd)they don't have to do anything - Ladybird says it all; but this one actually makes you think; you know, the Macdonald Starters are really what they say they are - Starters. And they make you go on from there. So - where could I go during this .... producing a book like that - or producing - even if all we can manage to give them is something much smaller than that, like a nature magazine?

BETTY J: Even a book you can paint in, you know, with a wee set of paints - they're no' that dear either.

DOREEN: No, they're not dear at all, those painting books .... painting books with nature pictures ...

BETTY J: Let them colour the leaves or something like that, you know, if you can get a book on leaves ...

DOREEN: I wonder. We'll try and get Kate in on that and see how our money(?) goes in the bookshops and the library - because it's next week we're on about - you know - we've not got much time. Painting books are certainly more in the price range.

Right. So we've got prizes of painting books - and we might get prizes of painting brushes then, or a set of crayons - to start somebody else off - you know - the next prize - your family can get a box of crayons and draw your own stuff with them. We would then have to try and have almost a prize per family, so that in the end every family would come home saying, 'Oh, we won it for leaves; we won it for colour, and we won it for plants or fruits' - now, that's only three things we've got at the minute. We could do the drawing of the leaves. We're going to do one for fruits, aren't we? Like acorns and ..

BETTY W: Brambles, rose hips...

DOREEN: Oh, and somebody last night suggested - almost the same thing as we'd done with the shells: doing patterns with them, bringing home some ... (That's right, aye) ... you know, the little cups that the acorn sits in, or the hazelnut sits in, and painting them, and using them for Christmas decorations.

BETTY W: You're away behind! We used to do that ourselves. What we used to do was with clear nail varnish and the glitter - you know, dip it in - mix a lot of glitter together - silver, pink,

BETTY J: whatever, uh huh, red and that, and just dip it in and let it dry - it comes up nice.

DOREEN: Beautiful - that sounds lovely. I was just thinking of spray paint ... So, we could do decorations with them. (Uh huh). Now that would give us time to notice which family hadn't won. You/

DOREEN(contd) You know, if people were saying - were you given that (?) at the time? - then you're left with saying, 'Well now, next week, bring your decorations'; and we would have time to say, 'Now - which families came with us? Who took all the prizes? Who didn't? Now what can we offer prizes for in the decoration line that would let the other families come in - so that the children would go home saying: we won it for ... whatever.'

BETTY: Biggest and smallest leaf, same as you did with the shells?

DOREEN: Yes, we could well do that. We could try and get a tiny leaf and a great big leaf, which would also make them look at - what is a leaf? - because some of these things are separate leaves and some of them are one leaf with separate pieces to them. Now that makes them look at that process of - 'How do you say that's ~~ix~~ a leaf and how do you say that's a separate leaf?'

BETTY: You could ...(?)... and see what time - what time of the year do you get this? - you know in summer and winter - things like that.

DOREEN: Yes. They could be looking at the difference in the leaves.

BETTY: If they could find they kind of leaves, right enough, I mean, they might make it wither - you know, with the rain - you don't know what the rain can dae with this weather we've been having - what reaction it took on the tree or something like that.

DOREEN: That's very much what we could be doing - the business of finding a winter tree - a tree that's going to winter - a tree that loses .. in the winter.

BETTY W: Well that's quite easy. But you don't want to gie them awful hard ones - the likes of me, I'm no' used to (Doreen: The country?) No - I mean, I'm the same as - I can maybe tell maybe a shape but I couldnae tell you the name of the tree, but I could maybe if you were describing it - the likes of you, you know the names of the trees, say for instance, but the likes of if you were taking me, I could gie' you the colour - this is what they're on with the children.

DOREEN: Yes. You're right, Betty. Children have got to have success first of all. They've got to be able to say 'I can do the thing in colour' - so that I can feel free to learn this thing on leaves. If <sup>they</sup> had nothing they could do themselves - they wouldn't want to know.

BETTY: You'd have to ask - like - this is what - October? (Uh huh) This is into autumn, isn't it? You'd have to actually describe it to them.

BETTY W:/

*Betty Jones on trees to a city child  
- leaves brought in  
teacher in school  
- no trees*

BETTY J: That's right; you've got the summer and you've got the winter and you've got - the only thing I know about a tree is it changes its leaves. You know, maybe every month or something like that - I mean, I'm only going back to - my mind's going back to when I was at school, in fact. But I mean I never actually look at a tree and say - the reason how I know it I mean, is going back to school.

DOREEN: You mean you've never actually watched a tree through its seasons?

BETTY: No. I've never actually seen a tree getting planted and then growing up. The likes of the ones in the back court the now, they take your mind, as you say. What makes you - you know - you've got a feeling - you get up every morning and you see the colours changing. Well they were planted away in November last year - November last year and then when the summer came, you seen all the different colours coming out in them.

DOREEN: And was that in fact the first time you had really watched that, in a sense?

BETTY: Aye.

DOREEN: That's really great.

BETTY: But I've never actually seen - when I came from Eglinton Toll, it's all tenement buildings. Queens Park's my nearest park.

OTHER: Two different trees they've got planted, as well - you know - the leaves go out quite a bit; in the other one they just come up.

BETTY: And then when we got education on trees in school it was maybe the teacher herself that brought it because maybe she came from the country; she travelled in, and she brought this - maybe three or four leaves - so this is how we got out subject; but we werenae taken like on these outings that youse are giving us the now. We never had these opportunities. We never ...

DOREEN: uh huh - that's I suppose - you're expressing, Betty, what we're absolutely on about - that the kids go out and do this themselves and they'll never forget it. And they'll watch it, and of course now they're planting trees round the district - the tree in the district will mean something to them. We should really be writing to the Corporation and asking them to give us a list of the names of the trees that are planted here, because that should be what the kids are saying: 'What are those trees?'

BETTY: /



*Beautiful piece  
for Betty Jones  
on what to do  
outside looks like  
destructive behavior  
- a stuffed bird  
as opposed to  
Zoo visits*

**BETTY:** There's some lovely colours in they trees. There's one on the edge of the flat there and in the summer it comes up pure pink. (That's right!) .. I mean there's shocking pink - it's no' just a pink, it's a shocking pink. And I mean it's away on the other side of the street, but I can see it from my window, you know, it's like a corner, and it just catches your eye as soon as you get up ...

**JEAN:** That's at our close, next to the garden, there's a wee bit with a tree on it. There's lovely pink flowers grow on that bit, if the kids would leave them.

**BETTY(?)** You see two or three and then the next minute you look, they've disappeared somehow.

**DOREEN:** But the children will eventually leave them, won't they? You know, they'll eventually get used to them being there.

**BETTY:** That's right. See it's just like, if you're in the country, a tree - you've got the trees round about you all the time, so it's no novelty to you. But if you get them here and maybe you see a wee pink flower, it's an instinct that's in you. You'll go up and you'll pluck that, and you'll look right into the root of it; you'll get it and you'll thingmae it and then you'll see - you know you'll go and (it'll just break away?) - I mean I've done that myself going to the park when I was wee, maybe a buttercup, picking up a buttercup and just actually taking the leaves and then there were wee bits growing out of I mean, you were actually looking to see (How it worked?) - there were a green stem and then this yellow. Well I used to think, 'How did that come yellow?' And I was looking to see if I could find this thing for to - there was never a bit, because it just gave you your stem, because everything else all broke off - it had already been blown, right enough.

**JEAN:** We used to dae something like that in the residential schools where it was usually wildlife, you know, birds and that - (they'd) take you oot to see the birds and you'd to remember how many birds you seen, how many different kinds and you'd come back and draw them.

**BETTY:** No I never got that.

**JEAN:** Colour them in - aye, I used to get it.

**DOREEN:** Well, that is another thing - there will be birds there and there will be animals.

**BETTY:** Stuffed birds, I remember getting stuffed birds .. a stuffed bird, you know, but no' going away, actually, as I say, the way - we've been to the zoo with the children, you know. Or if you got maybe the circus - I never ever got anything like that/

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BETTY (contd) that either at school.

DOREEN: Well the children are certainly going to get a great opportunity - they're still - you can see there is going to be a bit more from your taking them out. Once we've planned these things we'll have patterns for ourselves as well as for the whole neighbourhood.

BETTY: J: That's what I'm saying; it's more interesting. If you've got, as you say, this house, for a start in the scheme, they should take the advantage of it because I mean it's not only for a gossip - it's the interest of your child's. I can see the difference - I mean, I never got away to the zoo or an outing to the seashore when I was young and, as I say, I couldnae tell you a tree. A tree to me's just a tree; whereas if they get this, they actually know what they're looking for, and then they can, the likes of, as you say, they always talk about the country - somebody that comes from the country is very educated - you know - more brainier than other ones - than maybe the one from the city is. But it's just because, if you took somebody from the country into the city and you started talking about maybe towns and things like that, smoking chimneys and the boats and all they (Doreen: They wouldn't know that!) They cannae tell you that. So it's just like, I mean, it's just the way you've been brought. If you're no' going to get taught it, you'll no' know it.

DOREEN: Well that seems to me that in that area you've said a whole lot that belongs to this whole situation of taking these kids out, then, into the country and making sure they know this information about the country. But as well as information, we're on to this thing of not going to make judgements, choices, and this is the other side of it; there's not just information, there's the whole business of - can they talk? Can they talk about it? Can they hand on their information to other people? Can they cope with another group having won the competition? You see, there's a whole lot of other - the kind of things we were doing last week, the feelings that go on underneath the situation. Now, can we talk for a minute about that, how we're going to - how we as leaders in this are going to work with the family groups when a group is not winning - this is where our job's going to be - though you've your own children with you as well, your job is not just as a member now of this group, but as a leader in it, and you're going to have to be looking round and watching a group that are maybe not very sure of what's going on - haven't seen - as you said earlier 'Well at least we can do the colour bit' - they're just sort of saying 'I don't know anything about this.' Maybe a mother who doesn't like to say, 'I don't know' - you know how we all started - we had to start thinking about this fact - how do you show your child/

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DOREEN(contd)child if you don't know - if you're going to grow with them?  
We discovered it's actually quite easy, quite enjoyable!

BETTY: If you're there, and you see a person like that, that's the reason why we're here; we've to go over and express - you know - just say they've got four leaves, and maybe they don't know the name of the leaf, so you actually say to them.

DOREEN: 'Well, here's the book on it' - I think that's the line we could (use) with these parents who haven't been with us very long. Most of these parents have only been twice up here at all, so they haven't really had that kind of background that we did for the shell thing for anybody else and if you could be going to them and saying, 'Oh, those are nice - but I don't know all those names.' Now you were particularly useful Betty, and Jean on this piece - if we could just leave Betty Wallace out for a minute - because you would be able to say to them - 'Well, I don't know those leaves either - where can we get a book on it?' - you know; but you see, you could get the mothers such a lead there on how you cope, because you're not going to walk and say 'Now that's Sycamore - and that's something else - and why haven't you got a Beech?' you know .. but, if you're going to say, 'Well, do you think that's that one you've got there?' You know, you're going to have the same problem as they've got, except that you're going to know how to search for it. And this is what they say, that one of the things we teach nowadays is learning how to learn - you don't just hand them information; you teach them how to learn, how to find information, and if you can guide like that - if you've got a hold of these books and had a look at them beforehand, so that you've got some rough notion of what's what - where you might find it - or be able to say, 'Well, I can't find it in any of those books - we'll maybe make a note and we'll ask Ann to get us a book on ..' - whatever it is - someone last night said they'd love to know the difference between a toadstool and a mushroom and we sent the child that was with that person in to ask - 'Go and ask Alice to - for a book, would she get us a book on mushrooms and toadstools. Now he came back saying she hadn't got one. He didn't know this process by which he should have been saying, 'Will you put it on your request list?' - and she would ask for it at the library. Now, he learned a whole lot last night, not about mushrooms at all - but he'll know that again - but he learned about how to use the library. And that's the kind of thing you could be helping them do. 'Well this is - if you haven't got the information here, there's another source, the library group; they'll get you a book on it.' And so, if they've not learned anything about the trees, they've learned something about using resources like a library.

Now I would have said the same, Betty (to Betty Wallace ..) since you know so much about it, you know, you're really able to/

DOREEN(contd) to lead them on; I think you'd probably find more individual children than the parents who want to know beyond what we ask in the competition: So they've got their five leaves and they got them awful quickly, and he's now saying 'Well, what do I do now?' It's that sort of child - you could get a wee group and take them further and further into the subject, because what we usually try to do in a teaching situation - if the teaching situation's going to work well, you make the target reasonably low for everyone to reach, so that it's possible for everyone - everybody can collect five different leaves even if they don't know what they're about. Everyone can find four different colours. So everyone can get that much success and then you take the people individually - how much deeper can they go into that? And if you do the depth situation and you two do the wide one, helping them to get there and find the sources, then we've all got something, you know, we can offer.

Now, what about looking through the material now while I go make the tea and see what material you would use yourself; which of this you'd actually like to be carrying around with you. There are books and pictures, and that's a set, all inside that folder, about forests. So can I leave you to look through that - preparing your lessons! for the session.

BETTY W: This is the one - we really should have this autumn one.

BETTY J: Aye, and there's something on the - what month it is, you know, in the year.

(Group studying literature etc.)

BETTY W: Well, actually I think these ones would be the best, these wee - (Aye) - British trees - How to Recognize British Trees - because they've actually got the detail of the seed as well as the leaf.

BETTY J: Aye, it's taking you actually from the start of it.

BETTY W: Uh huh. I mean, it's telling you what to look for.

BETTY J: Showing the shapes.

BETTY W: And the different kinds, uh huh. I think there's another two or three here somewhere - wait till we see.....

(looking at books again)

... have you got them there?

BETTY J: I don't know - this is all Forest, and History ..

BETTY W: I thought there were a few more, but the likes of these would be the best, these leaflets.

BETTY J: /

Wednesday p.m. 12th October 1977

T 78.

*This makes a good Shapelle quote*

*not much of use in rest of paper*

PRESENT: Ann Ainsbury,  
Mary McSherry,  
Alice Meikle,  
Doreen.

DOREEN:

We have just gone through the list of all the people who should be here, and aren't here, but we think are coming on Wednesday, on the outing. The people who are not here and need to be visited because they said they were coming on the outing are Mrs. Kerr, Pat Curry and Mrs. Armstrong and I can't remember the other one's name; you know the one that's on the video with the psychologist - Mrs. Mac-something, that lives in Broomloan Road, well, she was coming as well.

We were starting to say how you feel when you're not good at something. You either say ... (?)... or you don't try it at all.

*clearly reflects*

ANN:

You say, 'I'll just sit here and I'll no' say nothing.' And if you just listen, you learn sometimes - is that no' right?

DOREEN:

You learn a lot listening. But you don't learn the skill just by listening to somebody else; any more than if I can't knit, I'll never learn to knit watching somebody else knit. You've really got to do it. And this is what lan uage skills are like. This is what we're trying to get the children to do; we're trying to get them to work with us, talk with us.

ANN:

So that when they grow up they'll no' feel like we feel.

DOREEN:

Right! They won't have this embarrassment.

MARY:

I ... (?)... it must be through coming here, because I really don't bother with many people where I am, and I never really spoke to many people, Alice - sure I didn't? And yet since I've come up here, I think I could tackle talking to anybody; maybe no' speaking to them in the right way, but I wouldn't be embarrassed to talk to anybody.

DOREEN:

Yes; because I suppose, well for one thing, we all make mistakes and it's not important - I think that's one of the biggest things to learn ...

ANN:

*staying*

You're better speaking to somebody and then talking to you as silent - even if you put your foot in it, is that what you're saying?

DOREEN:

Those transcripts, when we first saw them - you know, the written form of that tape - I couldn't believe that I didn't talk in sentences! I would begin a sentence and then wander on to something else - and you know ...

MARY: /

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MARY: It must be even worse for us then!

ANN: ... fall away - you cannae concentrate the same for so long.

DOREEN: Probably you start on something and you suddenly remember something else .. before you could finish that idea - you should have put in some other points. And you know - so, too bad! - that's me. But there's something useful in what you're doing.

ANN: And you find if somebody's a good talker, you just - even if you could talk - I know a lot of people are good at talking and they know what they're talking about, but they shut up, because that person's better than I am.' I mean, they let this person carry it, don't they? I mean, you let anybody ...

DOREEN: Well, you see, I think you do that very much, Ann. (Ann: Aye.) And it's a great pity, because you've got .....

(discussion about worsening weather: Doreen volunteers to take Mary in minibus to rescue washing from line' . I think!)

(dur: 1'30" approx)

DOREEN: We were just talking, actually, about Kathy's English class. Now I know you've got bother with your eyesight and might not want to do it, but Alice and Robert are just going to begin going to Kathy's English class now.

ANN: That's Tuesday afternoon at half past one?

DOREEN: Now, I wonder if you'd be interested?

ANN: Could I listen to them, or what?

DOREEN: Uh huh, you could come in .. because that - these are people who are thinking they might do 'O' Level English at some stage and they want to see what their skills are like - their English skills.

ANN: (to Alice) Are you starting it?

ALICE: I've just started it.

ANN: Oh well, I'll come along.

DOREEN: Next Tuesday's the holiday week, of course. Not next Tuesday. A week after.

ANN: Oh aye. Even if I listen, will I learn something?

DOREEN: Well .. Alice might - I mean Kathy might be having it next Tuesday; she's going to be working next week, so possibly it will be next Tuesday, and only .. that's why Kathy's off this week; she's going to be here next week. So you could go along next/

DOREEN(contd) next week and listen and see what you think.

ANN: I think I will.

DOREEN: ..because this is a way that you really would see if you could get that qualification. And if you got it, you would know you had something. Where you keep thinking 'Maybe I can't do things' - well, it would be nice to know - to know what you could do. If you go along and listen, because I don't think you'd have any problems.

ALICE: .... I believe it would help you, to find out if you've got any English intelligence ...

DOREEN: Ability!

ANN: I know..... I want to answer.

DOREEN: But all these things are skills, the things you ...

ANN: But even if I don't have anything, you must be listening and learning something.

DOREEN: Well that would be great, then, if you would like to join that. And Mary goes to it as well.

ALICE: Mary goes, and John Sweeney, Jean Campbell and Teresa Sweeney.

DOREEN: So that's four - so that would be seven. And Kathy's been doing it.

ANN: Are we doing writing down?

ALICE: Some of it's writing down.

DOREEN: Just wait and see. Go along and see what you think. I know that your eyesight's a problem to you and that you might find some of it difficult because of your sight, but you can go and try, and make up your own mind. I don't think you'd have any problem about being able to do it, but your problem might be whether it was hurting you to do it.

Well, now having settled that, let's get back on about next week. If we've got this outing, the object is to get the children to think. And to get them to think and to use their intelligence, they need things to think about. What we usually try and do in a situation like this is to look at one level of work that's reasonably easy for them, so that they can all get some success, and then see how much further they can go, so if we do competitions and things, they'll all be a reasonably low level, so that everybody can win the competition - part of the competition and then, once we've started on it for that reason, they see their success, they'll find something that interests/

DOREEN(contd) interests them more than another. Now last night we had a wee group here and we were planning this outing and - I'm no' going to tell you their plans till I've heard yours! then we'll put the two lots together. But they were talking of the kind of things - would you like to look at these books? - the kind of things that they might look for if we go to Blairvadoch.

(group studying books)

ANN: Well the first thing is leaves kids pick up in the autumn - you know - the colours, don't they?

DOREEN: So we could do something on colours?

ANN: They lift up the leaves and they say ...

ALICE: They actually see the difference in the .. the change in the weather, and how it's coming on to ...

ANN: Aye, but they like to keep it; they lift it up and say, 'Look at that - going to keep that, mammy?' And my wee grand-daughter - oh, and I've got leaves an' that, and I say, 'I wish I could explain exactly what tree that's off, but ...' And I'll say, 'Oh, that's a leaf, hen, there's sometimes half of it's read, the leaf, and half of it's green.' .. Is this with the sun no' getting it?

ALICE: You can explain with the changing of the weather; it's the winter and the spring an' that.

ANN: But the one leaf's got this different colour. How did it?

DOREEN: You can take the book on that. Some of these books you can borrow on that.

ANN: The colours are definitely different.

DOREEN: What really is happening is it's dying. Half the leaf is dying.

ALICE: Is that what it is? The one at the bottom - it's more a kind of reddy. I used to say it was something like the maple leaf.

DOREEN: Yes, but that's the whole tree. I think Ann's talking about the fact that as it begins to wither, one end of it ...

ANN: I didnae know it was withering.

DOREEN: Some of them are a red colour ....

ALICE: You can actually see them ....

ANN: /

ANN: ...kids in the park, I mean ... (indistinct) they're really maybe deeper but you just cut them off like that.

DOREEN: Teresa went with her mother. Did you no' hear Mary shouting - 'I've got Teresa with me?'  
(I think this refer to Mary's exit to take in washing??)  
Mothers looking at illustrations of leaves.

ANN: is that actually withering? All that round there?

DOREEN: That's right - it's the beginning of the sap stopping to run into it.

ANN: Oh well, I cannae say what you said 'sap stopped - stopped running into it.'

DOREEN: That's right because the tree is pulling up from its roots - pulling the liquid up. And when there's not much food coming up to it it seals off the ends of its own branches, and just leaves the leaves kind of helpless .. so the food isn't going out to it .. and if it does that, the colour changes, and really it's finished, dying. But some of them have beautiful colours.

ANN: Sometimes there's real red ones.

DOREEN: We could ask them to collect colours - different colours of leaves, couldn't we? - just as an easy thing, and that would get them starting to say why they were different colours. What was that word you were saying there? You said just now a great big word.

ALICE: ...that I couldnae even read! ... 'What is meant by the term: carboniferous?'

DOREEN: Carboniferous - like the fossil grove. The fossil grove's a carboniferous forest.

ANN: Have you been to that Whiteinch Park .....

oh, I've been with Joanne.

DOREEN: (to Alice?) You haven't been to it? You really must go. You know Victoria Park, well in Victoria Park there's a shed covering in what was once - the miners were digging - away about 1890 they were digging.

ANN: I know. We bought the wee book.

DOREEN: It wasn't really a mine it was a - what do you call the place where you pull out stones - you know - a quarry. And they saw that some of the stones - they dug up the one thing they/

DOREEN(contd) they were looking for - a particular kind of stone - and there was other stuff .. trees beside them .. and they stopped and said 'these are ancient trees - before man was created' - I mean, long before the creation of man - the very early stages of the world; these trees have been in this place - they had been swamped with water ...

(Re-enter Mary McS)

... just talking about the Fossil Grove and how it was made. Have you ever been to the Fossil Grove in Victoria Park? - a place called the Fossil Grove. It's covered in now - it's got a big pavilion. But what happened was that millions of years ago, trees were growing there, before man was created, and there were these swamps came in and covered over and then the sea came in - you know, this land, Britain, was covered with water with just the mountain peaks stuck up like islands and the weight of the sea pressing on this was really what shaped it - the sand and the mud that gathered went into the inside of the tree - you know, the tree became hollow eventually and the sand and the mud went in and the hollow tree was a kind of mould for it and the sand and the mud strengthened into sandstone - it was squashed and turned to stone over millions of years and the tree eventually withered away over the ages but the sand and the mud are the shape of the tree now, so there it sits with the trunk, and the shape of the bark, and all the rest of it, but it's really stone. And this would be a tree that had fossilized.

MARY: Where is this again?

DOREEN: In Victoria Park .. it's really great. There's two kinds of fossils. You can either get that kind that's really stone that use something else as its mould or you get the thing itself, and that's this carboniferous stuff. They've actually turned into fossils and become hard as stone but it really started off as something else. Shells very often did that. That tells you all about it at the bottom.

MARY: Are they doing something in school just now?

DOREEN: I don't know.

MARY: Because Charles came home the other day and said 'I've to bring four different leaves.' Colours, you know, and I wondered if it was anything to do with you or ..

DOREEN: No. I think that's usual school stuff.

MARY: Even more ... (indistinct) .. then .. he went to school as well.

DOREEN: Well that would be good if we could do this ourselves first of all. If we take stuff and look at ...

ALICE:/

# Learning Relations

DOREEN GRANT

VOLUME 3

PART 2

1. 'Benchmark' Documents
2. 'Reflections'

Thesis submitted for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Education  
Faculty of Social Science  
University of Glasgow

September 1987

'BENCHMARK' DOCUMENTS

- 01 November 1968
- 02 September 1974
- 03 September–November 1974
- 04 9 December 1975
- 05 December 1975
- 06 1975/6
- 07 4 February 1976
- 08 31 May 1976
- 09 1977
- 10 1977
- 11 May 1977
- 12 June 1977
- 13 July 1977
- 14 January 1978
- 15 August 1978
- 16 5 March 1978
- 17 March 1978
- 18 30 May 1978
- 19 October 1978
- 20 30 November 1978
- 21 December 1978
- 21a January 1979
- 22 19 January 1979
- 23 27/28 January 1979

24 1 March 1979  
25 1 May 1979  
26 May 1979  
27 March 1979  
28 Autumn 1980  
29 1980  
30 30 March 1981  
31 16 June 1981  
32 June 1981  
33 1982  
34 1982  
35 June 1982  
36 17 June 1982  
37 18 October 1982  
38 14 January 1983  
39 January 1983  
40 March 1983  
41 June 1983  
42 25 August 1983  
43 August 1983  
44 n.d. 1984  
45 n.d. 1984  
46 n.d. 1986

# "Benchmark" Documents.

## INTRODUCTION

These papers are a kaleidoscope of records over a very long period, 1968-86. They begin with a brochure from the Liverpool School where, as headteacher, I became uncomfortably aware of underachievement, despite great school effort. They end with the draft of some chapters for a future book on theory in practice based on the Partnership in Education Project in Priesthill, Glasgow.

The papers between these two major benchmarks range from small documents of one or two pages which had major effects on the work, either internally or externally, to larger formal attempts to document a stage reached.

**B199**

All Hallows Secondary School  
For Girls  
SPEKE



“PROFILE OF A SCHOOL”

*Highlights of the year 1967-68*

Wednesday, 6th November, 1968

# *Programme*

## ‘THE YEAR BEGINS’

The thoughts of pupils expressed in Dance

Chairman’s Remarks

Very Reverend Dean Montgomery, P.P.

## THE AIM OF EDUCATION — AS WE SEE IT

Miss P. M. Mullin — Deputy Head

### *Christmas Term*

#### ‘GIVING AND LIVING’

Pupils recount their experiences of  
Christian Service in scene and song

---

Duke of Edinburgh Silver Awards

### *Spring Term*

#### PROGRESS REPORT

Academic Education in Classes and Courses

---

Special Subject Awards

Summer Term

**' TEAMS AND TROPHIES '**

Athletics, Netball and Swimming, House Awards

**' EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE '**

Slides and stage presentation of end of year integrated courses

Presentation of G.C.E., C.S.E., and R.S.A. Certificates

**GUEST SPEAKER**

Miss A. E. Dufton, B.A., Head of Sociology Department  
Edge Hill College of Education

**THE EDUCATED GIRL — AS WE SEE HER**

Sister Peter, S.N.D.  
( Sister Doreen Grant )

Presentation of Head Girl's Award

Presentation of Courtesy Cup

4

*In these pages an attempt is made to express some of the educational opportunities open to girls today*

## PORTRAIT OF A PUPIL

Anita, Head Girl 1967-68, illustrates some useful learning situations.



### WORK EXPERIENCE

The opportunity of a trial period of work in the career she hopes to follow can be very rewarding for a pupil. As well as the possibility of basing her final choice on a little experience, there is the chance to see the relationship between subjects studied in school and the career in question. This insight may also provide an incentive for the academic demands of the classroom.

### EXPRESSING A POINT OF VIEW

Discussions are planned to stimulate thought, clarify ideas and help pupils to assess their beliefs and ideals. They also help to develop social qualities and encourage an ease in communication.

### ADVENTURE IN ANOTHER WORLD

Residential Courses encourage personal initiative and confidence as well as fostering a sense of community. This can be a helpful preparation for a young person about to be confronted with a working situation in office, shop or hospital.



### WITHIN THE SCHOOL

A school programme tries to balance academic lessons, cultural activities and practical skills. These photographs give a glimpse of the variety offered in this school.

### STUDY IN SCIENCE

Pre-nursing students specialise in Biology, Chemistry and Health Education. Other students follow a Commercial Course and work equally hard at Office skills as well as Commerce and Social Science subjects.

### EXPRESSION IN ART

Choice in cultural subjects is offered to all pupils from 3rd year onwards. Some follow an interest-subject for a term; others study art as part of a two year course. This girl has now decided to make art her career.



### EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The summer term brings an opportunity for outdoor activities. In this school the educational work of the whole year comes to a focal point in a series of field-study courses known as 'Subject Week.' The central pivot of the exercise is the personal interest of the teacher in a chosen project. The experience gained by the pupils is then used for oral and written reports which provide an impetus for the work of the coming year.

Sometimes the projects also result in leisure pursuits of lasting value.

### HADDON HALL, DERBYSHIRE

The arrival of Prince Arthur: highlight of the re-enactment of a Tudor Banquet given by the Vernons in 1489 to celebrate the return of the Prince of Wales to the Peak.

### OUTDOOR SWIMMING

The skills carefully learned in Speke Baths are practised with added joy in the lovely setting of woods and flowing river.



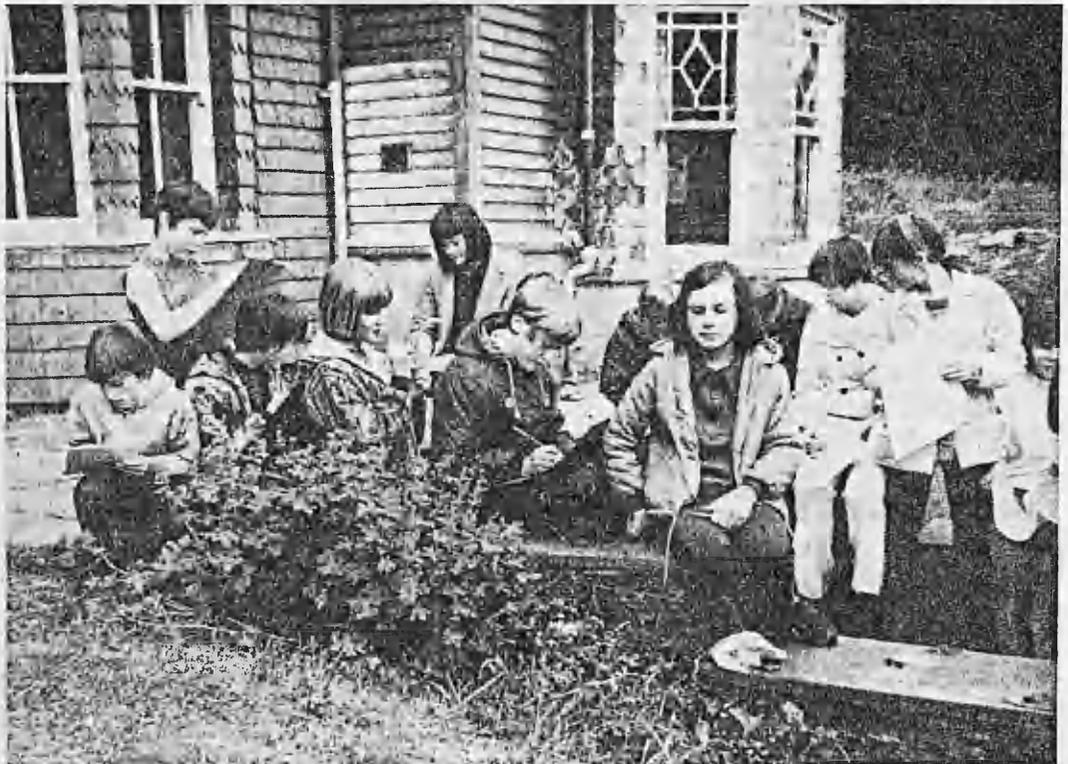


**RIDING LESSON**

An opportunity like horse-riding awakes new re-actions. This visit to a Riding School is for all an unforgettable experience, for some the beginning of a lasting interest.

**YOUTH HOSTELLING**

Adventure! Not just found in girls' magazines but experienced. There is an eagerness to make notes, both to record the joy of the moment and to learn how to plan for future visits.



### EXTERNAL EXAMINATION CERTIFICATES 1967/68

#### 6th Form Additional Subjects

ANITA LANDRY	CSE English Language and Literature, Chemistry, Health Education
ANNA McCABE	CSE English Language and Literature, Chemistry.
PATRICIA McLARNEY	CSE English Language and Literature, Chemistry, Health Education
MAUREEN O'MALLEY	CSE English Language and Literature, Chemistry, Health Education
PAMELA RYLANDS	CSE English Language and Literature, Health Education.

#### 5th Form

MARY ALLAN	CSE English Language and Literature, Art, Commerce, History, Typewriting.
BERNADETTE BARR	GCE Art. CSE English Language and Literature, Art, Geography, Commerce, Typewriting.
MARGARET CAWARDINE	CSE English Language and Literature, Geography, Mathematics, Typewriting, Commerce. RSA Typewriting Stage 1.
CLARE CLOTWORTHY	CSE English Language, Commerce, Mathematics, Typewriting. RSA Typewriting Stage 1 (Credit).
PHYLLIS COSTELLO	GCE Art. CSE English Language and Literature, Art, Geography, Commerce, Typewriting.
ANN DOYLE	CSE English Language and Literature, Commerce, Geography, Mathematics, Typewriting. RSA Typewriting Stage 1.
PATRICIA KAVANAGH	CSE English Language and Literature, Art, Commerce, History, Typewriting.
TERESA KINSELLA	CSE English Language and Literature, Commerce, Geography, Mathematics, Typewriting. RSA Typewriting Stage 1.
DIANA LAMB	GCE Art. CSE English Language and Literature, Art, Commerce, Geography, Typewriting. RSA Typewriting Stage 1 (Credit) and Stage 2.
CHRISTINE LEWANDOWSKI	CSE English Language and Literature, Art, Biology, Health Education, Domestic Science.
LINDA MELIA	CSE English Language and Literature, Art, Biology, Health Education, Domestic Science.
STELLA MILLER	CSE English Language and Literature, Commerce, Geography, Typewriting.
MAUREEN MURPHY	CSE English Language, Commerce, Geography, Typewriting.
IRENE McDONALD	CSE English Language and Literature, Commerce, History, Mathematics, Typewriting. RSA Typewriting Stage 1.
ANGELA McEVOY	CSE English Language and Literature, Chemistry, Biology, Health Education, Mathematics, Domestic Science.
PATRICIA McMILLAN	CSE English Language, Commerce, Typewriting.
IRENE SCALES	CSE English Language and Literature, Commerce, History, Mathematics, Typewriting. RSA Typewriting Stage 1.
SHEILA THOMAS	CSE English Literature, Commerce.
ANN VALENTINE	CSE English Language and Literature, Commerce, Geography, Typewriting.

# EARNING IS CHANGE

JULIE

and her mother, Mary.

What can Julie DO?



EDDIE

Eddie has changed since he was a baby.

He grew.

He also learned.

How much does LEARNING matter ?

Sept 1977



Peter is no baby! Make a list of the things you think Peter can do now.

The team with the longest list in two minutes is the WINNER! (ANY things!)

chool has helped to change these three friends.

LEARNING IS CHANGE !

ut their parents have helped them much more.

o make sure they GREW WELL

ne Health visitor,

ne clinic nurses

ne dentist,

ne doctor

all helped their parents.

o took care of their learning ?

us there any help ?

YOUR CHILDREN

have CHANGED

because of YOU !

e you interested in discussing

w your children think ?

w they learn ?



**This session was videotaped.**

- nov.

"Stairhead Seminars"

1974  
BMAJ

APPENDIX 2. THE TEN WEEK PROGRAMME DISCUSSION TRANSCRIPTS

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GROUP I.

Seven sessions are transcribed. Unless stated to the contrary, each is given in full.

The introductory session, September 2nd, was not taped. During this meeting the participants gave permission for the recording of all subsequent sessions. On September 30th and October 28th the central events were not continuous discussions. A brief note is made of these two sessions, for the sake of continuity. The events themselves are discussed in the text.

The final session on November 4th was videotaped.

GROUP II.

Only four full sessions are recorded. Two meetings had to be cancelled, in one case because of ill health in families, in the other because the group temporarily ceased to come together amicably. Details of these events are given in Appendix I, Background notes.

The idea of planned, continuous discussion on any topic was so new to this group that the introductory session had to be extended throughout September. October 7th was the first full length discussion on educational topics. By the next week, October 14th, the two chief participants were recording their ambivalent attitudes to this unaccustomed activity. The situation in this group was never very secure, yet skill and interest grew rapidly. By the final session, November 7th, a full half-hour session was sustained easily and constructively by all participants.

This session was videotaped.

APPENDIX 2

Discussion Transcripts in Chronological Order.  
Study Categories are Indicated.

GROUP I.

---

Sept. 9:	Readiness Tests	1.1	Reinforcement	B	9.
		1.2	Classical Conditioning	B	10.
		1.3	Adult/Child Interaction	A	11.

Sept. 16:	Teaching Session Based on Readiness Test 1.1		Reinforcement and Instrumental Conditioning	B	12.
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Sept. 23:	Review		Reinforcement and Instrumental Conditioning	B	13.
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Sept. 30:	Teaching Session Based on Readiness Test 1.3		Language and Control	A & C	14.
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NOTE: This experience session is recorded by notes, not transcript.

Oct. 7:	Review		Language and Control	C	15.
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Oct. 7:	Readiness Test 2 and Teaching Session		Concept Learning and Language	D	16.
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Oct. 14:	Review		Concept Learning and Language	D	17.
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Oct. 14:	Background Exploration Mothers' views about themselves and their own schooling			A	18.
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Oct. 14:	Teaching Session		Home/School Influences in Learning	A	19.
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Oct.21:	Teaching Session	Principle Building:		
		1. Experiments at Home	A & D	20
		2. Home/School Links	A & D	21
Oct.28:	Pre-teaching Session	Introduction to written sources on Parent/Child Interaction	A	22
	(Notes not transcript)			
Nov. 4:	Teaching and Final Review	Manipulation of Complex Concepts:		
		1. Concrete		
		2. Abstract		23

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GROUP II

Oct. 7:	Readiness Tests	1.1. Reinforcement	B	24
		1.2 Classical Conditioning	B	25
		1.3 Adult/Child Interaction	A	26
Oct.14:	Background Exploration	A Comment on Discussions	--	27
Oct.21:	Teaching Session Based on Readiness Test 1.1	Use of Reinforcement	B	28
Oct.28:	Readiness Test 2 and Teaching Session	Concept Learning and Language.	D	29
Nov. 7:	Teaching and Final Review	Manipulation of Complex Concepts:		
		1. Concrete		
		2. Abstract		30

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STUDY CATEGORIES

- A. Adult / Child Interaction
- B. Reinforcement and Conditioning
- C. Language and Control
- D. Language and Concept Learning

BIM 0 A 12

DAILY RECORD Tue, Dec 9 1975

# Sister Doreen's working in

By RUTH WISHART

A PILOT scheme started in Glasgow's Govan has already begun to break down barriers between parents and teachers; to help parents understand how they can best help their children.

It began when the Housing Department started a slum renovation programme on the locally notorious Wine Alley, re-christened it the Moorpark Estate, appointed a full-time community develop-

ment officer, and set up a tenants' hall. That was healthy groundwork. But the magic ingredient was a teaching nun called Sister Doreen.

Glasgow-born Sister Doreen had been a headmistress in Liverpool.

For her work there, she came recognition in the shape of a CBE. But 18 months ago, when she decided to take another

degree, and had to do a project for it, she opted to work in Glasgow.

She wanted to change the idea that education is just something that happens to a child for a few hours a day.

### Fun

Her first step was to get mums together, talk to them about what the teacher was trying to do and about how they could help their own

mothers were involved for ten weeks at a time. The next step was to get the teachers together with social workers and health visitors—so that everybody could work along similar lines.

Today, there is cautious excitement about the project. Kay Carmichael, senior lecturer in sociology at Glasgow University, says:

"It's precisely the kind of project we need—and the only thing that is going to realistically intervene in the pattern of deprivation."

child learn. The basic barrier was language. "We have a them-and-us situation because some people are not able to express themselves and their needs," says Sister Doreen.

"Because of this, they get a feeling of being inferior—and it's a feeling they transmit to their children." Learning about language was done in a fun way. Two groups of



Sister Doreen—changing ideas

BIM 0 A 12

ember 1975

A TOTAL EDUCATION PROJECT

**B M C**

May 1976

- 1. Rationale
- 2. Personnel
- 3. Cost
- 4. Requirements from within the system.
- 5. Why Govan?

Shathclyde Experiment in Education (S.E.E.) was set up by Shathclyde Regional Ed. Committee in conjunction with Glasgow Uni. Funds were provided by the Government (Urban Renewal) Shathclyde Region Notre Dame Educational Trust. Premises & services by Glasgow University.

\*\*\*\*\*

These decisions were based on the acceptance by all parties of this Document. Total Education

Rationale

There is massive evidence that the current educational system is not effective for a large proportion of children. Attempts to solve this problem during the last decade in Britain and America have never been wholly successful, but they have isolated some of the vital ingredients in an effective intervention programme.

The watershed between successful and unsuccessful pupils - and between powerful and powerless groups in society at large - has been clearly shown to be connected with the different development and uses of language common within these groups of people. The language under consideration is not a superficial thing of grammar and pronunciation, but a tool of power and freedom. Simple, direct language work in school has been almost completely useless in changing this situation.

The intervention programmes in E.P.A. Areas have gradually uncovered layers of work on which the schools must build if they are to be successful. The West Riding experiment which was, in many ways, the most successful of the 5 British E.P.A. projects, gave clear indication of the benefits derived from pre-school programmes and community involvement, including direct work with mothers.

Halsey, writing after all the E.P.A. projects were complete, goes beyond these discoveries and sets the work in an even wider context, noting the effect of physical, social and economic factors.

There are, therefore, three levels at which work must be done to achieve justice in education. One of these is outside the scope of educators. This is the physical, economic, social level. So it is clear that the co-operation of other agencies, such as housing, is necessary if a more comprehensive attempt at solving the problem of educational disadvantage is to be mounted. If the ordinary school system is to be more effective and more just, the resources of the educational services must be directed both at the second level, i.e. the community, the family and the children in their home environment, and at a revitalised programme within the schools, the level of formal education.

Halsey sums up the requirements in this way:-

"Above all, it is a matter of resources. At every point, again both inside and outside the schools, the working-class child has a great deal less spent on his opportunities for learning than has his more fortunate middle-class contemporary. The association of social class with educational achievement will not therefore be explained by a theory or eliminated by a policy which falls short of including

- a. changes in public support for learning in the family and the neighbourhood.
- b. the training of teachers.
- c. the production of relevant curricula.
- d. the fostering of parental participation.
- e. the raising of standards of housing and
- f. employment prospects and,
- g. above all, the allocation of educational resources.

The translation of such a theory into action would require political leadership with the will to go beyond the confines of traditional liberal assumptions."

(A.H. Halsey, 'Sociology & the Equality Debate' Oxford Review of Education Vol. 1, No. 1, 1975 p.17).

In the light of the very considerable research which has been completed on the problems of educational disadvantage, a proposal is made here for an educational project which will co-ordinate the educational forces already present in the child's environment and point these forces towards those forms and uses of language which will lessen the dissonance between groups in our society. This attempt at formulating a solution may be called:

'Total Education'. It is total in 3 ways:-

1. The family and neighbourhood

The focus is on the whole family and on the local setting. The family may have children of different ages, all of whom affect one another. To try to change one child, whether unstimulated pre-schooler, backward reader in the primary school or adolescent truant, without at the same time inviting the co-operation of the whole family, is to put the child in a conflict situation in which the most powerful factor, the home, will have the greatest effect, and one not in the direction of the school's efforts. Work with parents and with every age group of children must therefore be carried out simultaneously and co-ordinated to form an educational whole.

2. 'All the significant adults'

The project is total in another sense. ~~Stones~~, in his synthesis of American, British, Russian and Swiss educational theories, points out that a child is influenced educationally by 'every significant adult in his environment'. The project aims, therefore, at the direct education of all the significant adults in the child's daily life. These are seen as the

parents, first of all. (In some cases grandparents etc. also). The other important adults are the local professional workers: health visitors, social workers, community leaders, and above all, the teachers.

The educational programme proposed for these adults has two main ingredients.

- a) Language development
- b) Understanding the environment.

For parents this latter will be especially about the school environment. For the professionals the emphasis will be on inner city housing areas.

### 3. Educational Resources

A third meaning of total is in the area of normal educational resources. Every kind of educational provision which is currently available in the city, from pre-school through statutory school to adult literacy should be made available at the optimum level in the project area. This will require a degree of positive discrimination within the educational system, since these resources, consisting mainly of personnel and of access to stimulating learning aids such as libraries and rural experiences, are more easily procured in the suburbs.

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The next section uses the three concepts of total which are outlined above as the headings under which to list the resources, particularly the personnel, considered necessary to bring about more just educational provision through a total education project.

The proposed project aims at making the most of the educational opportunities in the home and neighbourhood setting, as well as those within the formal school. It also seeks to bring these formal and informal educational forces into greater harmony. Some of the agents involved in the home environment are professional workers in their fields (and employed by other agencies), who would be prepared to participate in inter-disciplinary work.

#### The family and neighbourhood

A report in SSCR Newsletter Nov.1975 on the work of van der Eyken and Shinman says, "The mere extension of existing facilities will fail to reach those who would benefit most. They would like to see a variety of strategies explored, including home visiting. . . . . They stress the need for increased flexibility in the system, and the need to focus, above all, on the quality of mother-child relationship".

Essential to this aspect of the project are a series of professional workers, some of whom are new, while others have their present role extended.

#### 1. The Educational Visitor

This new agent would work with small groups of parents in the project area. Mothers with children under seven would be invited to form the basis of the initial groups. Parents of

older children would gradually become involved as the number of groups expanded. The work of the educational visitor is aimed at explaining language development and teaching processes to mothers, in the first instance. Attempts would be made to involve fathers in these discussions as the groups became established.

2. The Literacy Worker

This new agent would work in conjunction with the city libraries. She would keep in touch with (a) the reading programme in the primary schools, (b) the work of the secondary English departments, and (c) special projects in other subjects at both primary and secondary levels.

Her task would be broadly that of a bridge between school and home in the areas of reading and writing. Her room would be a mini library after the fashion of the mobile libraries. Here she would read stories to pre-schoolers, hear the reading of primary children and support secondary projects by her interest and encouragement. Through her work with children she would be likely to come into contact with parents who were non-readers and could put them in touch with the adult literacy scheme.

3. The Pre-school Co-ordinator

This person, trained in the field of early childhood development, would be responsible for work with children between the ages of 2 and 5. Based on the Tenants Hall and working first with the playgroups, she would co-ordinate this work in conjunction with that of the nursery school. Her work would then be extended to home visits to support those mothers who preferred to keep their children at home during this time (c.f. Lothian's toy bank scheme). Mother and toddler groups would also be in her remit. She would therefore be concerned with educational provision for every pre-school child in the project area.

This pre-school work is an extension of normal provision and the worker could be obtained from the ordinary education system.

4. The Health Visitor

The health visitor visits the home after a baby is born and continues to visit until the child is two. Further visits depend on the doctor's request. The health visitor is trained to some extent in language development, but uses this at present only to detect faults such as deafness. The Govan health visitors are interested in taking part in inservice work with teachers to widen this side of their service to include language stimulation. This would enable them to help mothers of children below the age of two to interact verbally with their babies right from the beginning.

The health visitor already exists. The only additional requirement for her is an inservice course.

5. The Community Development Officer

This worker is already provided by the Housing Department and housed in the Tenants' Hall. She is in touch with the whole community through leisure time activities. Through her contacts she is in a position to aid home/school liaison

informally. There are also opportunities to prepare both parents and older pupils in formal procedures such as committee work necessary for participation in parents groups, schools councils etc. The professional workers' inservice course would give her insight into the language development which it would be helpful to foster throughout her work.

6. Social Worker

This home visitor can affect education in two ways. First he can help to stabilise the home so that the child comes to school in a fit state to learn. But in some cases he is left to carry the whole burden for parents who never progress to a position of self help. Such parents are also too affected by social pressures and by ever recurring problems to sustain a direct educational programme.

The social worker's second educational task is to help parents analyse their problems competently and work logically towards a solution. Through inservice training with teachers the social worker would see more of the role of cognitive language in this process and be in a position to give informal training which would prepare parents to take part in educational discussions as well as cope logically with their own finance etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

## II. The significant adults

A further-training course is proposed for all teachers in the neighbourhood as well as for other local professionals. The content will be planned by the project team in conjunction with the University and the two Colleges of Education. The problems of releasing teachers for such a course are very different in primary and secondary schools. Some beginning has been made by the local head-teachers to plan the practical arrangements.

Three levels of courses are proposed.

- a) A short introductory series of the type which has been offered recently to head-teachers to be presented to all teachers. This will be concerned with social and cognitive learning and with the special problems of urban education.
- b) Some teachers will follow this by 10-week courses based locally and in higher educational establishments.
- c) A few teachers will be seconded to the University for a one term National In-service Course on Social Handicap in Education.

From these courses working parties will be set up to consider relevant curricula for urban schools.

The other professional workers already listed would be invited to participate in these courses. Negotiations would have to take place with each department to decide on the degree of commitment. There is at present a readiness at the local level for this kind of co-operative work.

\*\*\*\*\*

III. The allocation of educational resources

Sections I and II include some of these resources.

Further needs are:

- a) Premises for the activities listed above.
- b) Staffing support from inside the present schools system as follows:

Primary Schools

A higher pupil/teacher ratio than red book standards, especially for the younger pupils to allow more adult/child contact.

Provision of a full time remedial teacher in each school.

Specialist teachers for music, art, drama, P.E., spending one period per week in every class.

Secondary Schools

Staffing at least up to red book standards.

One additional remedial teacher in each school.

Two teachers for bridging courses (one maths/science, one humanities).

These teachers to take 'second chance' pupils who might be able to profit from S.C.E. courses if extra coaching and support, such as a professional home could offer, was available to them in this way.

One teacher of community education engaged in linking the older pupils systematically with community service in the neighbourhood (old folks homes, hospitals, nurseries etc.), and with work experience programmes to stimulate awareness and widen horizons. The overall aim would be to give confidence and expertise which would help these adolescents survive later in society and in employment.

All schools would need some kind of inservice replacement procedure. The primary schools consider that they could plan a process in conjunction with Colleges of Education which would involve 3rd year students, rather than employing more teachers.

- c) Special Units

Govan High have already begun to plan a special unit for timid children who find the big secondary school too much for them. This requires a teacher.

Two classes made up of truants belonging to the project area from both secondary schools could be housed in empty rooms in an old school near their homes. Experimental approaches to a relevant curricula for these pupils would also provide the working parties with a demonstration group.

d) Material resources

Very little is asked by the schools in the way of further material resources. The only additional items required are library books for the primary schools which are very far from a public library and additional video tapes for the secondary schools.

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## Why Govan?

Govan is currently the subject of a comprehensive development plan. There is a major demolition and re-building process in progress. This includes new industrial developments as well as homes. There will be no owner-occupier houses; all will be corporation owned. The range of social classes in the area is therefore restricted.

The new houses are being erected in compact groups. The first of these, Burndyke Close, is now occupied. Riverside I is under construction. At the East end of Govan great areas have been flattened and roads laid down preparatory to the next phase of building. Houses which are not being demolished are being modernised.

This means that a new Govan is actually in the process of being built at present. The whole area was scheduled for completion by 1976. This is now seen to be wildly unrealistic, but a good deal of new property will be ready for use before the end of next year. People are therefore moving in to Govan, and will do so increasingly in the next few years. Educational work done in this area will come at a moment when families are beginning life anew and can more easily consider different socializing and educational patterns.

In many other disadvantaged districts in Glasgow the residents are moving out as demolition precedes re-building and modernisation. The schools in these areas will have a floating population over the next few years as this work proceeds. They may have to wait until the situation settles before beginning co-operative projects. Moorpark, the particular area of Govan suggested for the pilot scheme, is not being demolished. Though the houses are being modernised and the environment improved, this estate will never compete with the new housing groups planned for a major part of Govan. It will therefore continue to be a poor and relatively disadvantaged area.

It has a number of specific features which make it particularly suitable for a pilot project.

1. The modernisation of the 516 houses which was begun 2 years ago is now nearing completion. The people are poised to begin again.
2. The estate is a small compact area with a child population of 500 between the ages of 0-16.
3. To avoid a repetition of the East Keppoch failure in which the property was returned to its earlier slum condition immediately after the improvements were complete, the Housing Department has appointed a community development officer and built a Tenants Hall which is under the direction of a Tenants committee. This is rapidly becoming a focal point in the area.  
Co-operation and some use of premises have been offered to the project by the Development Officer and the Tenants association.
4. Two new primary schools (Copeland Road and St. Saviours) are being built now and will be put into service during 1976. These are open-plan schools and teachers will be looking for help in the new situations which will arise.
5. Old school premises will become available for in-service work.

6. The necessary information about the community, the families and the children has already been collected to a large extent.

a) There is background data compiled from a 3-year sociological study completed in 1972.

b) The Housing Department carried out a survey in 1973/4. This now refers to only 350 of the present families. A further survey is in progress and is scheduled for completion in June. This will give details such as family size and composition. All this material is available to project personnel.

c) Educational information has been supplied by the schools: numbers, IQs, class groups, truancy etc.

Some details from these records will show the number and age range of the children who might profit from a pilot project in Moorpark.

The pre-school numbers can only be given from the 1973/74 survey, suitably updated. They therefore refer to only 2/3 of the population. The other 1/3 must be calculated in proportion.

Secondary Pupils	136	34 of these truants (red tabs)
Primary Pupils	248	14 of these truants (red tabs)
Children between 3 and 5	40	(in 2/3 surveyed)
Children between 1 and 2	29	(in 2/3 surveyed)
Preschool approx. for 1/3 unsurveyed	30	
	<hr/>	
Total	483	
	<hr/>	

There are also some children in special schools, and a few in schools outwith the district.

Approximate total child population = 500.

BM 06

26  
1975/76

INDICATIONS OF EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE  
IN MOORPARK

moorpark estate consists of 516 flats. The six streets in the  
state are cut off from the rest of Govan by factory buildings  
r sites except on one side, at Broomloan Road.

illustrations of the realities behind the following statistics  
re provided from the housing survey forms using Kellas Street  
nly as an example.

from Housing Survey      350 flats only surveyed.

Evidence that the area has been allocated in many cases  
to social casualties comes in the presence of many broken  
homes, both one parent families and the very high proportion  
of middle-aged men living alone.

Total number of families with children      120  
Number of one parent families      28  
Number of men living alone      41

Large Families

There is no clear definition of 'large'.  
But some illustrations of families of 10 are included to show  
the range of organisation in large households found in one  
street.

from Educational Sources

Proportion of Pupils

	Total Numbers	Moorpark Numbers
Sec. School	2108	136 (45)
Primary	1245	126 (10)
		262
		<u>248</u>

Red Tab Attendance Cards

	Total Numbers	Moorpark Numbers
Sec. School	227	34 (1/7)
Primary	33	14 (almost 1/2)

✓ Total no. of Moorpark girls attending Govan High 37  
 No of girls with Red Tabs 16

The dramatic details from Govan High illustrate the problem of this area. St. Gerard's numbers are not so bad because the school is so much nearer no bus fares are involved.

St. Saviour's Primary have only 18 red tabs, but 9 of them are from Moorpark.

from Supporting Services

Social Work No. of families <sup>in Moorpark</sup> calling on help in last six months 105

No. of school referrals 9

Child Guidance

No of Cases from - all Govan per week 30  
 - - - Moorpark - - - 8 (1/4)

Total no. of Moorpark children receiving help 18

4 February 1976

Dear Colleagues in Govan

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION PROJECT: MOORPARK PILOT STUDY

This open letter is about a proposed project which aims at enhancing the educational progress of disadvantaged children in Govan - beginning with those in the district dismissed as "Wine Alley". I am writing both to the many people who know about the project and to the many more for whom this is a first invitation to participate in a new venture.

BECAUSE PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE HAVE MANY CALLS ON THEIR TIME, THE BASIC LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT WILL BE WITHIN WORKING HOURS. THIS WILL BE PRINCIPALLY BY IN-SERVICE COURSES HELD LOCALLY AND SCHEDULED TO BEGIN IN MAY 1976.

Before the first course participants can be determined, every local teacher, health visitor and social worker must be offered information about the scope and content of the project since its success depends entirely on the co-operation of a large number of professional workers. As a start we will show video tapes of a small pilot study in which a new form of parent/teacher interaction was tried out. A further tape in which some local teachers, health visitors and social workers offered their comments on a suggested form of interprofessional co-operation, will also be shown.

The only way every teacher in the area can be given the opportunity of seeing these tapes is to put them on at 4 pm. Mr Henretty has kindly offered the use of St Gerard's School Hall (Entrance Vicarfield Street at Neptune Street) for this purpose on Thursday 12 February. Coffee will be available from 3.45 pm. The presentation will begin at 4 pm and the meeting will close at 5 pm. Everyone working in Govan in any professional capacity is welcome to come to this introductory meeting. I know that for some these arrangements will clash with other commitments. I would be glad to hear from those who would like to know more about the project but cannot join us on this occasion.

Please return the tear-off strip, or phone the relevant information to St Gerard's School office (445-1581) by Tuesday, 10 February. I look forward to meeting many colleagues on this occasion.

Yours sincerely

*Doreen Grant*

Doreen Grant CBE ADDip MED  
Sister of Notre Dame

NAME .....  
PROFESSIONAL ADDRESS .....  
.....

B M O 8

12  
30

1, Lilybank Gardens,  
Glasgow, G12 8RZ.

31st May, 1976

Dear Parents,

Your children who are in Primary 1, 2 or 3 will be filmed in school during June. We hope to show these pictures to you later on when we begin to hold the small group discussions for parents in a flat in the scheme.

Now the Moorpark Action Group, who are planning the Festival Week, have arranged for your children to be allowed out of school on June 10th to take part in a Robot-making competition in the Tenants Hall. This event is for parents and children together. The film crew are willing to come to the Tenants Hall on that day so that you can see a film of your child with you as well as with the teacher. This should be good fun! We will show you these 'family films' as soon as we can.

The competition is for 5-8 year old children who have to make a Robot from old boxes such as cornflake packets, with the help of the parents. But grandparents or even older brothers or sisters can take the place of parents who cannot come. (You bring your own old boxes).

We would really like to take every child. You know how disappointing it is for children if they are left out of something. So do please fill in the entry form which you should have by now. Forms are available from the Tenants Hall if you have not been given one at home.

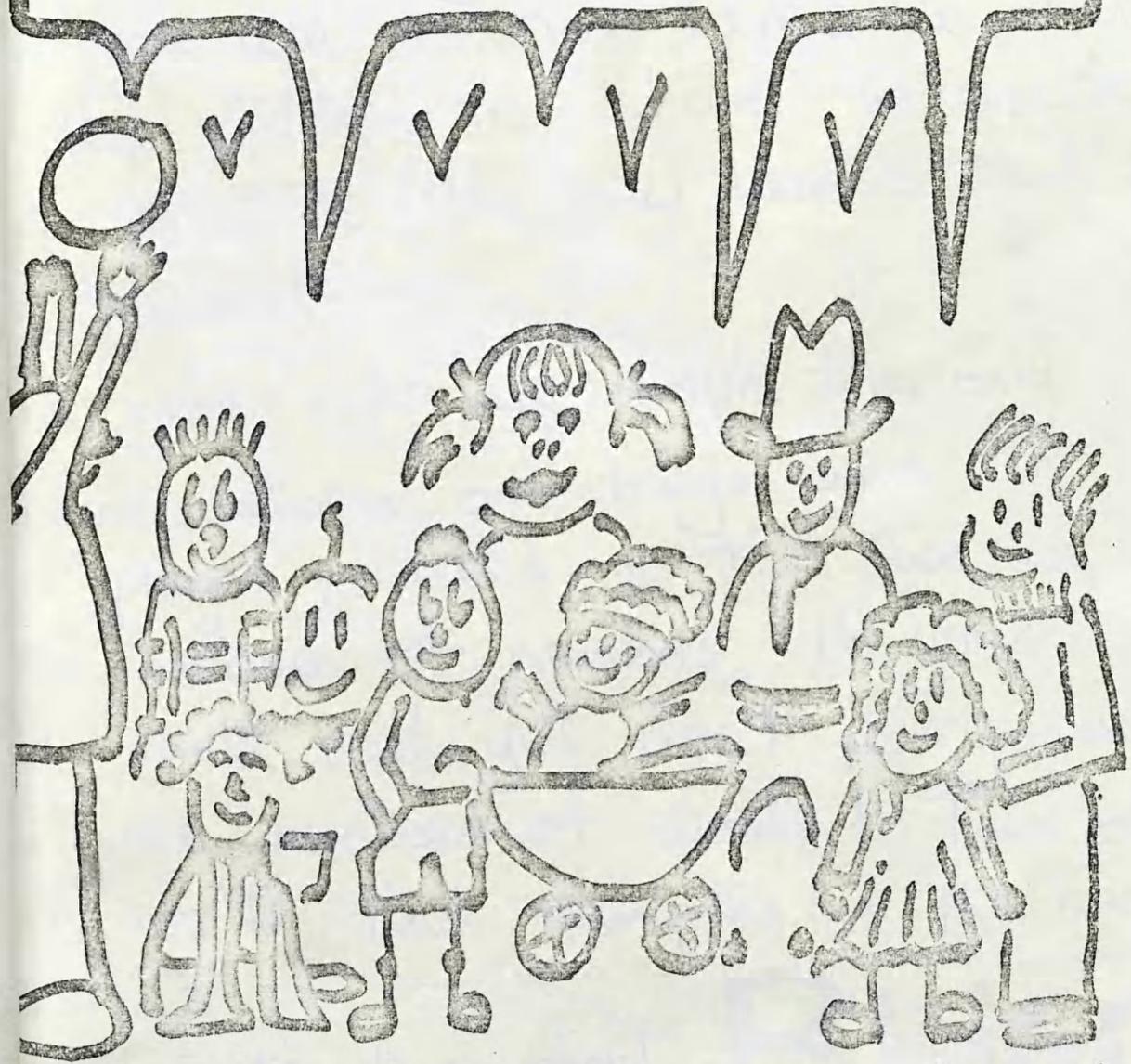
See you on June 10th? Let's make it a really big event! And a good laugh!

Yours sincerely,

Sister Doreen.

BMO9

bingo!



The Gowan Project.

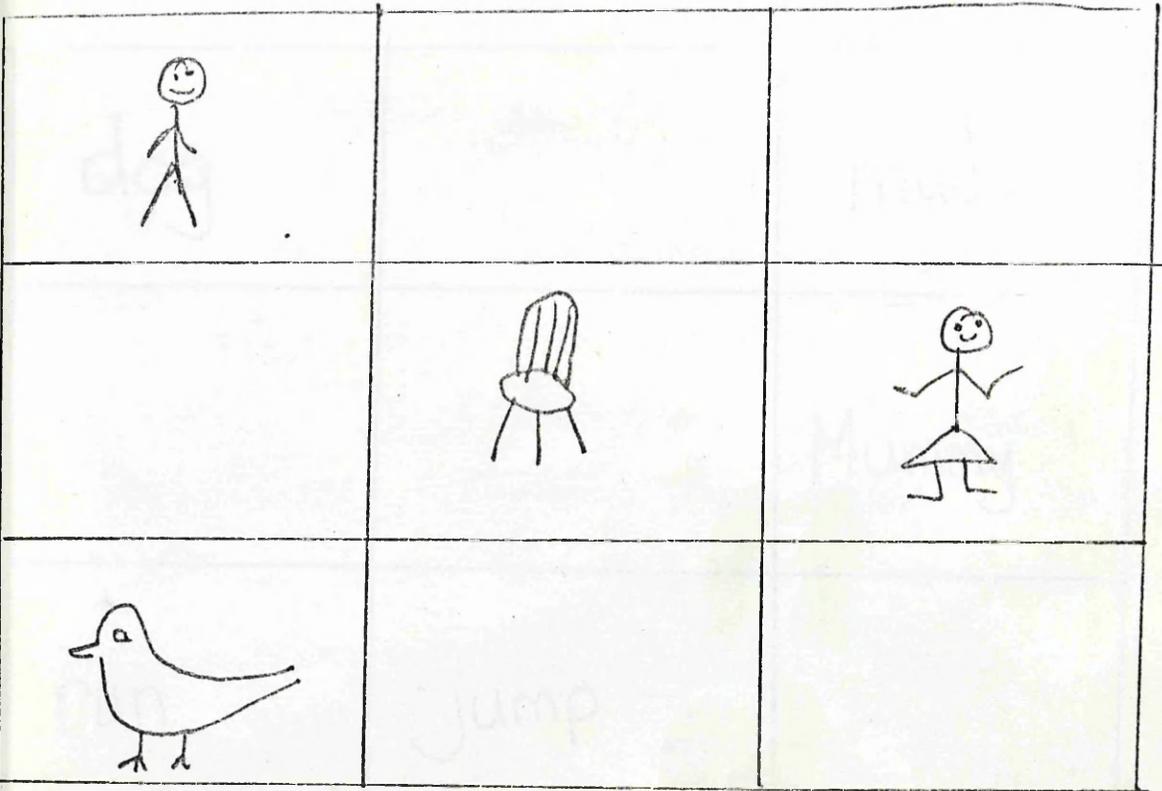
Learning new words and practicing them can be incredibly boring for children or it can be fun. This is one game which we can help make it fun!

The children have heard you or neighbours talking about bingo — how exciting it is when you win — now here's a chance for the children to share the excitement and practice the new words that they've learned.

The game rules are simple the only difference between our bingo and the bingo played in halls is that we use words instead of numbers. If your child can't read yet don't worry — use pictures instead of words! Turn over and you'll find examples of the two versions.

Now that it's fun shout

**BINGO**



← The card 

Each player needs a card. Mark them out like the one above. Build a bank of say 10 pictures. Select 5 and draw them on a card. Do this with each card. Don't make them all the same.

How to play the game

One person acts as caller. He shows one picture at a time from the bank. If you have the picture on your card cover it. The first person to cover all of his pictures shouts .....

# Bingo

# Word Bingo

34.

dog		mud
		Mummy
run	jump	

← The card 

Each player needs a card.  
Mark them out like the one above. Choose  
in words that the children have learned -  
don't make them too hard. Select 5 and  
write them on a card. Do this with each  
word. Don't make them all the same.

How to play the game  
One person acts as a  
caller. He shows one word at a time from  
a bank. If you have the word on your  
card cover it. The first person to cover  
all of his words shouts.....

# Bingo

# READING WORKSHOP - MADE UP ALPHABET. 35.

We used this idea to help the parents understand what a young child is faced with in learning to read. The parents act as the 'class' and experience the 'look and say' method of learning to read which is common in the local schools.

This game provides an ideal opportunity for the parents to discover for themselves the development of reading and particularly problems which can arise in the early stages. Examples of discussion points included:-

- a) the parents discovery that two and three letter words can prove more difficult for the child than longer words for which they can have a mental shape and picture  
 ex. 'and', 'in', 'the' more difficult than 'elephant'
- b) difficulties encountered picking words out of context.

Many more points obviously emerge and we have had many enjoyable and often hilarious sessions with this method, which we find provides a relaxing background for discussion.

Throughout the reading workshop courses the parents frequently referred back to it in discussion.



# Footstep Game

STAGE 1: Cutting out the footsteps involves the parent + child in discussion on size, shape, left and right as well as manipulative skills.

STAGE 2: Discussion on symbols to be chosen depending on child's stage of development and can differ for various members of family.

## PLAYING THE GAME

ASK GAME: Footsteps placed on the floor - object of the game is to reach the end of the road - game can be played individually or competitively with various sets of footsteps.

Symbols: Some examples

- ① Shapes
- ② Colours
- ③ Letters
- ④ Numbers

Rules can be made within each family - ex. back to the beginning if wrong word said. Discussion with parents re this game involves giving appropriate cues to help the child recognise the symbols and progressively limiting the number of cues as the child's confidence grows.

As with all the games the key word is :-

Fun ! . . . .  
for all.

Family

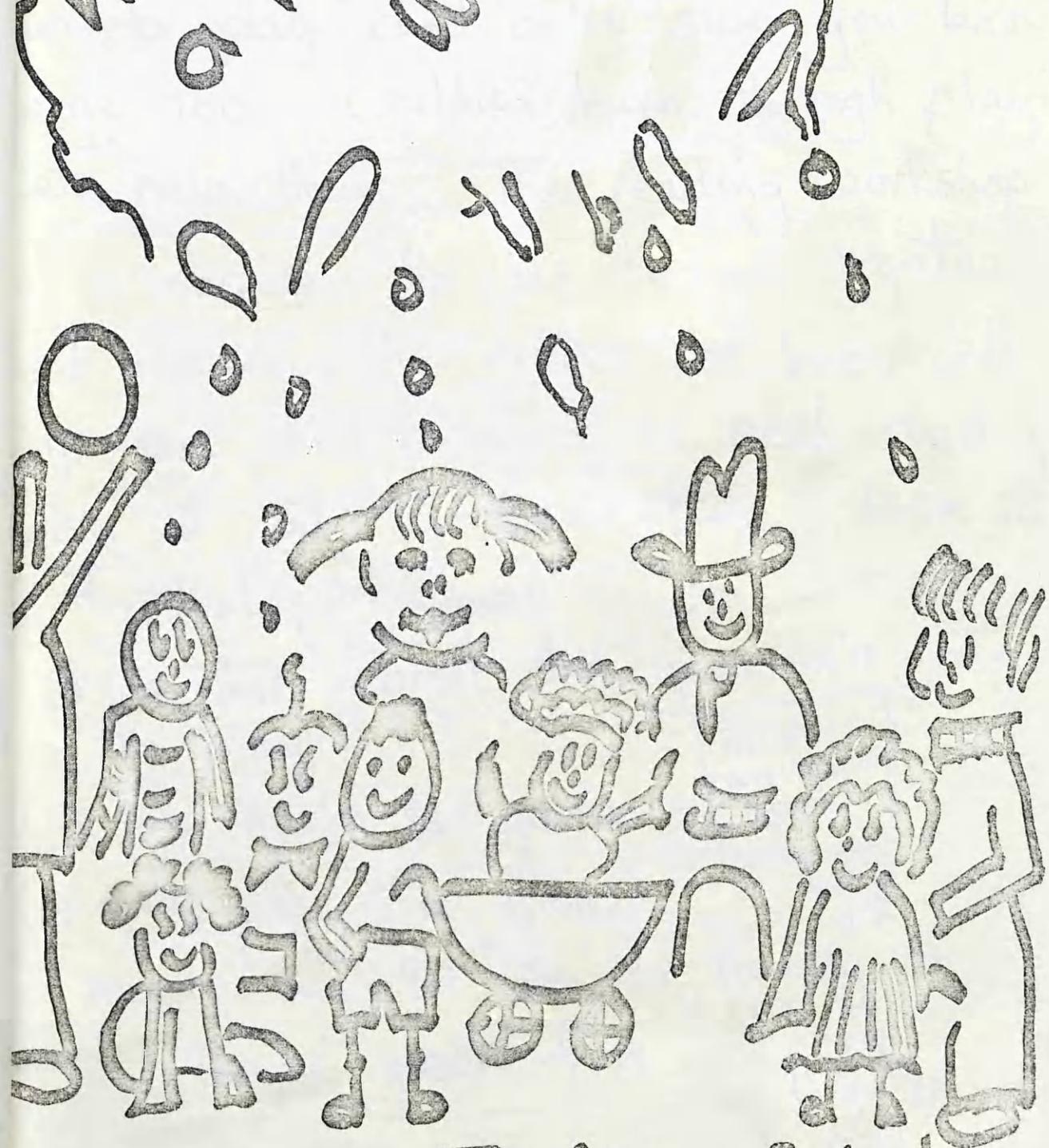
Original  
May 71

This version of record.  
Spring/Summer 1979

37.

What is  
a reading  
workshop?

BM II



The Govan Project.

Schools in Scotland expect parents to help their children to learn to read at home. Do you know how to help?

Do you know how to make it fun? We know some games which are great fun to play and we're sure you know some too. Children learn through playing. Let's help them. The reading workshop is a chance for us to get together and share the games we know will help our children learn to read and enjoy it at the same time. Here is a typical programme -

① We talk about the games we're going to play

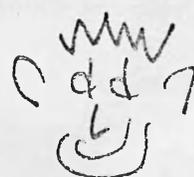
② We make the games

③ We play the games

The games are for all the family to play - They're great fun

See you soon

Parents  
are teachers  
too!



S.E.E. GOVAN PROJECT

Co-ordinator's Report  
to the Steering Committee  
at the end of the first year

BM 12  
June 77

This document consists of sections from the original Paper submitted by the Working Party for Urban Aid, together with comments on the present state of play. The team proposed at that time consisted of three workers in the community and four in the schools. Of these, the first three were put forward by Policy Planning for Urban Aid grant but only two of the teachers; - those required for the primary school; since the document stated that the secondary work would not be a major part of the first year's effort. The job outlines from the proposal document are given here for the first three workers, together with their degree of realisation in the first years. This is followed by a section on the schools and finally a brief section on the global aims on which the whole project is based.

The proposal document, 'Total Education, December 1975, contained the following job descriptions:

1. "Parent Group Leader

This new agent would work with small groups of parents in the Project area. Mothers with children under seven would be invited to form the basis of the initial groups. Parents of older children would gradually become involved as the number of groups expanded. The work of the educational visitor (P.G.L.) is aimed at explaining language development and teaching processes to mothers, in the first instance. Attempts would be made to involve fathers in these discussions as the groups became established."

The work is now well established. Two groups of courses have developed from the original 'Stairhead Seminars'. The first emphasises language and experience. Parents learn the importance of conceptual language and prepare some educational visit in which they will practise the skills learned. The first term's work was concerned with Govan itself. A Zoo visit in Term 2 and a seaside visit including prep work with the Marine Biology Department of the University in Term 3 complete this series. Four parents' groups have combined for these events.

The second course is concerned with the use of words in giving and using precise instructions within ongoing parent/child interaction. The basic activity is a family workshop in which parents and children combine to produce puppets, kites, pantomime dragons, etc.

A young couple with three children and a mother of five children are now beginning to be trained as para-professional discussion-group animators for next year's courses. The couple are also connected with the Adult Literacy work since the wife is only semi-literate and attends classes held in the Project library.

Adult/

Adult groups run by other team members are now augmenting these two series by the P.G.L. The Link Teachers run courses about the school reading schemes and the Preschool Worker runs parent workshops on intellectual development of preschool children through play.

A few parents are now seeking education at their own level. At the opposite extreme from the Adult Literacy is the class for adults who would like eventually to attempt 'O' Grade English or take part in a public course requiring an equivalent standard of English. A small group of parents is also taken out of the district by minibus to learn how to run a summer playscheme.

Details of the spread of parents' courses are given in the accompanying chart. We have been both surprised and pleased by the constantly growing response. Although we do not yet reach every parent, even in the current target population, the interest is much greater than was predicted for an area in which participation in adult education, in the normal statutory sense, was non-existent.

2. "The Literacy Worker

This new agent would work in conjunction with the city libraries. She would keep in touch with:

- (a) the reading programme in the primary schools;
- (b) the work of the secondary English departments;
- (c) special projects in other subjects at both primary and secondary levels.

Her task would be broadly that of a bridge between school and home in the areas of reading and writing. Her room would be a mini-library after the fashion of the mobile libraries. Here, she would read stories to preschoolers, hear the reading of primary children and support secondary projects by her interest and encouragement. Through her work with children, she would be likely to come into contact with parents who were non-readers and could put them in touch with the adult literacy scheme."

The Literacy Worker has fulfilled all but the secondary sections of this remit.

First Term

This was spent in furnishing the library room, building relationships with the public libraries, learning their system and acquiring a stock of books from a variety of sources.

Second Term

The library opened quietly in January and was immediately a focus of attention in the district. Without any more public announcement than a list of times on the door of the house, the number of people joining the library has risen to well over 600. The number of adult readers rises steadily.

Third Term/

### Third Term

Individual Records The literacy services have now expanded. From the beginning, there was an attempt to go beyond a routine book-lending service to a training in appreciation and discrimination. To this end, a coding system has been devised to record young children's bases of choice. One use of this is to trace the small children who choose books only by size or by the colour on the covers. Careful records about each borrower call attention to such children and appropriate help is given.

Functional Literacy Small classes for reluctant readers at Primary 7 transfer and at the secondary school leaving age have emerged in the last few weeks. Adult literacy work will probably merge with the latter next term. Semi-literate adults were originally referred to the appropriate services but this has now been reviewed and a small class is beginning in the Project library.

Local Voluntary Work Three regular voluntary helpers have emerged from the many who give occasional help. One is a middle-aged mother who has a deaf and dumb son. The second is a young single parent with a small child and the third, a fifteen year old boy who has a poor academic record. These three are now taking part in a training course for library helpers.

The Uses of Literacy The first section of this course is being given by Miss Helen Murdoch from Hamilton College. It is on choice of books for different age-groups and on story-telling and reading to very young children. The helpers will have immediate use for their skills as they develop because the Link Teachers and the Literacy Worker are jointly organising story-telling sessions for five to six year olds who have not yet begun to read willingly. These children need to find that books contain stories which they might like to read for themselves some day and the new para-professionals will help to give them this desire to read.

The Library and the Schools There is now a regular two-way service between the library and the local primary schools. Books for school projects are obtained from public libraries by the literacy worker, delivered to the schools and changed when required. Three primary teachers from one school give regular help at 4 o'clock when the library is particularly crowded. This service includes reading with children, discussing book selection and supervising primary and secondary school library assistants who stamp the books and issue them.

A first meeting has been held with the English Department of Govan High School and joint work with that school library is being planned.

### 3. "The Preschool Co-ordinator"

This person, trained in the field of early childhood development, would be responsible for work with children between the ages of 2 and 5. Based on the Tenants' Hall and working first with the playgroups, she would co-ordinate this work in conjunction with that of the nursery school. Her work would then be extended to home visits to support those mothers who preferred to keep their children/

children at home during this time (of Lothian's toy bank scheme). Mother and Toddler groups would also be in her remit. She would therefore be concerned with educational provision for every pre-school child in the Project area."

The global aim set out in the job description has remained but steps taken to reach this have been different from those anticipated. The Preschool Worker has spent much of her time in finding out the current situation at the 3 to 5 year old level by conducting a lengthy preschool survey. This has built up useful contacts with the families since the survey took about thirty minutes in each home. From this home-based session came membership of nursery, playgroup or toy library learning sessions.

Work with this age-group fluctuates a great deal. Without the rigid timetable of school, family organisation is very fluid, affected by health, weather, the previous evening's social events, etc. The preschool is therefore the one area in which we are much further back than we expected. A whole reorganisation of the work is in progress to try to overcome the first year's problems.

At present, the work is on a variety of levels:

1. Meetings are held with the responsible people in nursery and preschool playgroup to plan co-operative approaches.
2. A programme of in-service training for preschool staff is given by college lecturers, etc. This has been well received.
3. The preschool worker keeps in constant contact with both the nursery and the playgroup and knows all the families concerned.
4. Mothers of young children have come individually or in pairs to learn how and why they could use the equipment in the toy library.

A new Course for Parents The Open University has produced two new courses for parents, the first one about pregnancy and the first two years of life and the second one dealing with the age-range 2 to 5. Arrangements have been made to record both TV and radio programmes and use this material as the basis for further sets of parents' meetings in the autumn.

### Statistics

Before moving on to the School section, this might be the moment to say something about statistics. There are 103 families with children between 3 and 8 in Moorpark. We have not yet attempted to reach those families with children in the 0 to 2 age range. There are 32 such families. But this does not leave us with a total of 135 families because many of the younger families also have children between 3 and 8. The work of putting all this on computer will be completed by the next school session. When this is ready, we will be able to give accurate information on the target population with success and failure rates. At present /

present, we can only show trends. These, however, are sufficiently positive to be clearly shown by the charts that are enclosed. The page of the Co-ordinator's diary headed 'Parents' shows a sudden expansion of parents' groups of all kinds since April, following a long period of home visiting and extensive library contact, with only a small amount of intensive group contact. Details given in the Primary Schools section to follow also indicate a similar advance in contact. There will be 61 Moorpark families between P.1 and P.6 in Copeland School in August. Only eleven of these are not already well known to the Link Teacher, who has been concentrating on P.1 to P.3 this year. Further details of this numerical type are not included in this report; they await computerisation.

### The Schools

The initial document carried no job description for the fieldworkers in the schools. Instead, there were two lists, one for Primary and one for Secondary, made up by head teachers. These outlined the additional staff that the heads would like to see in their schools, and were not directly linked to the Project's aims at all. Because the Project was concerned in the first year with the Primary stage, we have concentrated our efforts in school on discovering the role of that Link Teacher. This has now emerged as a supportive role in both home and school by which the Link Teacher facilitates new approaches to education in both groups, with the aim of withdrawing from the scene when the work is consolidated. Initially, the contacts were made as and when it was possible to talk to parents in the street, in the school, in the centre. By March, when the IQ and Language Test results were available, we began to use profile sheets of one age-group at a time, beginning with the five year olds. Two of these sheets are presented with this document as samples. As a result of this concentrated work, there is now very good contact with all the parents of this group except for three, who have problems, such as the mother in hospital. We then concentrated on the four year olds who will be going to school in August and built up contact there. The situation for next term, therefore, is that the new P.1 and P.2 are now closely linked with the Project. Some families of P.3 and P.4 have a great deal of contact but there is still a good number of gaps, especially at the P.3 stage, where we have not yet made a systematic appraisal. Family work is, however, cumulative. The number of new families, therefore, in the rest of the primary school is not very great. This fact, combined with the growing interest of the upper primary teachers, some of whom help in the library or borrow class project books from it, means that it is quite feasible for the Link Teachers to try to affect the whole Primary range with the help of a Job Creation teacher next year.

My assessment of the situation as presented here is that we are fulfilling our task, but doing so rather slowly because we have to invent every step. We are in the process of filming each team member at work in order to have training material for Project teams beginning elsewhere. With a pattern created now on which to base new work, it should be possible for a new group to reach our June point in March or April. We are ready now to complete our initial promise to deal with the whole age-range, 0-16. Some of the secondary work has already begun. We have held Primary 7/Secondary I staff meetings. From these, we have organised meetings of P.7 pupils and their parents/

parents, with the Guidance Staff from the two comprehensive schools. The parents have expressed great fear about their children's happiness in the secondary school, where they have often had older brothers or sisters who had bad reputations. The parents are afraid that the younger pupils will be immediately labelled. The Project has promised support initially in the form of parents' meetings in the Project House during the first term of secondary school. At the other end of the scale, we have begun two small pieces of work for leavers. One is concerned with community service. The other is a mixture of leisure activities and careers prospects. We would like to widen this side of the work very quickly. There is great interest from parents, pupils and teachers. Two of the present team have a good deal of experience in this area. I have run Work Experience courses myself from a secondary school and Kathy Robinson has been a careers specialist in Glasgow. We urgently need a Secondary member in the team at this point. The original request was for two Secondary teachers, one in each of the comprehensive schools. In the current financial crisis, we cannot expect this now. I feel sure that one Secondary organiser with Job Creation help could fulfil the task with support from the rest of us. This would bring the Fieldworker team to seven; three directly in the community, (the Parent Group Leader, the Community Literacy Worker and the Preschool Worker); three in the schools, (two Primary Link Teachers and one Secondary Link Teacher); all working together with the Co-ordinator. This would make it possible to attempt to fulfil the complete Pilot Project as originally set out by the Steering Committee.

This was expressed in the proposal document as follows:

"The Family and the Neighbourhood

The focus is on the whole family and on the local setting. The family may have children of different ages, all of whom affect one another. To try to change one child, whether unstimulated pre-schooler, backward reader in the primary school or adolescent truant, without at the same time inviting the co-operation of the whole family, is to put the child in a conflict situation in which the most powerful factor, the home, will have the greatest effect, and one not in the direction of the school's efforts. Work with parents and with every age-group of children must therefore be carried out simultaneously and co-ordinated to form an educational whole.

The basic theme here was that as well as good teaching in school, children need support at home. This support was to be procured,

- (i) by educating the parents;
- (ii) by educating all the members of the family who are at school, including the teenagers.

This would not only help the adolescents' education, but would give the younger children a good teenage model.

The/

The whole range of educational possibilities must act together. Such a range could not be set up all at once and so the decision was taken that in the initial year the major attempt would be to reach the parents of children between the ages of 2 and 8. As soon as this was well established, we would attempt to support the education of the very young children from birth to 2, and of the older children.

We would need to implement this now, to give us a full two-year period of work before final evaluation. I, therefore, request that one Secondary teacher be procured for the Project, either by secondment or by some other means, to complete the team.

Sister Doreen Grant,  
Co-ordinator.

6th June, 1977.

Note I Qs above Reading Score

STRATHCLYDE EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATION

Test Results - Copeland School PIII

\* Daughter of 'la Agnes' recorded in Learning Relations ch 4

Name	Address	Date of Birth	Stanford Binet I.Q.
<del>E2052021</del> * Joanne	43 Kellas Street	28.12.69.	149
<del>E0102011</del> Henry	19 Dava Street	12. 9.69.	93
<del>E0301021</del> Rose	70 Kellas Street	11. 9.69.	126
<del>E1122012</del> Gary	3 Rafford Street	22. 2.69.	86
<del>E1311024</del> Jacqueline	246 Broomloan Road	10. 7.69.	102
<del>E1102022</del> Tracey	3 Rafford Street	4. 4.69.	103
<del>E1121015</del> Robert	94 Kellas Street	27. 5.69.	87
<del>E0522011</del> Mark	91 Lettoch Street	29. 8.69.	104
<del>E0711012</del> Sandy	46 Kellas Street	4. 8.69.	82
<del>E1010222</del> Michelle	100 Kellas Street	13. 7.69.	95
<del>E1201022</del> Michelle	240 Broomloan Road	21. 7.69.	88

Score on Edinburgh Reading Test

\* \* \* \* \*

E1506022  
Lorain K... 4 Oston 26.05.69 115

Alex ... 31 Kellas 1.05.69 83

B2202012

SEE A TUESDAY!



Theory-in-action Booklet No.1

SEE A TUESDAY!

This booklet shows evening work at the end of December 1977. At the practical level, the most obvious features are the great numbers of adults and children taking part, as well as the enthusiasm around.

Some of the theoretical issues embedded in this visual record are:

- Family-based education.
- Growth in parental and community confidence.
- Emergence of local leaders.
- The role of professionals in this kind of community education.

Footnote for English readers.

The west of Scotland usage of the verb SEE, as in SEE A TUESDAY! indicates that the subject contains a complex web of ideas and emotions beyond the informer's immediate verbal expression.

## SEE A TUESDAY!

Late opening night in the Community Library, Project House, 15 Orton Street, Govan.

Premises

Kitchen of the 3 apartment council flat used for Project activities.

Adaptation

Issuing desk for an informal library which follows the procedures of the 5 Glasgow branch libraries on which it depends.

Pantomime Workshop session, Govan Project Centre, Broomloan Road, Govan.



Fact Glasgow inner city: 100 people in an old school building.  
Feeling Pantomime spectacular with audience participation.

Project Library: Tuesday 6.30 p.m.

Read me a story!



Adults share their interest in books with children who come to this library-in-a-living-room. The children enjoy this attention from the library's job creation assistant as well as from local parents and teenagers. They also enjoy the books!



A local housewife (date stamp in hand) is in charge of the evening session. At least 100 of the library's 800 members come to the library on Tuesdays. The crowd selecting books in the living room will soon be so great that stamping and issuing will be banished to the kitchen.

Project Library: Tuesday 7 p.m.

'You wouldn't think so many people would be wanting books!'

This volunteer has helped in the library regularly since February. Evening sessions began in summer with this mother in charge.

She needs the library skills acquired during this year to deal efficiently with the clients who crowd into the kitchen.



The tiny hall soon turns the queue into a crush. But the children wait good-naturedly. Their homes are similar to the Project Flat, so they are very aware that noise disturbs the neighbours — and if they forget, there are always neighbours nearby to remind them!



Pantomime Workshop: Tuesday 7.30 — 9.30 p.m.

'On with the dance!'

The problems of bringing up a family single-handed are laid aside for a moment as a mother becomes completely caught up in the act.



The 'wicked uncle', dressed in a discarded curtain, seems less sure of his step! But hesitation is only momentary. This local Dad has discovered a leadership role for himself in these family workshop sessions.

The drama professionals 'play it cool' at the ends of the line-up.

### Pantomime Workshop

'See if I've got it right!'

The 'court cook' turns out to be a born comedienne — to her family's surprise. The 'Royal Nannie' gives amused concentration to the spontaneous rehearsal, while her own toddler wanders safely among the other families.



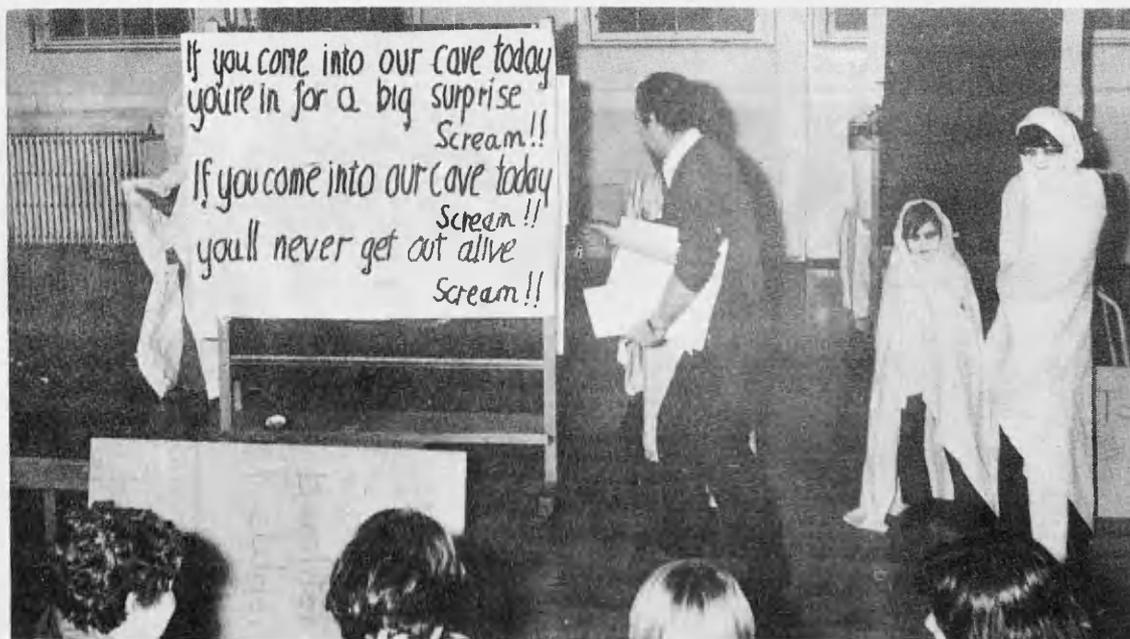
This pantomime workshop has only lasted six weeks. But it has brought together groups of parents and children in a new way. Neighbours who have been good friends for years, as well as those who only knew each other by sight, now plan to work together as a team to spread the idea of family workshops.

## Pantomime Workshop

'Which side of the hall sings best?'

Audience participation is especially appropriate in this pantomime, which is not offered as a finished performance but as a learning situation for everyone.

The 'Ghoulies who guard the treasure' have sung the song they made up the previous week. Now Jim, the drama professional, invites the audience to sing too.



And then they all joined in!

Pantomime Workshop

'Oh Jeanie! Look at your daddy!'



By the end of the evening it was difficult to tell the 40 original participants from the 60 friends who had been invited along!

Yes, even a Dad or two got carried away!

Pantomime Workshop

'Honestly! Did you ever think we could make a success of a pantomime?'

Teenagers and adults may have problems in understanding each other sometimes, but this 15 year old girl and a neighbour who is the mother of four, have no communication problems when a costume piece is going wrong and the scene is about to start!



In case you were wondering —  
the pantomime was 'Aladdin!'

Background Note

All the participants in these Tuesday evening activities belong to families who live in Moorpark, a small council housing estate in Govan, known until recently as 'Wine Alley'.

S.E.E. Govan Project is a 3 year intervention programme concerned with the total education of all children (0-16) who live in Moorpark. The work is done mainly with the significant adults in the children's environment, rather than with the children in isolation.

Govan Project Theory-in-action booklets are offered as both information and discussion documents.

D.G.  
January 1978

Doreen

B M 15

BASIC PRINCIPLES

August 1978

1. THEORY OF CHANGE

We all live in a 'field of forces' which operates like iron filings in a magnetic field, i.e. if the focus moves in one area, everything moves to create a new pattern. It is therefore pointless to concentrate on one element in the field without considering the resulting over-all change. The Project is concerned with the total educational pattern and so concentrates on changing norms in a complete district with the whole population, though concentrating on families with children between birth and sixteen.

2. PRINCIPLES

The first principle for the fieldworkers is that freedom in learning depends on the understanding of educational principles, not just practices. Sharing the Project's basic principles is the most fundamental element in all the Project's work with parents and professionals. These underlying principles can be summed up under three headings:

1. The importance of human groups (family, friends, committees, etc.) in the process of change.
2. The effect on children's learning of adult/child interaction.
3. The power of language for thought and reflection and the uses of analysis and synthesis of concepts in bringing about change.

3. PROCESSES/

### 3. PROCESSES

The principles are shared through patterns of work which, though different for each fieldworker, always consist of three components:

1. Widening Experience to achieve:
  - (a) Growing awareness of the whole environment.
  - (b) Confident grasp of the specialised world of school.
  
2. Language & Reflection sections which offer:
  - (a) Direct information about the uses and the power of language.
  - (b) Structured opportunities to use language for reflection and for expressing and clarifying emerging ideas.
  
3. Social Support by Fieldworkers individually and through organisation to sustain:
  - (a) Individuals as they move through change.
  - (b) Formal and informal groups as they struggle to take root and maintain existence.

### 4. GOAL

Principles are fully grasped when the learners are able to make their own unique expressions of those principles in practice.

The first phase of the Project consisted of fieldworkers initiating programmes which exemplified the basic principles within a series of practical situations.

The second phase, while continuing this work, must move towards a support of those individuals and groups who are preparing to initiate their own programmes.

This support involves us in a direct training function.

BM  
16  
B.60

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM GOVAN PROJECT TEAM  
CONCERNING THE POSSIBLE CONTINUATION OF  
THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES IN MOORPARK  
AFTER THE TERMINATION OF THE PROJECT

---

We understand from the SEE Steering Committee meetings that the Regional Education Department has recognised an obligation to the parents of Moorpark children to continue some of the activities developed over the past 2½ years by the Govan Project Team working with Moorpark parents and children.

As the Education Department is currently considering ways in which the work can continue, we would like the opportunity to express our views as a team on these matters. After two meetings of the team on Sunday 13th and Thursday 22nd February, the following recommendations were drawn up. However, we wish to stress that these recommendations were arrived at through our ongoing work with Moorpark parents over the past 2½ years. We understand that the parents themselves will be given the opportunity to express their views directly to Regional members and officials.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Activities

We strongly recommend that the following activities continue in Moorpark:

- (i) Community Library
- (ii) Group activities such as:  
Preschool Groups; Family Workshops; Summer Playscheme;  
Reading and Number Workshops; Parents and Teachers shared work, e.g. preparation for school and learning in the community.
- (iii) Individual educational support through home visiting and through parents in class with their own children.
- (iv) Any additional or alternative educational activities the local people themselves see as desirable.

2. Professional Support

We consider it vital that the families who have been intensively involved in the work of the Project be given access to informal professional support through the service of a full-time education worker based in Moorpark. In addition, access to a number of professional personnel not based in Moorpark is essential. These professional people should adopt a facilitating role to allow local people the opportunity to organise and run the desired activities.

60A6

### 3. Para Professionals

We urge that the payment of local leaders, e.g. those who have taken part in Neighbourhood Training Schemes, who are prepared to accept responsibility for running activities be instituted. The criteria for payment is currently under discussion, hence details of the scheme are not yet available.

### 4. Premises

To permit the continuation of the activities we urge that the lease of the house at 15 Orton Street be extended for a provisional period of at least one year. We also consider it necessary to permit the use of other premises such as the Project Centre and St. Gerard's Annexe.

### 5. The 2 Primary Schools

(i) We recommend a change of structure within the schools which allows the class teachers to make home/school liaison part of the school system. Additional staff in schools is one means of facilitating teachers to work with parents/children both in and out of school.

(ii) Appropriate preservice and inservice training to include various aspects of work with parents is necessary.

### 6. Management

To permit the expression of local needs, we recommend the setting up of a Joint Management Committee composed of parents and professionals. This Committee would have responsibility for the maintenance of educational activities in Moorpark only.

### 7. Resources

In addition to the essential access to professional skills, we recommend an annual grant to the Joint Management Committee.

### 8. Timing

To avoid discontinuity in the activities of the Project when the Project terminates in July, we recommend that the summer term be used as a handing over phase.

### 9. Other Areas

There are two views on how the Govan Project ideas and practice should be translated to other areas:

View A: Most members of the team are of the view that neighbouring communities to Moorpark, e.g. Summerton, Riverside, etc., be encouraged to use the institutional support currently available through Community Education, Govan Resource Centre and the schools. This would allow the gradual growth of the /

the ideas in neighbouring communities and avoid any criticisms of 'take-over'.

For other areas in Glasgow most of the team recommend the setting up of educational 'animators'

who would enter an area of Glasgow to encourage local people to set up activities along similar lines to those developed in Moorpark. After a period of time the group should transfer to another area, leaving behind a full time professional education worker responsible to a local Management Committee.

(This is the recommendation of 7 of the Project Team).

View B: It is recommended that home-liaison teachers and additional community personnel be appointed both in Govan and elsewhere in the city, with remits which cover a number of small sub areas (say the groups of areas which make up a primary school's catchment).

(This is the recommendation of 2 of the Project Team).

EW/JA  
5.3.79.

- (Sgd.)..... *Jean Aitken* ..... Jean Aitken
- ..... *Mary Dunese* ..... Mary Dunese
- ..... *Doreen Grant* ..... Doreen Grant
- ..... *Alan Locke* ..... Alan Locke
- ..... *Nancy McAdam* ..... Nancy McAdam
- ..... *T. Macdonald* ..... Tom Macdonald
- ..... *Teresa McLaughlin* ..... Teresa McLaughlin
- ..... *J. E. Wilkinson* ..... Eric Wilkinson
- ..... *D. J. Williamson* ..... David Williamson

STRATHCLYDE EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATION

GOVAN PROJECT



STRATHCLYDE REGIONAL COUNCIL  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STRATHCLYDE EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATION

GOVAN PROJECT

A PUBLIC REPORT

ERIC WILKINSON : DIRECTOR  
DOREEN GRANT : COORDINATOR  
DAVID J. WILLIAMSON : EVALUATOR

C O N T E N T S

Acknowledgments

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F : Dissemination of Information on S.E.E.

Sections 1, 2 and 3 of this report were written separately by the people responsible for the work in each area. (See pages 62, 63 - Project Roles.) Section 4 expresses the conclusions reached by the three authors together.

Eric Wilkinson, Project Director pages

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Jointly Written

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		All three Authors jointly		90-92

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Eric Wilkinson  
 Doreen Grant  
 David J. Williamson

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 Department of Education,  
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 Glasgow.

March 1978.

Govan Project Centre,  
 Broomloan Road  
 Govan,  
 Glasgow.

## PREFACE

The Strathclyde Experiment in Education is an action research project based in Glasgow. It was established in 1976 to counteract the educational disadvantages affecting children living in an inner-city area. By fostering a greater awareness in parents and professionals of the importance of adult/child interaction both in the home and in the school, it is hoped to create an environment more conducive to effective learning in children.

The Experiment was set up by Strathclyde Regional Council and the University of Glasgow in August 1976 and is funded by the following bodies:-

Strathclyde Regional Council  
Urban Renewal Unit, Scottish Development Department  
Notre Dame Educational Trust  
University of Glasgow  
Manpower Services Commission.

As the Experiment is at the halfway stage, it is considered appropriate to present a summary of the work to date.

This Public Report has three main functions -

1. To describe the background to the Experiment.
2. To present the progress made during the first 18 months of operation in Govan.
3. To draw some tentative conclusions about what has been learned.

The Report is intended for a wide readership, but in particular it is aimed at educational decision makers and practitioners - politicians, administrators, teachers, parents and other interested adults.

**SECTION I : POVERTY AND EDUCATION**

- 1.1 : Introduction
- 1.2 : Strathclyde, Deprivation and Education.
- 1.3 : Related Projects.
- 1.4 : A New Initiative in Strathclyde.
- 1.5 : Theory into Practice.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

There is extensive and impressive evidence to show that the current educational system is not effective for a large proportion of children. Many of the children who "fail" are to be found in "areas of need" where difficult social conditions are associated with a way of life divorced from the world of school. The potential and opportunity of young people brought up in "areas of need" are limited by low expectations, lack of understanding and negative reinforcements which are characteristics, not only of home, but of the school and of the community. \*

The Strathclyde Experiment in Education is an attempt to find a new approach to the education of children living in a small community in Govan. The Experiment is based on the concept of educational integration, which embraces the informal experiences in the family and neighbourhood, and the more formal experiences in school.

Situated in Moorpark Estate, the Experiment is focussed on the socialisation systems used by adults in shaping children's lives. Adults in each component of this intricate network - the family, community and school - are often ignorant of the extent of their influence in the development of intellect and social awareness. By working with parents, community leaders, teachers and other professionals, we are attempting to bring about a deeper understanding of partnership in education. To quote Earl Schaeffer:

*"We need a comprehensive view of education - the family, the community, the mass media, the school and the professions. All have a role to play, just as we do. Our role is to be leaders, organisers, resource persons, and consultants who build the strength of family, community, professions and institutions. We need an educational system which emphasises confidence, competence, and responsibility of the parent, which the professions too often take away."*

In searching for a way ahead in education it must be stated that educationists (be they academics, local authority administrators and/or teachers) cannot alone solve the problem - the roots of the problem run much deeper than the capacity of any one group. Solution depends on the pooling of energies to be found in the community itself, with a favourable political climate as well as the expertise and /

Footnote: In Section 1 of the Report the words 'home', 'school' and 'community' are generic terms and do not refer specifically to Govan.

and support from the educationists, the planners and other social agencies. But above all, it depends on a consensus within society as a whole that the concept of 'progress of mankind' incorporates a deep concern for the inequalities in our society.

Nevertheless, education has a crucial role to play in the regeneration of inner-city areas. It is through education that significant changes in attitude will be brought about - both in professionals and in parents.

Few can deny that we in Strathclyde are faced with an enormous problem of social deprivation and that the situation is more than an infringement of our notion of justice. Epidemics demand mass vaccination, but in this case the vaccine is not, and perhaps never will be, available. We are convinced that no one formula for the eradication of deprivation exists. All we know is something of the nature of the ingredients to encourage local residents to throw off the cloak of apathy and to awaken in the professionals a new sense of service to the community that needs them.

It is our hope that, as Scotland moves rapidly towards the twentyfirst century, the ideals of tolerance, love with responsibility, self-discipline and imagination, will be adopted.

## 1.2 STRATHCLYDE, DEPRIVATION AND EDUCATION

The 1971 Census Report and the work of the National Children's Bureau have brought to light the extent and complexity of urban deprivation in Strathclyde. In response, the Regional Council has declared its intention to tackle this serious social problem as a matter of urgency. In its first Report ("Multiple Deprivation") published in October 1976, three levels of the problem were identified.

### Material Level:

This refers to family poverty and primarily affects the low income group and the unemployed. The effect is to remove almost totally any choice for the healthy development of the family group. Stress, apathy and dependency are commonplace.

### Service level:

This refers primarily to the attitudes in the professional groups - health, education, police, social work, etc. Many members of these groups, perhaps subconsciously, fail to acknowledge the worth of human life, irrespective of the circumstances in which that life is being lived out. The effect on the disadvantaged is to convince them of the worthlessness and hopelessness of their situation, resulting in an almost total lack of positive motivation to work towards the amelioration of their depressing circumstances.

### Community level:

This refers to the psychological, self-defeating characteristics associated with particular communities which serve to reinforce such features as hopelessness, dependency, stigmatisation, etc.

The Report concludes :

*"that deprivation can only be tackled effectively by the co-ordinated response of members and officers from central and local government closely involved with the community in an educative, regenerative process."*

If, therefore, education is seen as an important component of the regeneration process in Strathclyde, what is the extent of our knowledge about the relationship between education and deprivation?

The literature abounds with evidence to show that the response to our present education system from those who are recipients of the service - chiefly children and parents - is vastly different between different social groups.

Eric /

\*

Eric Midwinter summarised some of the available evidence in the following table:-

TABLE I

	Sub-Normsville	Normsville	Super-Normsville
Poor reading ability at 7	35%	30%	20%
Selective or 'top stream' places at 11	17%	25%	45%
Number gaining five 0 levels	9%	20%	35%
Number staying in sixth form	8%	19.5%	30%
Number going on to higher education	3%	7.5%	16%

At each stage of the schooling process, children living in disadvantaged circumstances perform at an inferior level when compared with their more privileged peers. What is more, the above table shows that differentiation increases as children get older. If poor performance is one of the features of the psychological syndrome of deprivation, one may ask what effect schools themselves are having on those children from areas of social deprivation. Are they helping to alleviate the problem by giving those children a sense of purpose and hope, despite poor performance, or are they reinforcing or even exacerbating the problem by condemning them to frustration and desperation? This question has been and still is, a source of heated debate not only in education but in society at large.

Several studies support the view that many schools are indeed agencies for differentiation though there is, and perhaps never will be, any empirical support for the view that schools actually cause worthlessness, apathy and alienation. It is the considered opinion of the authors that there is a great deal of inherent value in schools. Schools can be places where joy is found in learning, where creative talent is fostered, but unfortunately schools have remained relatively unaffected by the changing values in society. We believe that the educational informal processes at work in the school have become divorced from those informal processes at work in the community. It is pointless attempting to attribute blame as we consider that both school and community need to become more aware of their impact on the learning of pupils. The formal and the informal must come closer together to minimise conflict and confusion and work towards a greater understanding of the needs of all concerned.

Irrespective /

\*Footnote: MIDWINTER, E. "Education for Sale" Allen & Unwin 1977.

Irrespective of where one stands on the schooling issue, we are faced with a further question of whether with a different approach, education can give birth to a new sense of purpose - a new sense of change in the times. Can indeed education convince the powerless that their plight is not a visitation of fate but a remediable condition?

The research evidence on this issue is equivocal. Initial results from such projects as Headstart and E.P.A. were not particularly acclaimed as successful. However, some recent evidence from the U.S.A. does indicate some tangible positive long term educational effects of Headstart.

1.3 RELATED PROJECTS

Headstart (USA)

This diverse programme, which began in 1965, in response to the Civil Rights unrest of the early sixties, was designed to increase the educational achievement of socially deprived children in the U.S. By 1971 the programme became the target of a bitter attack, the principal criticism being that whatever intellectual improvements are endowed on the participating children very rapidly fade away when they pass on to "normal" schooling. Now, however, sufficient time has elapsed to allow thorough longitudinal studies of individual programmes. All 96 studies that have been carried out so far indicate a persistent positive effect from early educational intervention. For example, one of the most dramatic results to emerge in the last year came from Gordon at the University of Florida. In his programme, which places great emphasis on parental involvement, only 1% of the Headstart children (of whom there were 200 in the study) had to be referred to special education classes. This compares with 30% in similar children not participating.

Headstart is still very much alive in the United States, many children involved in the early programmes being supported and monitored under Project 'Follow Through'.

The debate, which has surrounded the educational benefits of the programmes is a source of current controversy in the U.S.A.\*1 Although the evaluation of 'Follow Through' has cost \$30 million, conclusions about its effectiveness remain contentious. The present state of knowledge is expressed in the title of a recent paper by Ernest House et al. *"No Simple Answer : Critique of the Follow Through Evaluation"* \*2

Homestart (USA)

This project was established by the Office of Child Development some three years ago to increase the level of consciousness in children's lives. It grew out of an awareness in some of those associated with Headstart of the value of educating parents to work with their own children rather than educating children apart from their families.

To /

Footnotes: \*1 LAZAR, IRVING, et al. *"Preliminary Findings of the Developmental Continuity Longitudinal Study"* 1977. A paper presented at the Office of Child Development Conference entitled "Parents, Children and Continuity" held at El Paso, Texas. May 23rd 1977.

\*2 To appear in the Harvard Educational Review 1978.

To quote Earl Schaeffer:

"I think the goal of Homestart is to increase the level of consciousness in all parents, to make them aware of their importance in their children's lives, to help them obtain the information they need, to provide the help they need to be more effective with their children, and to make them aware of mass media and community resources that they can use in the education of their children. Then the professions and institutions must become more effective collaborators with those highly conscious parents. That means we need to develop a new consciousness in professionals - a consciousness that their role is not restricted to the school-age child in their classroom or the child in the day care center, but that their major role is in strengthening and supporting the family's care of the child, with a secondary role of supplementing but never supplanting family care."

#### 1.4 A NEW INITIATIVE IN STRATHCLYDE

##### Background

There are three interlocking strands that culminated in the establishment of the Govan Project in 1976.

- (i) Notre Dame pilot intervention work in Govan.
- (ii) The research collaboration between the University and Jordanhill and Notre Dame Colleges and also Renfrewshire Child Guidance Service.
- (iii) The initiatives taken by two Regional Councillors, the Regional Director of Education and the present Project Director.

To understand the background of the Govan Project, each component requires some explanation.

##### Notre Dame Pilot Study

The Notre Dame work had two stages. A preliminary study was made by the present Co-ordinator in various parts of Govan in 1974. This was concerned with the possibility of fostering language development in the home. In November 1974 Jordanhill College of Education recorded a section of this work in two video tapes entitled "Stairhead Seminar" and "The Concept of a Black Pudding". (See Appendix for a list of the S.E.E. video tapes).

Analysis of this work supplied two pointers for the next stage:

- (a) Language development work should be with all the significant adults in the child's environment.

Work should include not only parents and leaders within a community but professionals such as teachers, social workers, health visitors and community workers.

- (b) The most suitable geographical area was one in which some movement had already been made to improve basic material conditions. Within the areas already investigated in Govan, this pointed to the present Moorpark known at that time as "Wine Alley". A house modernisation and environmental improvement scheme was nearing completion at the time of selection.

In March 1975 the Project Co-ordinator was given a promise of support from Notre Dame Educational Trust to establish a small project in Moorpark for a period of two years. Glasgow Education Department agreed /

agreed to a part-time appointment for the Co-ordinator in a Govan Secondary School, to facilitate the work. In August a letter was sent by the Department to the local schools to invite them to co-operate in this small project. A survey of the 120 homes in Moorpark in which there were three to eight year olds was made, to find out if parents discussion groups would be acceptable. The response was very positive. In November 1975 a video tape "Join the Professionals" was made. This shows the positive response made by the professional groups approached, to the first small piece of educational work already done in some homes, and the interest in further home/school liaison.

Before the first year of this project was completed, the expansion into S.E.E. had been prepared .

### Research Collaboration

Since 1972 the University Department of Education has been involved in a small way with action research projects in two Centres - Rosevale and Ferguslie Park. The Rosevale Project was a joint Notre-Dame - Jordanhill College - Nursery School Project with an emphasis on language development. The present Govan Project Director assisted with the analysis of the statistical material collected for the evaluation.

Also in the preschool field, the University and Renfrew Child Guidance Service co-operated in studying different ways of promoting cognitive growth in disadvantaged children by involving the mothers in more structured work with their children.\*1

### The Setting up of S.E.E.

After the cancellation of the Computer Assisted Instruction (C.A.I.) Project in Glasgow in May 1975, two Regional Councillors (Cllrs. Cannell and Green) requested that the Education Department of Strathclyde Regional Council mount a project in the East End of Glasgow to improve the education of children living in disadvantaged circumstances. After a preliminary meeting with Mr. D. Burns (Depute Director of Education for Strathclyde Region), Cllrs. Cannell and Green, and the present Project Director, it was decided to set up a working party to devise a plan for a small well contained project somewhere in Strathclyde, preferably in Glasgow and preferably in the east end of Glasgow.

After much discussion, it was decided to mount a pilot project, not in the east end, but in an area where some work was already in progress. The present Project Co-ordinator, who became a member of the Working Party, was then requested to submit a scheme for the expansion and extension of her previous work in Moorpark, Govan. The plan was submitted in December 1975 and final agreement between Strathclyde Region, the Scottish Office, Glasgow University and Notre Dame Educational Trust was realised in May 1976. Advertising and appointing staff took place in July and August of that year, and the work began with the commencement of the 1976/77 school year.

\*Footnote: WILKINSON, J.E. and MURPHY, F. *Differential Methods of Enhancing Cognitive Growth in Urban Preschool Children.* Child: Care, Health & Development. 1976, 2,1-11.

agreed to a part-time appointment for the Co-ordinator in a Govan Secondary School, to facilitate the work. In August a letter was sent by the Department to the local schools to invite them to co-operate in this small project. A survey of the 120 homes in Moorpark in which there were three to eight year olds was made, to find out if parents discussion groups would be acceptable. The response was very positive. In November 1975 a video tape "Join the Professionals" was made. This shows the positive response made by the professional groups approached, to the first small piece of educational work already done in some homes, and the interest in further home/school liaison.

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Also in the preschool field, the University and Renfrew Child Guidance Service co-operated in studying different ways of promoting cognitive growth in disadvantaged children by involving the mothers in more structured work with their children.\*1

### The Setting up of S.E.E.

After the cancellation of the Computer Assisted Instruction (C.A.I.) Project in Glasgow in May 1975, two Regional Councillors (Cllrs. Cannell and Green) requested that the Education Department of Strathclyde Regional Council mount a project in the East End of Glasgow to improve the education of children living in disadvantaged circumstances. After a preliminary meeting with Mr. D. Burns (Depute Director of Education for Strathclyde Region), Cllrs. Cannell and Green, and the present Project Director, it was decided to set up a working party to devise a plan for a small well contained project somewhere in Strathclyde, preferably in Glasgow and preferably in the east end of Glasgow.

After much discussion, it was decided to mount a pilot project, not in the east end, but in an area where some work was already in progress. The present Project Co-ordinator, who became a member of the Working Party, was then requested to submit a scheme for the expansion and extension of her previous work in Moorpark, Govan. The plan was submitted in December 1975 and final agreement between Strathclyde Region, the Scottish Office, Glasgow University and Notre Dame Educational Trust was realised in May 1976. Advertising and appointing staff took place in July and August of that year, and the work began with the commencement of the 1976/77 school year.

\*Footnote: WILKINSON, J.E. and MURPHY, F. *Differential Methods of Enhancing Cognitive Growth in Urban Preschool Children.* Child: Care, Health & Development. 1976, 2,1-11.

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Attempts to change one area of school work, e.g. language across the curriculum, without changing the whole curriculum, are currently shown to be without substance. We do not have a choice, therefore, between work in school and work in the community; between preschool provision and adolescent development; between home/school relations and groupwork in class. All these elements and more must be tackled at the same time if human behaviour is to change. Moreover, cutting across all the elements are the powerful forces of accepted norms, roles and values. Many of these influences, from T.V. to the local attitude to chronic unemployment, are beyond the Project's scope. But there are some which come very close to the Project's area of work. A community's norms about regular school attendance may be at variance with those operating in the classroom. There may be wide divergence in the assumptions about the role of parent or of teacher. Effective change demands a framework for action which allows work in this diversity of areas, levels and values to form a co-ordinated whole.

The following principles emerge from this theory:-

- (a) Concentration on a geographical community which exhibits some clearly observable if undefined norms and values, rather than on selected individuals of matched I.Q., age, school, income, etc. whose unity is chiefly statistical.
- (b) A carefully selected set of educational principles to be exemplified in all work undertaken with the family as a whole or with any member. This encourages spontaneous reinforcement of new ideas, skills and attitudes when these are tentatively introduced by any member.
- (c) Direct work with teachers because of the new awareness in society that home/school mismatch is detrimental to education. Teachers to be given the opportunity to explore new home/school links and offered inservice work to sensitise and inform in-school activity.

(ii) Philosophical Position

It is possible to bring about change in a variety of ways, from the force of law to manipulation by skilful television advertisement. The Project is committed to change by consent through shared, informed experience (Freire). A respect for the individual, and for his freedom, is central to the Project. The team members act as facilitators and animators initially, while seeking opportunities to prepare emergent leaders in the community, and interested teachers in the schools, to replace them in their roles.

The philosophy is expressed in two ways:-

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1. by an attempt to share educational principles behind the work, and not merely the practices;
2. by a growth towards partnership in the work, which will result in joint decision-making.

(iii) Fundamental Educational Principles

(a) Cognitive Growth:

Language is central to human activity. Research has helped us to understand something of the power of words. For example, Vygotsky and Luria have shown that intelligence grows through the use of cognitive language such as that necessary for problem solving. They have made it clear that language is a vitally important tool for storing and retrieving information, as well as for planning and for changing plans and ideas.

*"The Word, handing on the experience of generations as this is incorporated in language, locks a complex system of connections in the child's cortex and becomes a tremendous tool, introducing forms of analysis and synthesis into the child's perception which he would be unable to develop by himself."*

A central place is given in the Project's work to foster this kind of conceptual language through a variety of activities.

(b) Language Functions:

Project activities include the use of current work on language skills and functions (Tough, Halliday). Attention is given to creating a climate in which these skills may be valued, by sharing simply with parents and other interested adults the theories on which the action is based.

(c) Communication:

Thinking skills have to be matched by communication patterns. The Project's activities are designed to offer experience in adult/child interaction which lead to a position in which the adult is not expected to be the fount of knowledge, but a partner in a joint search. The principle that no one person possesses knowledge as a finished product, but that knowledge is always growing through shared effort, is demonstrated in the style of Project activities.

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If this kind of skill with words, which allows knowledge to be formed by interaction is not valued in the home, and not seen in the school to be vital for all pupils, not merely those interested in higher studies, the position is reached which Bernstein describes:

*"A tiny percentage of the population has been given access to the principles of intellectual change, whereas the rest have been denied this access."*

(iv) Programme Patterns : Informed Experience.

The proof of the Project is in the practice. Language skills cannot be used in a vacuum. They are tools within the social situation of the home, community and classroom. Social groupings, such as family and school class, are themselves subject to change as the higher language skills of cognition and communication are developed. Growth in knowledge and self esteem, in skills of organisation and sharing, are not achieved without stress. To offset the tensions aroused by these changes, the Govan Project offers not only ideas and educational experiences, but a support system of discussion groups, personal consultations and material facilities.

This report offers the fruit of 18 months search for patterns of work which might give children an integrated educational setting in home and school. Each area of work described in the following pages has been refined and adapted to reach its present state of development. Step by step details are available in Project records, transcripts of weekly discussions with parents, and interview schedules with parents, Headteachers and Promoted teaching staff. Here we are concerned with offering some tentative findings in the form of practices which exemplify the Project principles with some degree of success.

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SECTION 2	:	THE GOVAN PROJECT
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## 2.1 LOCATION AND FACILITIES

### Govan

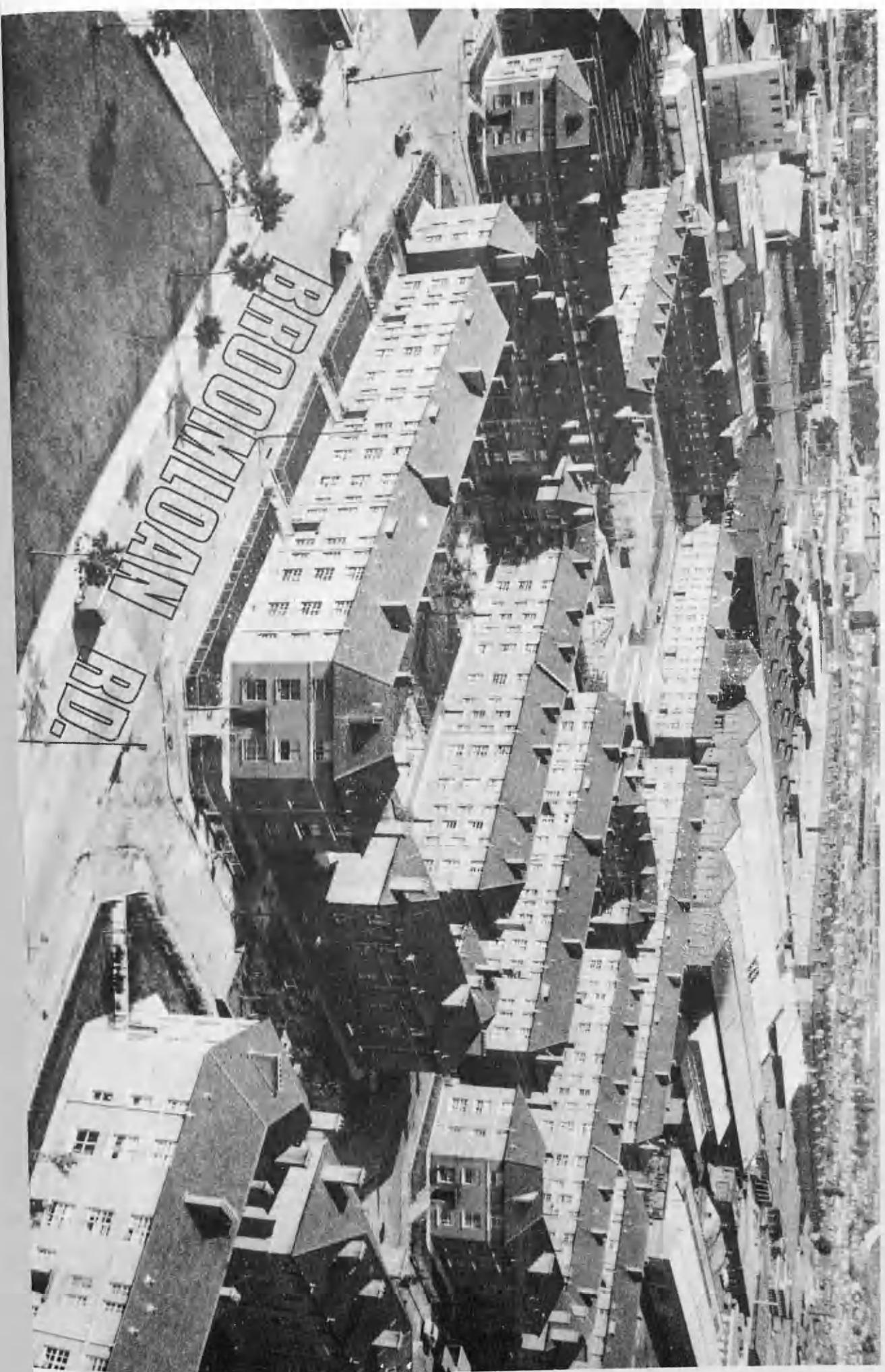
Govan is currently the subject of a comprehensive development plan. There is a major demolition and rebuilding process in progress. This includes new industrial developments as well as homes. The majority of houses will be owned by the local authority. Old houses are either being modernised or demolished, and new houses are being erected in compact groups. Two of these estates, Riverside and Burndyke Court, are now occupied. Throughout Govan great areas have been flattened and roads laid down preparatory to the next phase of building. This means that a new Govan is in the process of being built. The whole area was scheduled for completion by 1976. This is now seen to have been unrealistic, but a good deal of new property will be ready for use before 1980.

People are, therefore, moving into Govan, and will do so increasingly in the next few years. Educational work done in this area will come at a moment when families are beginning life in a new area or in revitalised surroundings, and can more easily consider different socialising and educational patterns.

### Moorpark Estate, Govan

The Govan Project does not extend throughout Govan, but is confined to Moorpark, a small housing estate, built in 1934, near the point where Govan and Ibrox meet. This particular area has not been demolished and rebuilt. The houses have been modernised and the environment improved, but the estate will never compete with the new housing groups planned for a major part of Govan. It will, therefore, continue to be a relatively disadvantaged area. Moorpark known until 1974 as "Wine Alley", is a small, inter-war, housing estate of 516 houses and approximately 1,700 inhabitants. The photograph shows both the layout of the estate itself and its setting among factories and the Glasgow Underground Maintenance Depots. Current modernisation of the Underground has added a sea of mud and a nerve-wracking level of noise to an already depressing area. Broomloan Road, which is a major link between Govan Road and the Motorway, gives the only access point to the Estate.

### Moorpark Facilities /



## Moorpark Facilities

This small estate was built without any shops, schools, churches or meeting places of any kind. Recent environmental improvement included the building of a small Tenants' Hall in 1975. It consists of a large, single room with a movable partition, plus a small office, kitchen and toilet facilities. The Hall was built to provide accommodation for Tenants' Association meetings concerned mainly with matter of housing and the environment, including such concerns as local vandalism. It has a second function; that of a social centre for the area. As well as the Tenants' Association Committee, there is a Social Committee which is responsible for Hall management. The Hall also provides certain local services, such as a pay-phone, old people's meals and playgroup facilities. Potentially, it is a centre for any Tenants' Group wishing to set up a community activity of any kind for themselves, though at present, activities are of a type which require no professional input, since the present Hall Management Committee allow into the Hall only tenants of Moorpark.

## Moorpark: Criteria for Selection

Moorpark has a number of specific features which make it particularly suitable for a pilot study.

### 1. Size

The estate is a small, compact area with a child population of 500 between the ages of 0 and 16.

### 2. Community Stability and Community Morale

The modernisation of 516 houses which was begun four years ago has now been completed. The same families continue to live in the area but there is a new sense of community and in some families an awareness that the area has been given a new start.

### 3. Data

The necessary information about the community, the families, the children and the schools has already been collected to a large extent.

(a) The sociological background of the area was investigated in a study completed in 1974.

(b) The Housing Department carried out a survey of the housing, including family size and family composition in 1973/74. This information, plus the school registers, has been made available to the Project Team. The fieldwork is based on this data, as is the evaluation.

### 4. Contact

Prior to the setting up of S.E.E., relationships within the community and the local schools has been established through the Notre Dame pilot study.





2.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD EDUCATION

2.2.1 The Community Library

(a) The Library and the Public Library Service

Moorpark is more than a mile from Elderpark, the nearest Public Library. Because of this, the Glasgow District Library Service agreed to help the Project set up a small Community Library in the living room of the Project House. This is under the care of the Project's Literacy Worker, who works closely with the libraries in the southwest of Glasgow, where she was given some initial training. The southwest libraries also provide the majority of the books in the Community Library, though some books have been bought by the Project and 1,200 others (mainly paperbacks) have been donated by Moorpark residents. The Literacy Worker keeps in close contact with the Children's Librarian at the local library, so that Moorpark acts like an outstation for Elderpark. For example, a Hallowe'en Competition throughout the City Libraries, called "Make a Monster" brought Elderpark the highest number of awards in the city (nine). Two of these prizes were won by the Project Library entries. The Literacy Worker is now involved in promoting the new magazine written by children which Elderpark Library will edit for the southwest.

(b) The Library and the Schools

The local schools are very aware that the Project Library gives the Moorpark children special assistance. While a small amount of help can be given to whole classes in a school by the Project Library, the Literacy Worker saw a greater assistance in linking the local school with the Elderpark Library and acted as facilitator in setting this up. The Children's Librarian from Elderpark has now built up his own relationship with both St.Saviour's and Copeland Schools and they, in turn, have become involved in special library events, such as the Christmas Card Competition.

(c) The Library and the Community

Within Moorpark the library is our main contact point with the community as a whole. It has acted as an introductory area for many residents, both those who were interested in our other Project activities but were uncertain how to begin participating, and those who were unaware initially that the Project offered more than a book library. The Literacy Worker is in touch with local people at all ages and stages. Parents, grandparents, teachers, children, use the library as a resource. Many fathers of families visit the library, often bringing their children along in a family group.

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## 2.2.2 FAMILY BASED LEARNING

### (a) LEARNING NETWORKS:

Within the wider community are smaller support systems consisting of groups of families interacting at an incidental, informal, "neighbourhood" level. One obvious example is a kind of extended babysitting by which children are at home in a limited number of households in the district. These groupings often arise from physical proximity; for example, neighbours in one close. Ideas spread easily within such groups. Not only do they form good communication systems; they are also supportive of innovation. Some co-ordinated activities, such as family care, shopping and home maintenance are common. During modernisation of the houses, ideas about decoration and refurnishing flowed freely among these groups. We have now some evidence that educational ideas introduced by a few members of these groups have spread in the same fashion to other members. Two mothers often form the nucleus of such groups. They support each other in attending Project activities. If one cannot come, the other brings both families. This secure, central group then tries to encourage other neighbours to join them. It is on this powerful though unstructured network that much of the Project work is built.

### Parents Discussion Groups:

Research findings in many countries confirm the need for parent/child interaction as one component in the educational system. Awareness of the need to offer parents both theory and practice in this field, together with an appreciation of the power of informal parent groups, led to the original "stairhead seminars" in which small groups of parents spent one hour per week in a discussion session which contained serious educational ideas, woven into an entertaining meeting. In the eighteen months since S.E.E. was set up, these groups have increased and diversified, evolving patterns which contain a greater "whole family" emphasis, though still retaining a small "parents only" section.

### Families and Groups of Families:

*"Why do we no' have it at night, an' bring the weans?"*

(Mother of three, March 1976)

The movement from meetings for parents only to family-based sessions was led by parents, who were in their turn responding to pressure from their children. Discussion group sessions concerned with the skills involved in giving accurate verbal directions had centred on the following of instructions in making simple games. These games-making activities led to requests for sessions where the whole family could learn together. Some children - and a few fathers - wanted to take part in these sessions which they could see gave the mothers so much enjoyment. In other cases mothers had a less positive reason for requesting the change. Their shy, unsure /

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unsure introduction of messy activities like puppet making into households in which the fathers were used to having peace to watch T.V. caused tensions in the home which they preferred to avoid by learning and teaching these new skills elsewhere.

The movement itself offered two useful avenues for progress:

- (i) The increased "fun" aspect attracted new members, who could be offered the educational experience first and then invited to reflect on the meaning in later discussion sessions.
- (ii) Opportunities for changing patterns in family relationships occurred. Because adults and children were both learning something new, there was an easy flow between giving and receiving help. The parent no longer needed to be the source of information, or feel threatened by his own lack of knowledge when the child understood an idea before him.

(b) EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS:

Theory and practice meet neatly together in the workshop format, where the sessions can be arranged to ensure that:

- (i) parent/child interaction is necessary for success in the work on hand;
- (ii) a major part of the interaction is round a cognitively-challenging task;
- (iii) it includes practice in the use of conceptual language.

Family Workshops were the Neighbourhood Tutor's first attempt to put these principles into operation. Ideas and numbers have grown in the second year to include workshops in Pantomime and in Puppet-Making.

In the Reading Workshop the Primary Link Teachers had put the same principles into practice round the family side of a school-oriented task, reading. Toy Library sessions for mothers with young children are the Preschool Worker's version of these same ideas, applied to the family-based education of very young children. Parent/Professional Workshops are now beginning with health visitors. These will give opportunity for adults to deepen their practical grasp of the principles underlying the educational components of their work with families with very young children.

Visual records (video and photographs) are available for the following Workshops:

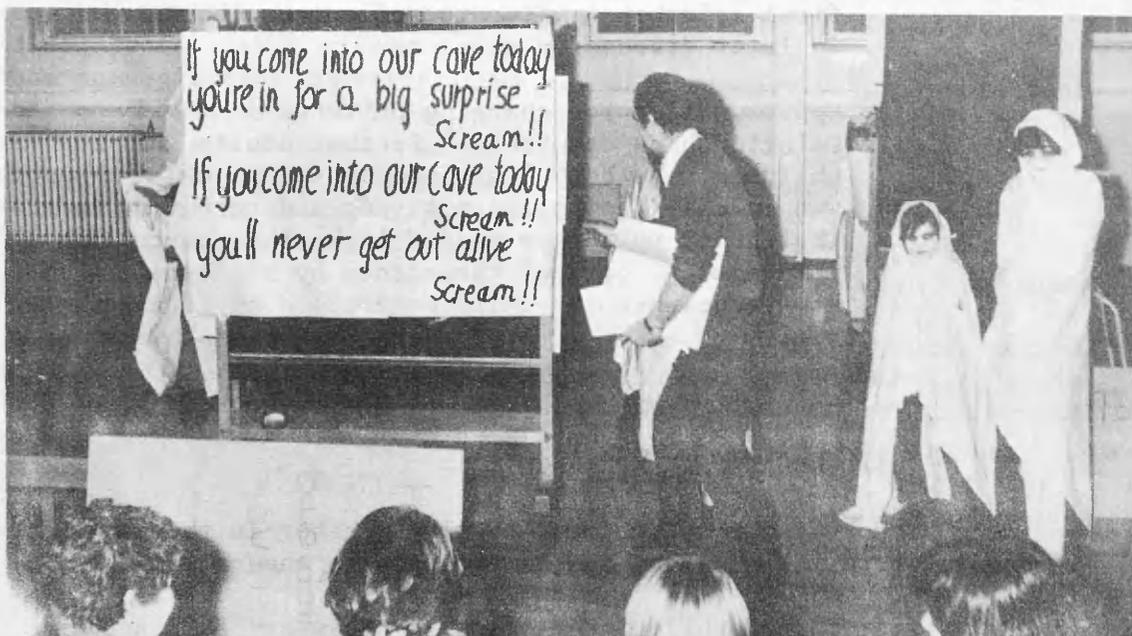
Pantomime, Puppets, Reading, Toy Library.

Pantomime Workshop

## Pantomime Workshop

*"Honestly! Did you ever think we would make a success of a pantomime?"*

(Father of three)



In the first term of the second year, the work transferred from the House to the Project Centre because of increasing numbers. It developed, with the aid of a drama specialist, into a Pantomime Workshop with 14 families taking part. The organisational challenge of producing a recognisable pantomime without breaking up family groups was overcome by having three distinct casts performing one act each.

The Workshop only lasted for six weeks. On the last night, the 40 members of the cast, parents and children from the 14 families, invited friends to come and join them. It remained a Workshop session so that, by the end of the evening, it was difficult to distinguish the 40 original members from the 60 invited guests, since all were taking part in the activity. A pictorial record of the Pantomime is contained in a picture booklet which is in preparation, entitled "See a Tuesday!"

Some /

Some quotes from that evening may give a flavour of the proceedings:

*"The children are so different in the back-court because of this pantomime. I never have to lift the window these days and shout at them. They are so happy making up their parts, they seem too busy to annoy each other!"*

(Mother of four)

*"They don't have a Project like this in the Riverside Scheme. I've been saying we'd go over there and give them some ideas."*

(Two Mothers)

Moorpark Muppets

After the Pantomime - Puppets.

The original Family Workshops took place in the Project House on Tuesday evenings. About six families took part and made items like kites, masks, puppets, and finally a paper dragon. In June these were brought together in a first attempt at a street play. This work, which can be seen on video, shows the enthusiasm of the families for the Workshop format, the potential for language work through drama, and the need for larger premises to allow more families to take part. By the time the move was made to the larger rooms of the Project Centre, a Pantomime was the seasonal activity. But not all parents were happy with drama activities. A mother who never came to the Pantomime had been so overwhelmed when she first followed the Neighbourhood Tutor's directions and completed a game successfully by herself that she had said "I feel like a genius". With this in mind, the choice of activity for January was kept wide. The families saw in puppet-making the possibility of combining handwork and drama skills. This work is in progress now, as this report is being written.

To keep the practical and theoretical sides of Project activity parallel, the evenings are arranged in two sessions. For the first hour and a half, the families work at making the puppets or planning their performance. The work is then cleared away and while the children are looked after downstairs, the parents gather in the old classroom which serves as the Project lounge, for tea. Some of the principles behind the evening's activities are then put before them; for example, the function of language in the storage and retrieval of information is shown through a guided discussion on the value of clear directions in puppet making when the parent is trying to learn the process for herself, while helping all her children to make their puppets at the same time.

The Reading Workshop /

## The Reading Workshop

*"I know you've got to help him with his books at night, but I lose my temper when he cannae read the words."*

(Mother of five year old)

In many schools in Scotland, parents are expected to "hear" children read during the child's first years in school. The parents do not necessarily know how to do this in an effective and enjoyable way. As the Link Teachers visited parents of five year olds, they became aware that reading at home was often a puzzling and painful process. At the same time the Link Teachers were themselves learning new ideas about the reading process by following the Open University Reading Development Diploma Course.

In April 1977 they set up a first Reading Workshop for parents and their five year olds. It ran one evening per week for eight weeks. This was an attempt to share with parents the principles developed in the Open University Course. The success of this venture led to a new series of Reading Workshops for parents whose children began school in August 1977. A third Reading Workshop is now in progress as this report is being prepared. The Workshop's aim is to involve the whole family in games which will help to motivate the child to learn to read and also to consolidate the work being done by the schools. There is a special emphasis that reading at home is "fun".



### "The Games Sessions

We adapted games which the family already knew, including

'Bingo', 'I Spy', etc., before introducing them to further reading games. We then offered a game called 'The Footstep'. This involved parents and children in cutting out a variety of large and small feet, using family feet as templates! They then wrote sounds on the feet and placed one foot behind the other on the floor, so creating a 'road' of sounds. The game consisted of keeping one's balance while stepping from foot to foot. Each step had to be preceded by saying the sound before placing the foot on top of it. This game could be extended by using words, numbers, etc., and afforded an opportunity for the whole family to participate. The first set of footsteps was cut out at the Reading Workshop and parents and children in each family worked together to create their game. During these sessions the Reading Workshops were very lively and noisy.

Examples of games devised by the parents between Workshop Sessions have shown that the principles being developed are showing practical and enjoyable results at home."

*"I wish my older kids had had this when they were starting school."*

(Mother of three)

The above is an extract from the Link Teachers' Report on Workshop Activities, February 1978.

All work in the Govan Project aims to give parents principles as well as practices. It is, therefore, not enough to involve parents in making games; they have also to have the opportunity of discussing the principles behind these games. The evening sessions, therefore, have two components:

1. Games which can involve the whole family.
2. Discussion with the parents which includes amusing learning situations for them.

The following is an extract from the Link Teachers' Report of a Reading Workshop discussion session held on 2nd November 1977:

"We had made up a chart, based on the Open University Course, which was a very simple story using an invented alphabet. We asked parents for their first reaction on seeing this chart. 'Mrs. Kellas' said: *"It looks like Chinese!"* Another reaction was: *"In no way will we ever read that!"* We then discussed how a child feels when faced with a page of print. By this time the parents /

parents were beginning to see the child's difficulties because they were experiencing these problems themselves.



The big difference was in the parents' ability to verbalise their experience. We tried to make them realise this by noting that the child can't say, 'That looks like Chinese' or 'Where do you begin?' "

#### Workshops concerned with the Under Fives

*"I think your children take an interest if you're playing in the games with them and say, 'Oh imagine - my mammy's in it!' "*

#### Toy Library Sessions

A very small scale version of a Workshop is available for preschool children and their parents. The children with the least outside help are the two to three year olds, so toy library provision is offered to these parents first, though parents who ask to use the library for preschool children of any age are welcome.

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The work consists in periods of play in which mother, child and Project Preschool Worker take part together. This play takes place in the toy library room of the Project House. Originally a small bedroom, one wall of the room has now a series of shelves on which are arranged toys that can help in the development of manipulative and cognitive skills. These toys are for present use and also for borrowing, so below the shelves hang drawstring bags in a variety of bright colours, ready for the child to carry away his "toy of the week". The rest of the room is designed to allow painting, clay, sand, water-play.

0 to 2 Year Olds: Parent/Professional Workshops

Work for very young children which should lead to parent/professional workshops is now being attempted in conjunction with the Health Visitors. In September 1977 the Project took five places in the Open University Course, "The First Years of Life", and invited parents and Health Visitors to the Project Centre for joint viewing sessions. These were followed by half-hour discussion periods. In December the group sent a joint letter to the Open University, submitting their comments. Now, as this report is being written, parents and Health Visitors are planning to extend some areas of particular interest in the O.U. Course by making their own video material. The first area will be on the very beginnings of language development. One exercise suggested in an O.U. booklet is concerned with the responses a baby gives, when only a few weeks old, to the smiles and speech of his parents. The Parent/Health Visitor Workshop Group is beginning to plan a local video of this interaction, to be shown to other interested parents and professionals.

3 to 5 Year Olds: Playgroup Workshops

The Glasgow P.P.A. already run Workshops in Govan. The Project's Preschool Worker, who acts as support and resource person to the Moorpark Playgroup, is currently leading two sessions in the present course for all Govan playgroups.

Other Preschool Services

Workshops are not, of course, the only way in which principles and practices can be shared. The preschool area is particularly rich in potential, though little use was being made of available resources in Moorpark when the Project began. During Year 1 of the Project the Preschool Worker conducted a survey which gave the Evaluator information about knowledge and attitudes in Moorpark to organised preschool education. This showed that nine children between the ages of 3 and 5 were being affected by the agencies available. The parents too were given information during this survey. The times, organisation and particular benefits of playgroup and nursery were explained to them, together with the details of the Project's Toy Library. By the end of the Project's first year there were 34 children receiving regular preschool education out of a total of 48 children eligible.



Now, in 1978, the 3 to 8 year olds have three possible areas of provision:

1. the Playgroup which is being held in the Tenants' Hall and is now completely in the hands of the parents;
2. the Nursery, in which there is a very exciting and imaginative programme of education;
3. the Project's Toy Library.

A videotape "Play with Me" shows something of all these services. It also underlines the need for adults to understand the principles behind these practices. The Project is committed to sharing underlying educational principles with the adults involved. The Preschool Worker, therefore, offers a discussion session for parents of 3 to 5 year olds. This is based on the Open University Course "The Preschool Years" and runs on similar lines to the early course which is shared with Health Visitors. Further work in which parents who have become acquainted with the principles, are being prepared to hand on their knowledge to other parents, is described in a later section of this report.

(c) /



(c) HOME VISITING:

Parents who find none of these services suitable are visited at home by the Preschool Worker, partnered by a neighbour, and offered a home-based play session. Home visiting is also undertaken by the Link Teachers.

The possibility of intruding is very obvious, and home visiting has to be handled with the greatest care. The service is offered with a constant awareness that it is a privilege to be invited into another person's home. Initial contacts are brief and consist of an introduction on the doorstep with an offer to call later with some relevant material; toys and play material for preschoolers, samples of the child's work for primary children.

Home visitors were rarely left on the doorstep, even at the initial stage. Interest in their children's progress and appreciation of the home visitor's efforts were universal, even where understanding of the educational ideas involved was minimal initially. Now, after 18 months, the team members have become familiar figures in Moorpark.

For /

For a large number of families, home visiting has been a valuable service through which a great deal of direct work has been achieved in a small number of well prepared visits. Learning has been two-way, as the home visitors have discovered how many statements which are seen as simple explanations in an educational setting, sound like meaningless jargon in a different context.

(d) LANGUAGE AND EXPERIENCE CYCLES:

This set of meetings brings together some of the most important features of the family-based education. The practical focus in each series of the Language and Experience Cycles is an experience which is readily available but may not be within the family's repertoire of activities, because the parents themselves have not been introduced to the ideas.

*"The only thing I know about a tree is it changes its leaves - you know - maybe every month or something like that - I'm going back to when I was at school in fact. I mean, I never actually looked at a tree. I've never actually seen a tree getting planted and then growing up. Stuffed birds - I remember getting stuffed birds but no' actually going away to look at something live in the country or in the zoo, or that."*

(Mother of six)

*"See all this about shells and things on the shore? I've been to the seaside often. I never knew there was anything there but sand and water."*

(Mother of four)

### The Pattern

Each series has a three-step pattern: Prepare; Act; Reflect.

1. Prepare.

The parents prepare the outings at weekly meetings, taking usually half a term to reach the event. These meetings have an element of factual learning about the proposed visit, such as the kinds of animals one might expect to see in a zoo; the seashells to be found on the Clyde coast; leaf identification in preparation for the visit to Blairvadach or to a local park. The sessions emphasise how little a person need know of the subject initially, and the importance of information search rather than of being a complete fount of knowledge. The Project Library is one major source of information which is easily approached. Other, less easily reached sources, are requested by the Project Team to supply information, though occasionally letters are written by the parents also to people like the Glasgow Planning Department and the City Zookeeper. Throughout the whole planning exercise there is an effort to show that ignorance is a normal human condition and information search a "respectable process" to be enjoyed publicly.



Where possible, the parents have a preparatory visit on their own before returning with the children.

2. Act

The actual event is planned as a search for knowledge, pursued by the family co-operatively. There is a constant emphasis on the basic principle that a concept is learned by isolating its salient features. This is usually done by family competitions, planned beforehand by the parents. Tiny prizes are offered for the family who can supply the best classification under a variety of headings; for example, "Five different kinds of shells", "The best collection of different leaves", "The longest and the smallest feathers", "Fruits from four different trees". The visual records show how exciting the families found these exercises, and how much the events were enjoyed by all the members.





3. Reflect

The great family satisfaction which these outings engender, leads to serious reflection on the part of the parents. At these discussions, after the children are back in school, the parents spontaneously express the changes in their family interaction patterns during the outing. There is an opportunity at this part of the course to show that a different organisation and a different pattern of questioning and verbal interaction, causes totally different behaviour in their children.

*"See when you go an ordinary outing to the seaside? The children don't ask questions - it's just 'ice cream' and 'potato crisps!' But here they were running to their mothers - or to someone else's mother - to say, 'Is this a rough stone?' or a smooth shell, or whatever they were supposed to be collecting "*

*"Oh and the competition! My family were so determined!"*  
(Extract from group conversation June 1977)

There are many indications now that the educational significance of these events is clearly understood. A spiral effect is expected from this series of exercises. The reflection sessions are likely to become a higher form of preparation for further action.

Project team members working in other fields often hear parents offer information and ideas which show that they have assimilated a principle and can transfer the experience from one event, such as an outing, to a totally different event, such as a reading workshop or a play session.

Visual records have been made of these Language and Experience spirals:

- Autumn 1976 ... Bus Tour of Govan ... Video "Upstairs Only".
- Spring 1977 ... Calderpark Zoo ... Black and white photographs.
- Summer 1977 ... Clyde Coast Visit ... Video of reflections in "More than an Outing".
- Autumn 1977 ... Fruit and Leaves in ... Autumn. Colour photographs.



colour, shape and size, the skills of threading and building, and the possibility of imaginative play. The mothers then had to consider how they would introduce these ideas to new mothers in their groups.

The training discussions are taped. The following comments came from transcripts of these sessions.

#### Self concept.

*"Since I've been coming up here, I think I could tackle talking to anybody. Maybe no' speaking to them in the right way, but I wouldn't be embarrassed to talk to anybody."*

#### Forming a New Group.

*"You just have to kind of talk to them in the street if you see them and if they're willing to come, you give them an opportunity to come up to the house, or you bring them up to your own house and talk to them there, or you say, 'We'll be having an outing in March, but you'd need to come to preparation sessions if you wanted your weans to get to it.'"*

#### Training Procedure.

*"..... and then the second session could be led by you and the parents would know whether they went right or wrong, and they could ask you questions. They could say, 'Did I do that right?' Is that the right words I used?' and if it wasn't right, well, she could maybe - you could maybe speak, showing them what kind of words to use, and how to put more spirit into the conversation, and show them how to ask the group to speak up, you know, and bring more questions into it."*

#### Response to Training.

*"You're better speaking to someone, and them talking to, as being silent, even if you put your foot in it - is that what you're saying?"*

While some of these parents may wish to commit themselves to filling regular roles over a considerable period, as the Library assistant has done, others are interested in acquiring a skill for its own sake. They want to understand the skills and concepts behind /

behind our activities. So in many ways, the people we call our Neighbourhood Education Workers are a changing group and the scene will be different with each report. For example, the mother who began helping in the Reading Workshop one term has had a new baby and will not be able to come out in the evening sessions for next term. Two young men, who had been unemployed for some time, showed an interest in training but, after several sessions they left for full time employment. As the scene changes, so the skills in the neighbourhood grow. This should mean that the parents who have learned something in the training sessions will have an increased assurance and skill to hand on to their own families. They might also perpetuate the ideas in informal family groups, whether support was available or not from formal organisations. This aspect of the work can only be assessed years after the Project is over.

2.3 EDUCATION IN SCHOOL

2.3.1 Teaching in the Inner City

Research into differences in educational achievement, attitudes and motivation, shows that children from inner city areas perform very differently from children of matched I.Q. from suburban areas. The results show undeniably that inner city children and schools are mismatched. There is much less information on possible solutions to the problem.

The Project's work in school is concerned, therefore, with:

- (a) bringing teachers the opportunity to consider the special teaching needs of inner city;
- (b) offering the schools the support necessary to allow these heavily committed teachers to explore the educational needs and the resources available.

2.3.2 The Primary Schools

St. Saviour's School

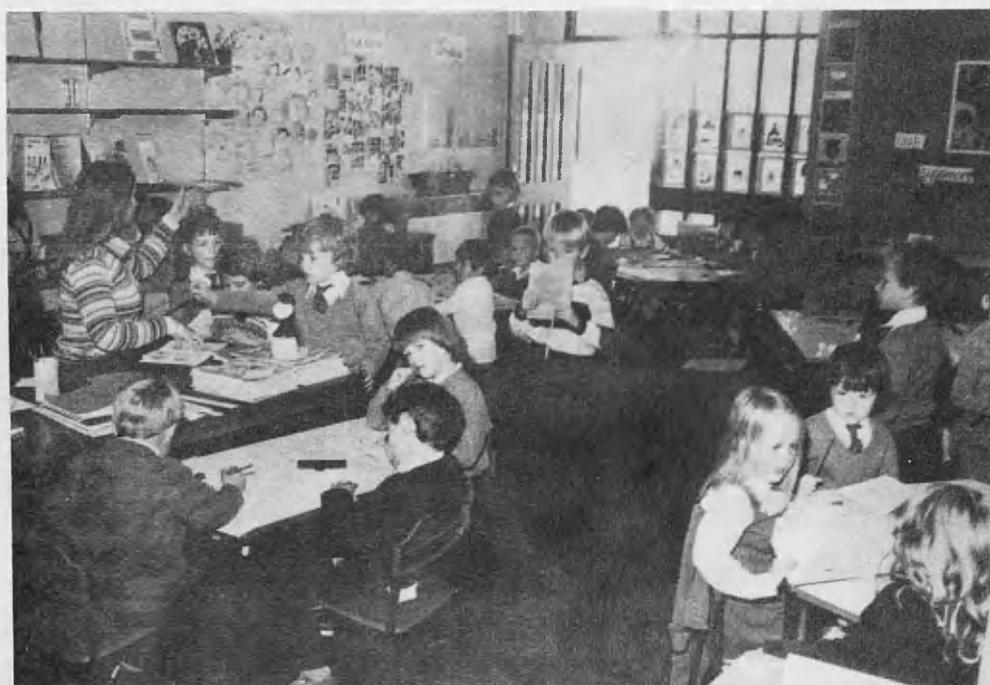
Copeland School



A total of 220 Moorpark children attend the two Primary Schools.



COPELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL (389)  
transferred from its Victorian building  
to an open plan school in August 1976.



ST. SAVIOUR'S PRIMARY SCHOOL (541)  
moved to open plan in August 1977.

## Background to the Work

The Project is committed to the theoretical position that the whole family influences the attitudes and educational skills of each individual member. Because of this we are concerned with affecting the education of all children between the ages of 0 and 16, both in their community and in the five schools (one Nursery, two Primary and two Comprehensives) which the majority of Moorpark children attend. Obviously, such a widely based programme could not be initiated at once. The Project's initial concentration, therefore, was on three to eight year olds, with the intention of moving gradually towards those adults and agencies concerned with older children. This plan is reflected in the area of school work emphasised in this Report.

The five schools attended by the majority of Moorpark children were first contacted in 1975 while the present Project Co-ordinator was carrying out the preliminary work described in Section 1.4. In December 1975 the Head Teachers expressed the view that they would wish to be associated with further work with the parents. Additional teachers were proposed for both primary and secondary schools, but when the Project concentrated its resources initially on families with children under eight, the secondary work was postponed until year 2, and additional teachers were considered for primary schools only.

Unlike the work in the community, the Project's school based work had no previous pilot study on which to form its pattern. The school work, therefore, had to go through a rapidly changing pilot stage in the first year, which is documented briefly here.

After acceptance of the S.E.E. proposals by the funding bodies, the Primary schools were approached regarding the appointment of an additional teacher. The Assistant Headteachers (early years) were involved in selecting the teacher to be attached to their schools. The remit of this additional teacher was predominantly infant work, both to help the Assistant Headteacher in the teaching of basic skills and to facilitate the release of teachers for inservice work, but during the first term of the Project it became clear that these teachers were having contact with a minority of Moorpark children. As the work of these teachers outside the school was concentrated in Moorpark, it was considered necessary for them to get to know the Moorpark children both in the school context and in the family context. Hence, after a period of uneasy negotiations with the schools, the role of this teacher changed from remedial work to a linking and facilitating agent between home and school, with the title of 'Link Teacher'.

From November 1976, P1 to P3 class teachers were given the choice of team teaching or grouping the Moorpark children. Thus, where a class teacher did not wish co-operative teaching with the Link Teacher in the classroom, the Link Teacher worked with the Moorpark children by taking small groups in a separate room or corner, the latter being the case in the open plan situation. In these /

these small groups, individual attention was given to the Moorpark children for a short period each week. The work the Link Teacher did with the child in school was discussed with the parent when the Link Teacher visited the home of that child, so that the parent could support and extend the inschool work.

Being a community based project, several problems have arisen by attempting to work with only 25% of the school population. In some respects, one may perceive this situation within the school as divisive. On the other hand, one may consider the work the Link Teachers are doing, to be a model for extension throughout the school.

Now that the Link Teachers are familiar with the majority of Moorpark children attending Primary school, and the schools more at ease with the kind of work the Link Teacher is doing, the distinction between Moorpark and non-Moorpark children is no longer seen as a major problem.

In year 2 the Link Teachers' role in the school is beginning to emerge clearly. This has two main aspects - one is concerned with the Link Teachers work within the confines of the classrooms and is related to that often misunderstood concept, underachievement.

The Project is not concerned with remedial education programmes, nor with ranking children in relation to one another, nor with trying to make every child reach a standardised average. Underachievement is about performance in relation to one's own potential. In this view a child with average or above average reading skills, could still be seriously underachieving in relation to his own high level capabilities as recorded by some other measure. The Project is concerned with helping each child achieve his own potential. To do this the Link Teacher works with every Moorpark child, and tries to meet his educational needs at that moment. The work is done in close co-operation with the class teacher and often consists simply of carrying out the work assigned by the teacher. In this way the class numbers are reduced, when both Link Teacher and Class Teacher have the opportunity for individualised work with small groups. In the past year Link Teachers, in consultation with the Assistant Head, Lower School, have introduced the series 'Language in Action' into the situation, and both Moorpark and non-Moorpark have benefitted. A few class teachers are interested in different forms of co-operative teaching. It has been possible in some cases to divide a class into three during the Link Teacher's session, and pursue a joint project in three parts.

By far the main work is linking home and school as the title 'Link Teacher' implies. This team member acts as a 'bridge builder' offering initial support to school and community as the adults in the child's two environments set up new procedures in educational co-operation. Wiseman pointed out nearly ten years ago:

*"The interaction of the attitudes of child, parent and teacher may be the greatest single force affecting the end of education for a particular child. It might even be agreed that all other environmental factors - school and neighbourhood - only affect education attainment through their mediation of these attitudes."*

Because the Project is openly operating in an experimental situation, and concentrating on a small geographical area, it is possible for the Link Teacher to try out a variety of approaches to home/school links and learn communication patterns by trial and error. These can then be passed on to interested class teachers when the "teething troubles" in that particular method are over.

Two successful techniques in the community have been the Reading Workshop and Home Visiting. These are described in the Neighbourhood Education section of this report. The time now seems ripe for sharing this work with class teachers. Both schools are very convinced of the need for home/school links. Because of open plan, the schools are now in a position to have parents into them more often. Both have now set up procedures by which parents and class teachers will meet on a regular basis. Home visiting is seen as complementary to this process and joint school/project work is beginning to be organised on this theme. But co-operative work between home and school is 'frontier' territory for everyone - project member and class teacher alike. Though the joint effect of home and school attitudes is generally accepted as important, neither parent nor teacher has had any training in coming to an awareness of their own unchallenged assumptions. One way in which both school and community may begin to explore their own values and attitudes is by becoming conscious of views held by the other. The first step towards this is for teachers and parents to know and respect one another as people, finding in this process that they hold very different views about the work they are carrying out jointly, i.e. the education of a particular child. While this rapport is being built up between teacher and parent, a start can be made at the level of skills, though even here it is surprising to find that what seems in the school context to be a clear explanation may seem like meaningless jargon within the home. It is not surprising that both parents and teachers are wary of this new component in education, for which they have had no training, however convinced they are of its importance. There is a need, therefore, for clearly structured content which will give the parent and the teachers educational subject matter around which to explore their own roles as educators. Reading is an area in which some concrete work can be done.

### Feedback Seminars

As part of the psychometric component of the evaluation, the achievement of whole year groups in each of the two schools was measured in Term 3, using the newly constructed Edinburgh Reading Test. Stage 1 was given to Primary 3, Stage 3 to Primary 5 and Stage 2 to Primary 7. Individual scores and profiles across the various subtests were then drawn up and the information given to the schools.

In order to link more closely the Project's work in the community with the progress of children in school, short discussions with the class teacher have just begun in both primary schools on individual Moorpark children. The purpose of these discussions is to review the achievement of each child in school, such that new approaches involving the family where appropriate, might be adopted both inside and outside school.

### 2.3.3. Work with Secondary Pupils

#### Time Scale

Nursery, Primary and Secondary Heads took part in preliminary discussions before the Project was set up and became a formal Advisory Group in the first term.

Practical work in schools was confined to the Nursery and Infant Departments of the Primary schools in the Project's first year. The Secondary work is, therefore, only in its second term as this report is written.

The first year of this work seems likely to be in the nature of a preliminary study in preparation for more clearly specified work at a later date.

#### Desired Outcomes in Home/Community/Schools.

Within the context of the Project's total work, the secondary area is important not only because older children in families need as much educational help as their younger sisters and brothers but also because the young ones use the adults as models, and so the work at the lower age level is seriously affected by the image presented by the secondary school siblings. Because of the strength of the peer group at this age, the behaviour patterns of one adolescent can only be changed by bringing about group change.

From the community's point of view some work must be done with secondary pupils, especially in the upper age range because the problems at this age are so outstandingly obvious in the district, that the Project would lose credibility if it made no attempt to tackle them.

From the schools' point of view the Project's involvement in secondary work allows these large comprehensive schools access to a small contained area in which new insights and approaches may be tried out without causing a major upheaval.

#### Defining the Task

The Comprehensive schools are such a major component of the formal educational structure, and the areas of debate about them are so many and varied (cf. recent reports on curriculum, assessment and truancy) that it is necessary at this point to list what the Project is, and is not, concerned with in secondary education. The Project has no direct contribution to make to the hotly debated subject of curriculum and assessment. Its contribution to the problems of school attendance remain to be seen. What we are clearly concerned with is:

- (a) unifying the educational environment for every child from 0 to 16;
- (b) offering some direct input on language development, particularly in the areas of communication and cognitive skills, to all the significant adults in that environment.

What this means in practice has still to be worked out at the secondary stage, but the work undertaken so far points to the pastoral area as the obvious starting place. The two schools have youth wings which are not directly under the guidance of the Head Teacher. Within the schools themselves the guidance systems are very different. In Govan High the system is based on houses which divide the school vertically. The school also has a thoughtfully planned haven room to cater for those children who find problems in coping with a large school. St. Gerard's system is based on year groups. Social work has a training department for school social workers in this school.

### Personnel

Instead of a Project member, a secondary teacher responsible to both Heads, has a special time commitment to this work as part of his total remit. He works with the Guidance staff and other interested teachers, as well as with the Neighbourhood Tutor and the Literacy Worker, in planning work for the first year and for school leavers. In the last few weeks, a community education worker has begun to take part in the school leaver work.

### The Work to date

First Year:

The Project's Literacy Worker, who has worked with most of the first year pupils when they were looking for help with P.7 projects, partnered the Guidance staff in home visits to these pupils when they were new to the Comprehensive School. This liaison has been effective in a number of small ways:

1. Parents who have children beginning to truant, or to find excuses for remaining at home, now take this problem to the Literacy Worker in the Project House. She immediately contacts the Guidance Teacher, then family and school work together on the problem.
2. The form of home/school interaction most common till now has been 'crisis contact'. Since the Project began work in the secondary area, one school reports an appreciable change in this behaviour. For the first time ever, a large number of parents from Moorpark attended a Parents' Evening about First Year in the school before the children began school. In November, one of the Guidance Teachers invited her group of parents to visit the school during lessons and see their children at work. The Literacy Worker took these parents by minibus and discussed the visit with them on the journey home.

*"I don't think my lassie really failed that maths exam. She didnae understand the stuff in the first place and she told the maths teacher so, but he didn't seem to see what her problem was, an' I don't understand what that maths is about."*

(Mother of four)

In the second term of the school year, some parents are beginning to bring their children's problems to the Project in matters of literacy and numeracy within the secondary school context. It is hoped to set up some Reading and Numeracy Workshops on secondary work within the current year.

School Leavers:

*"Why can't we come here on Fridays as well as on Mondays and Wednesdays? Time seems to go so quickly here, somehow ....."*

(A fifteen year old girl)

Work with the school leavers began in September 1977. In the first term, Moorpark Christmas leavers from both Comprehensive schools met in the Project Centre twice each week instead of attending school. The Neighbourhood Tutor, the Literacy Worker and the Secondary Drama Teacher appointed jointly to the two Comprehensive Schools helped with these sessions during the first exploratory period. Eventually, the pressures of the adult world in which there is little hope of employment, coupled with a sense of inadequacy demonstrated by most of these pupils, led to a series of "mock interviews", visits to firms and training schemes, and discussions on job satisfaction and suitability. These sessions were conducted jointly by the Secondary Drama Teacher and the Neighbourhood Tutor. Though there are great gaps in the literacy and numeracy standards of these pupils, the Project Team members are still finding the same resistance reported by the class teachers to any direct work in basic subjects and the Literacy Worker is no longer sharing in this work. Three changes have affected the current work with the summer leavers:

1. The length of time before these pupils leave school - January to May.
2. The presence of Community Education Workers.
3. The absence of any direct school personnel due to illness.

The work already planned in the first term continues, with a further emphasis on exercises and activities in building up relationships. The Community Education Student offers special skills in this area. There is also a gradual movement towards responsibility and organisation of their activities by the students themselves in the areas of leisure, as well as of employment-seeking.

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An extract from the Neighbourhood Tutor's Report from November 1977 gives some impression of the work up to that date:

"We had already visited several places of employment, discussed the problems connected with job seeking, filled in application forms, and were ready to move on to the interview. Before it was possible to set up mock interviews, we spent two sessions exploring the function of the interview and then role-playing among the members of the group. Without exception, they had considered it as a one-way information gathering and testing session, where the interviewer fired questions and the candidate merely answered as briefly as possible. After several preparatory sessions, in which the boys and girls learned that they, too, had something to contribute to an interview, we invited to the Centre an ex-Personnel Officer, briefing the teenagers on the imaginary Company, and the jobs vacant, and filming each one of them. We were then able to play back the video and discuss the details with each pupil. They could see how they sat, what sort of eye contact they made, or did not make; how they fiddled with their hair, their fingers, or pencils, and how they responded to the interviewer's questions. All the teenagers were very uneasy, and were surprised at their nervous habits, which the video was able to show them. They seemed glad that they had been through the experience before it really mattered. Perhaps the whole session was best summed up by one of the boys, who said:

*'My hands were all clammy - I knew what he was asking, but I couldn't get the answers out. I'm glad I've done it once. Maybe it'll no' be as bad the next time, when it's for real.'*       "

#### Employment:

Preparation for employment is something of a mockery unless the problem of unemployment is faced. The Project has addressed itself to this problem in three practical ways:

- (i) Contact has been built up with Strathclyde Training Company, the training side of Govan Shipbuilders. This organisation was set up to give training for craft apprentices. This work has now been expanded to take in an additional group of school leavers, who will receive a shorter training to equip them for employment outside the shipyards, particularly with small firms which lack training facilities. Liaison between /

between the training staff and those working with the school leavers is beginning, modelled on the Project's home/school links. A similar situation is being explored with the training services agencies.

- (ii) A Training Workshop, according to the training recommendations of the Holland Report is to be set up to relieve the immediate unemployment problems of some of the school leavers. The Project Director is involved with this, together with the Careers Service.
- (iii) A small study group concerned with the long term employment prospects in Govan has been initiated by the Govan Area Resource Centre. The Project Co-ordinator is a member of this team. Its purpose is to bring together information on the current employment possibilities in Govan; the unemployment facts and figures, together with recommendations of possible strategy for attracting light industry into the area.

#### Special Provision:

So far the school section of this report has dealt with the five schools attended by the majority of Moorpark children. It must be noted that Moorpark is served by no less than 20 schools. The 15 others only cater for a small number of children, but 25 families in the district are affected by them. This in turn must affect the whole small area of Moorpark. Two of these schools are Govan schools outside the catchment area which children attend by parental choice. The other 13 are divided into four mentally handicapped, two physically handicapped, three maladjusted and four List D. A small amount of interaction has taken place between the Project and the six special schools. Two of the children eligible to join the school leavers group come from the mentally handicapped school. Contact with the other agencies is even more fleeting, consisting of a visit from a worker in a maladjusted school and a seminar from a social worker concerned with List D.

Since children are in each of these schools because of individual problems, and these must be affecting their education, it is obvious that the Project must try to reach this area. Exploratory work, at least, is proposed for year 3.

#### 2.3.4 Further Training of Teachers in the Primary Schools.

During Year 1, various meetings for teachers were held in the Project Centre. These were run by College staff, Project staff and Advisers. Towards the end of Year 1, discussions took place with the schools vis-a-vis a more concentrated and relevant programme in Year 2. Both Primary schools opted for school-based inservice work run by Hamilton College, College-based courses run by Jordanhill and Notre Dame College and Teacher Centre based courses run by the Local Authority.

##### (i) School-based Inservice Work (Hamilton College of Education)

In the 1976/77 academic session, a number of informal contacts were made by members of the College staff with the Strathclyde Experiment in Education in Govan. As a result of these contacts Mr. Jackson and Mr. Michael, with the encouragement of the College Principal, explored the possibility of extending the College involvement in the work of the Project by means of school-based inservice work. After discussion with Mr. Wilkinson, Director of the Project, a number of schemes were agreed, and these are progressing satisfactorily.

##### The Plan.

The initial plan was to establish good relationships with the two schools involved, and this could only be achieved by gaining the confidence of the teachers. Therefore, in co-operation with the school staffs, areas of work were chosen where teachers welcomed assistance. These areas were determined by discussion with Head Teachers, Assistant Head Teachers, and Class Teachers. Thereafter the College staff arranged to visit the teachers on a regular basis, to construct a programme of work for their classes and to teach in the classrooms in order to explain detailed procedure.

This is different from the College's normal practice in school-based inservice work in other places. Teachers usually attend a College-based introductory course for one day, in which general work is covered and tasks issued for teachers to carry out in their own classrooms. Teachers then return to College three weeks later for two consecutive days, to complete the course. They are given work to carry out in schools, and they receive visits from tutors who now deal with specific problems in each class.

In Govan it was decided to forego this system in favour of a direct approach to the school staffs on their own ground. It was hoped that the College tutors would be accepted more quickly by the staffs and would discover ways of assisting in realising the aims of the Project. With hindsight it appears that this was the better way to proceed, although all the tutors working in the schools have missed having the chance to deal with the broader issues and implications of the work. For example, teachers are rarely available to discuss work with the tutors, away from their class /

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class, and it is difficult to find time to brief teachers for future work and to review results achieved. However, good friendly contacts have been made with the school staffs, and excellent work has been carried out in the classrooms.

### The Work of the Art Department

Even a cursory visit to classes in both schools showed that many children were regarded by themselves, their fellows and their teachers as failures. Certainly, they do not perform well by any commonly applied test. The fact that they have acquired this self-image and are so regarded depresses their performance further. It was felt that it would be helpful to the teachers and the children if a number of strategies were introduced which would assist these children to revise their opinion of themselves, and would help them to improve their performance.

Another area of work chosen was the teaching of handwriting, about which many teachers feel guilty because of generally declining standards. The system of teaching handwriting designed by the College, is designed to improve the children's performance without increasing the time the teacher must devote to it.

Lastly, it was decided that children should not leave the Primary School without being helped to be aware of their visual world. A programme is being devised in conjunction with the teachers of P4 to P7 classes in the hope that the material will eventually be in such a form as to be used elsewhere.

### Progress of the Work

The greatest concentration of effort is in St. Saviour's where the work is progressing satisfactorily. The contacts in Copeland School are fewer, but where they have been made, are yielding good results. The reason for this is, partly, that the Head Teacher in St. Saviour's School arranged an excellent programme of inservice assistance immediately we arrived, which involved us throughout the school. Copeland Primary School was slower to respond, though there is every indication that this will change in the near future.

In St. Saviour's a method of teaching handwriting to young children which ensures that they will learn correct letter formation from the outset has been introduced. This system was produced by the College as a result of a previous research project, but is now being supplemented with a pre-writing programme devised by the Infant staff to suit their particular conditions existing in Govan. In addition, in co-operation with the staff of the school, supplementary material is being produced which will involve parents in the scheme. This material can be operated by them to help their children at home. When it is available parents will be informed and their assistance sought.

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There has also been a great deal of work in the Infant Department designed to link language and visual work. Resource material for teachers has been produced by the College and this Work has linked naturally with the Language Course which the teachers attended in Jordanhill College.

For Copeland Infant Department, a numerals teaching kit (a modification of the handwriting scheme) is being developed and it is hoped to introduce this shortly.

In the middle and upper schools of St. Saviour's and Copeland the programmes of work designed to assist children to think more effectively are well established. Children are developing strategies for solving problems raised by their own questions, and that they now have greater opportunities to discuss problems in a much more co-operative situation than was formerly possible. It is hoped to involve parents in this work as it is felt that they would easily understand the 'commonsense' quality of the approach and could give invaluable assistance.

The art inservice course is located for the present only in St. Saviour's School. It is directed by Mrs. Shanks and Mr. Watson. Through it all, senior children are being helped to look more closely at their own environment and notice that it is rich in pattern, shape and line. They are learning too that artists select, analyse and translate their observations into different materials. The children are engaged in practical experiments which cause them to do the same and prepare them to compare their work with that produced by professional artists. In this way it is hoped that they will be made more aware of the visual quality of their own environment and of the art which is freely available in the city. So far there has been a good staff response in this area of inservice work and an exhibition is planned for the Summer Term to try to interest parents in the work of their children.

#### The Work of the English Department

- (a) An objective common to work in both schools is the encouragement of the extended use of fiction. There are various reasons for this:
1. the development of good attitudes to reading - to see a book as a source of interest and pleasure;
  2. the development of the child's awareness of the human and physical world in which he lives;
  3. the helping of children to internalise certain features of the written language which are significant in the enriching and disciplining of speech and writing, in developing a sense of audience in the act of communication, in the developing of constructions, based on the linear sequence of the written language, which are significant in cognitive processes.
  4. /

4. the demonstration of book-based programmes which may have more interest and more validity than programmes derived from decontextualised language activities. In both schools unit-studies based on fiction are being tried at various levels, providing the basis for a variety of linguistic and related activities. In St. Saviour's a variety of texts is being introduced at the P.3 level to encourage the move from class reader to free choice in reading. These books are being supplemented by audio-visual material using the multihead sets available. At the present moment commercial material (Penguin 'Listening and Reading' and Weston Woods material) is being used, but a start is being made on the recording of material to meet the needs of the school.

(b) One lecturer is working with selected groups of less able children in both schools to develop certain forms of language. (This is primarily to devise suitable material and techniques).

The forms of language are:-

1. the language of personal recall;
2. the language of imaginative construction;
3. the language of speculation.

Various techniques are being tried out:

1. Discussion and writing based on material, local where possible, relating to children's activities in a known setting. (A unit based on this material is being prepared for teachers' use.)
2. The use of visual material: This material is being used to develop a vocabulary to describe the world in which the child lives and his response to it - (demonstrate relationships between events; to communicate in a precise and ordered way; to provide a starting point for speculation and imagination. (A set of tested slides with notes is being prepared).
3. The production of structured material for use by individual children.

The availability of certain items of audio-visual equipment in St. Saviour's is being exploited to produce programmes which may be used for specific language development.

(ii) /

Footnote: The description of the school-based inservice work was submitted by Mr. Michael and Mr. Jackson. The authors of the report wish to acknowledge their appreciation.

(ii) College-based Courses

The following table illustrates the nature, duration and location of inservice courses attended by teachers from the two primary schools.

TABLE 2

SCHOOL	COURSE	PLACE	CLASSES	LENGTH OF COVER
St. Saviour's	Language Development	Jordanhill College	P1:P2:P3	1 teacher per week/ 3 weeks
	Aesthetics	Notre Dame College	P4:P5:P6 P7.	1 teacher per week/ 4 weeks.
Copeland School	Environmental Studies	Jordanhill College	P4:P5:P6: P7.	1 teacher per week/ 4 weeks.

After the teachers have been on the course, follow-up visits to the school are being made by the College Tutors involved in the course.

(iii) Teacher Centre-based Courses

TABLE 3

SCHOOL	COURSE	PLACE	CLASSES	LENGTH OF COVER
Copeland School	Environmental Studies	Dundas Vale	P7	2 teachers for 3 days
St. Saviour's	Open Plan Organisation	Dundas Vale	Promoted Staff	3 teachers for 2 days

Follow-up visits to the schools are being made by the Primary Adviser.

The inservice training described in this section has been developed through a flexible approach involving extensive discussions between the Schools and the Colleges of Education, and the Primary Adviser. The introduction of this work into the schools is an ongoing process and it is hoped that future innovations will continue to respond to the requirements of the schools, the needs of the children and the availability of resources.