

and should be adapted to the hunger and needs of the child. During the symbolic or play period of later infancy, and during the keenly observant but still comparatively unreflective period of early childhood, emphasis should be cast upon the sensory-motor, the historic, the individual, the social, rather than upon the abstract, the technical, the scientific.

In the primary grades of the school, therefore, the greatest stress should be placed upon activities connected with the child's immediate experience, involving a study of his surroundings—geography and history.

While the work should be purposive, it should not to any great extent appeal to the *commercial* instinct. The child is usually specially interested in certain living forms of plants and animals; but he is not interested in *all* such forms, nor are inanimate objects devoid of interest to him. The construction of a thermometer or a study of various forms of water may lie closer to the child's life interest than an investigation of certain animal forms.

The material should not be selected on the basis of trivial superficial interest, but should be of such a nature that when the child realizes what is there and what it means to him, it will become interesting. The despised and persecuted common toad, usually looked upon as an ugly venomous and loathsome beast, becomes an object of genuine interest when the child learns that the toad is entirely harmless, that it is one of the most humane and valuable fly traps yet discovered, that it destroys large numbers of injurious insects, that its life cycle extends over thirty years, that it is easily tamed and that it is destined to become a valuable and highly appreciated domestic pet.

5. The study in the initial stages should not consist of set formal lessons. For example, the metamorphoses of an insect or the development of a plant from seed to fruit may be observed for months, with an occasional brief conversation to organize the facts learned up to the present, and to direct observation for the future. By spending an hour a week, in brief or extended discussion (as the conditions of the case require), much valuable work can be done in every grade. The school garden, and the field excursion, when properly conducted, afford the ideal conditions for elementary Nature Study.