

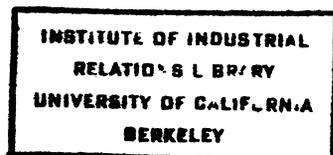
WORKERS EDUCATION

A Handbook of
Sources, Materials, and
Teaching Aids for Use in the
Development of Labor
Education Programs.

Prepared by

INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS (Berkeley)

University of California, Berkeley



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WORKERS' EDUCATION CONFERENCE

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Presented by

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY AND LOS ANGELES

This Sourcebook on Workers' Education has been prepared in connection with the Fifth Annual Workers' Education Conference presented by the Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, Berkeley and Los Angeles. It is our hope that it will be of help to you in collecting materials which will be of practical value in the development of your union's education program. The Sourcebook will provide a working file of program suggestions and teaching aids which might otherwise not be brought to your attention.

From time to time, the Institute of Industrial Relations will issue additional items which may be helpful in your program. As soon as possible, summary proceedings of this conference will be distributed to each of you. We suggest that the proceedings be incorporated in the Sourcebook.

Your suggestions for additional materials will be welcomed by the Institute staff. You can help us do a better job in this field by letting us know of your specific needs in developing your own programs. This kind of cooperation will, we hope, make our joint efforts in the workers' education field most effective.

HOW TO CONDUCT A DISCUSSION GROUP*

A. Size and Composition of Group

- 1. The group should be small in size - twelve to fifteen members with a leader. Participation by all members of the group is exceedingly difficult for groups in excess of fifteen members.
- 2. The group should have some common denominator of interest, and a common basis for judgment on the subject under discussion. For example, you cannot stage a successful meeting if part of the group has no interest whatsoever in the subject or has such a strong opinion that they are ready to break up the discussion if necessary. On the other hand, you cannot plan a successful discussion if you mix experts and beginners. The experts will take certain knowledge for granted, going on to aspects of the subject which interest them, while the beginners will be tempted to sit and listen, taking in the discussion on a catch-as-catch-can basis.

B. Discussion Topic

- 1. The topic for discussion should be of interest to the group, and within their competence. The topic should be a "discussable" one. If you select a subject which requires expert or technical knowledge to be discussed, then plan a lecture, not a discussion meeting. Any topic, however, has "discussable" aspects. In selecting your discussion topic, turn to aspects of the subject on which there are real differences of opinion.
- 2. Do not define your subject so narrowly that you will not be able to hold the interest of your group. On the other hand, do not make the topic so broad that you will not have sufficient time to cover it.

C. Physical Arrangements

- 1. Seating is important. Each member of the group should be able to see every other member. Either a square or round table is best. A row of seats with the leader in front sets up a resistance to participation; in fact, takes on the look of a classroom.
- 2. Check lighting. Lighting should be good enough to read by, but not too glaring. Avoid electric light glare. Avoid sunlight glare.
- 3. Check ventilation. A stuffy, hot room is not conducive to wide-awake discussion.
- 4. Check acoustics, if your group is discussion before an audience. Good acoustics cannot be taken for granted.
- 5. Although it is difficult to generalize, it is better not to plan a meeting longer than one and a half hours. We frequently err in planning too long a meeting, with the result that some people, worn out by length, do not come back for later meetings.

D. Starting and Regulating the Discussion

- 1. Before the discussion starts, be sure the members of the group have been introduced to each other.
- 2. At the beginning of the meeting, the leader should make it clear what the group is to discuss. The group should know from the start

*Adapted from a reprint of a report of Workshops on Program Planning (sponsored by the American Association for the United Nations) by Paul H. Sheats.

How to Conduct a Discussion Group (continued)

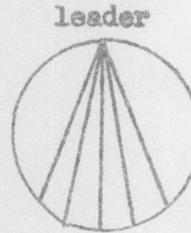
what it is going to try to accomplish, or what the purpose of the discussion is.

- 3. Everyone should have a chance to discuss. The discussion should not be directed toward the leader, but from member to member. In other words, you want the discussion to go back and forth. The primary purpose of a discussion group is the sharing of ideas and opinions.

like this:



not like this:



- 4. It is up to the leader to break the ice, and also to keep the discussion rolling. Posing a question is the most profitable device. The leader, at the beginning of the meeting, after stating briefly the scope of the problem under discussion, can pose a question which challenges the group's thinking, calling on each to state his opinion. This helps to break the ice.
- 5. The leader should give members of the group confidence and encouragement. He or she must help the timid to participate, and make sure that each member has a chance.
- 6. A leader will be called upon to give information as well as to lead the discussion. Therefore a good leader has knowledge of the subject, and knows the pertinent source material, so that he or she can collect the essential facts and assemble available material *etc.* But a good discussion leader does not have to be an expert, nor does he need to fear questions for which he does not have the answers. Preparation and some knowledge are different from expertness. As co-equals, group members must themselves share responsibility for getting the facts.
- 7. The discussion should be kept on the topic. If you meet up with a "problem child" who wants to go off on a tangent, suggest that his question be the subject of another meeting; if it is a factual question, recommend a source where he can find the information he wants, without taking up the time of the discussion group.
- 8. Don't let two members get into a discussion between themselves. Don't let members of the group all talk at once. Although you want spontaneity, at the same time you want sufficient control so that what is being said can be heard by all.
- 9. A good leader ties up the discussion from time to time as the meeting progresses, and in addition takes a few minutes at the end of the discussion to summarize the major conclusions of the group. This helps to give the group a feeling that it has accomplished something.

How to Conduct a Discussion Group (continued)

E. Qualities of a Good Discussion Leader

- 1. The leader should have faith in the group members and in the value of discussing the subject. This is even more important than a technical knowledge of the subject. At times people with technical knowledge fail because of lack of faith in the importance of the subject matter, in the value of discussing the subject, or in the importance of the members' contributions.
- 2. A leader should show no partiality - either for a member or several members of the group or for a particular opinion. A good leader is impartial, and should try to bring out all points of view, as well as to get every member to participate in the discussion. He should not try to get across any pre-conceived ideas of his own.
- 3. The leader should find something good in the contribution made by every member. This does not mean that he will allow inaccurate or impractical suggestions to go unchallenged, but will depend to a large extent on the group itself to do the challenging.
- 4. The leader should have a pleasant voice - a sense of humor - a sense of timing - and often, a sense of dramatics.

WHO DOES WHAT IN A GROUP?

The Leader

- sees that everyone is acquainted
- maintains an atmosphere which is permissive and conducive to full participation
- takes a problem census
- gets group consensus as to which problem is most important
- helps the group set goals
- helps group establish its own rules; e.g., recess periods, closing time, length of time any one member can speak, etc.
- provides continuity in the attack on the problem through: keeping the discussion on the problem
- summarizing important points frequently
- coordinating the efforts of the group
- allowing time for presentation of issues and facts
- allowing time to harmonize conflicting ideas or values--restating the main problem when necessary
- maintains impartiality toward individuals and ideas
- utilizes special abilities of group members
- makes appropriate use of resource members and consultant
- provides for continuous evaluation of the group product and group process through reports from recorders and observer
- works toward areas of agreement and/or final summary

The Recorders

- keep a record of the main points of the discussion (one recorder can keep the permanent record while the other records on blackboard)
- summarize points and reports at the end or beginning of the following session
- consult with the group about the form of the final report
- prepare and make final report

The Observer

- observe the group process and how the group operates
- reports to the group what he has observed about the working of the process
- helps others become conscious of ways of observing the process without losing sight of the content of the discussion
- evaluates problems census, problem attack, group interaction, changing leadership role within the group, group atmosphere, techniques used for moving the group toward goal, etc.

The Consultant

- participates as a member of the group
- provides information or material at request of group
- volunteers information which seems pertinent to discussion
- assists leader in keeping group on discussions
- assists leader in moving group toward achievement of goals

WHO DOES WHAT IN A GROUP? (continued)

The Participants or Resource Members

- contribute ideas and suggestions to the discussion
- assume various roles as needed
- listen to what others say and relate what is said to the problem
- request clarification
- state points clearly and briefly and avoid wrangling over details and technicalities
- think for themselves
- recognize that everyone in the group has something unique to contribute to the solution of the problem

Visual Teaching Aids

It is sometimes possible to make material more interesting and understandable by presenting it in a visual form. Teaching aids should be used where it appears that their use will:

1. concentrate a great deal of information into a concise form (graph, chart)
2. relate general information to experiences that interest the group (movies, film strips)
3. reinforce what has been heard by visual representation (blackboard, charts)
4. simplify abstract or complex ideas (diagram)
5. dramatize information used to compare ideas or situations (various types of graphs)
6. bring outside experience into the learning situation (movies, film strips)

This is not an exhaustive list. Many types of learning situations will be simplified or enhanced by audio-visual devices. It is important to remember that such devices are not effective if they are superficially tacked on to the teaching process. They cannot be relied upon to do the whole teaching job. Audio-visual aids should be thought of as effective supplemental aids to the teacher.

Types of Visual Aids

Blackboard--the most flexible and generally usable visual aid for

classes, meetings, lectures, conferences, and panel discussions. Simple to use, the blackboard is helpful in explaining complicated subjects and in aiding the audience to remember points or figures that have already been discussed.

Movies, film strips---useful in many situations to arouse interest in a subject and to stimulate discussion. Some are helpful in summarizing discussions which have already taken place. These devices require careful planning, including such matters as pre-testing the equipment, checking the hall facilities (electrical outlets, shades, acoustics, etc.,) previewing the films and timing them to fit into the most suitable place in the program.

There are several sources for securing films on a rental basis. Most organizations renting films publish catalogs that give basic information concerning the subject matter of the film, the length of the film, and in some cases discussion guides have been prepared to use with the films.

A few such sources are:

Department of Visual Instruction, University Extension,
University of California - Catalogue of 16mm Education Motion
Pictures

American Federation of Labor, Workers Education Bureau, 1625
Eye Street, N. W. , Washington 6, D. C. Films on Labor

CIO Film Division, Department of Education & Research, 718
Jackson Place, N.W., Washington 6, D. C. Films for Labor

Roosevelt College, Labor Education Division, Film Services,
430 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago 5, Illinois.

Sources of General Information

The Department of Audio-Visual Instruction, National Education Association, 1201-16th Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

The United States Office of Education, Visual Education Service, Federal Security Agency, Washington 25, D. C.

The Educational Film Library Association, 1600 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

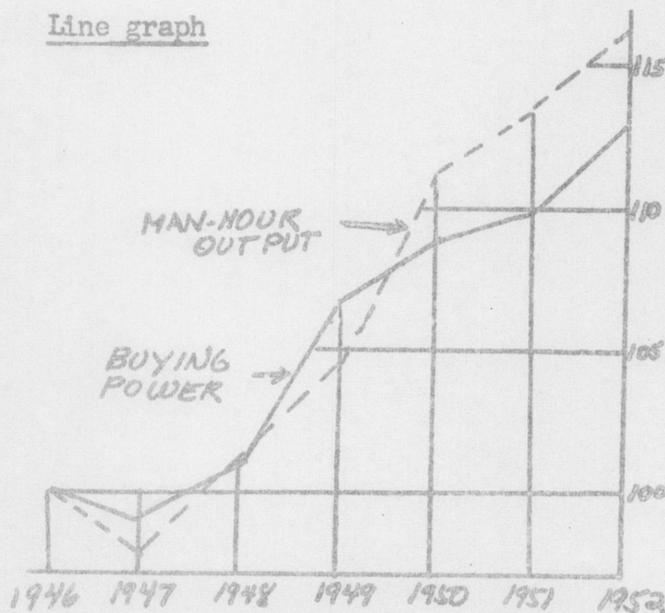
Film Council of America, 600 Davis Street, Evanston, Illinois

National Audio-Visual Association, 2540 Eastwood Avenue, Evanston, Illinois.

Graphs

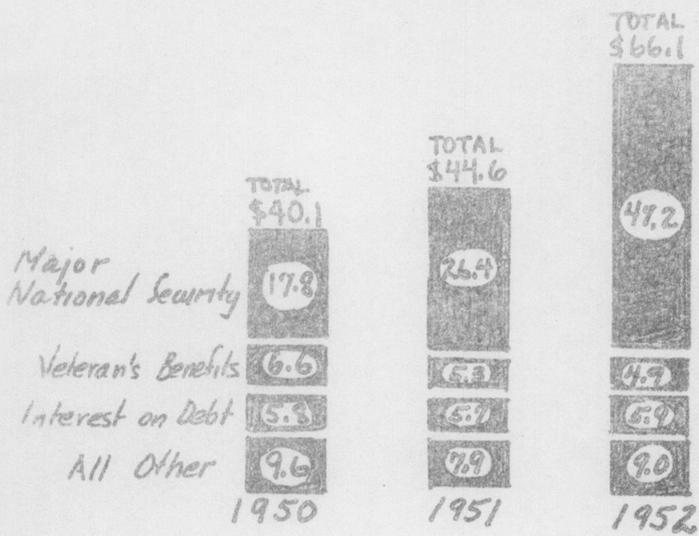
Graphs should be simple and easy to read. The type of graph used should depend on the nature of the material being presented.

Line graph



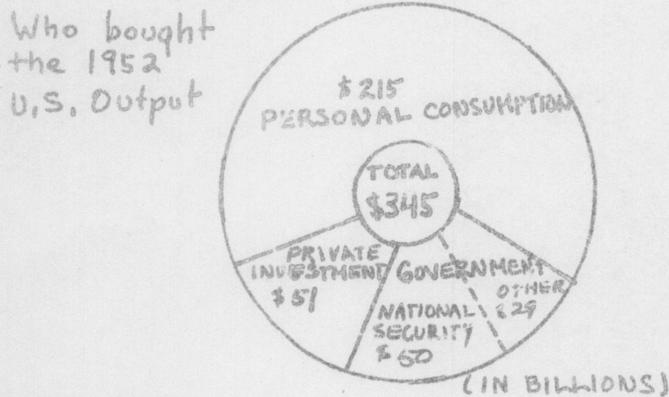
useful for showing such things as union growth, employment trends, cost of living, etc., where growth or development over time is significant

Bar graph



particularly helpful in pointing up differences, comparing two factors or showing proportion of one part to the whole--such things as employment in various periods, employment in various industries, benefits or costs under health and welfare plans

Pie graph



excellent for showing how some total is divided--such as tax dollar, union income, source of federal revenue, etc.

Diagram, charts

These are especially helpful for simplifying complex ideas. Diagrams may be used on the blackboard or as part of a prepared chart. In the methods of instruction chart included in this sourcebook, the diagram was used to show group interaction patterns. Diagrams are excellent for showing organization of a union, structure of a governmental unit, etc.

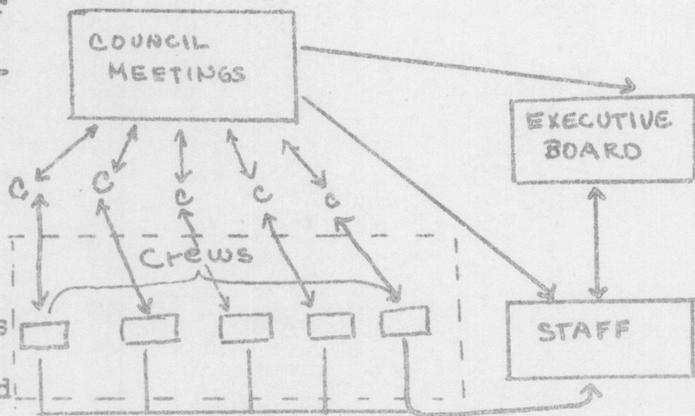


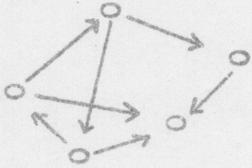
CHART SHOWING CREW ORGANIZATION FOR COMMUNICATION PURPOSES
C= Captain of Crew

Sources of Information on Graph and Chart Construction

Arkin, Herbert and Colton, Raymond R. Graphs, How To Make
And Use Them. Harper & Brothers, 1936.

Spear, Mary Eleanor. Charting Statistics. McGraw-Hill, 1952.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION*

METHOD	CHIEF CHARACTERISTIC	INTERACTION PATTERN	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES												
Lecture	Formal presentation of information	 <table border="1" data-bbox="414 929 576 1120"> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Can cover much information in short time. Good for technical subjects. Makes it possible to have very tight organization of material.	Student participation usually impossible.
0	0	0	0													
0	0	0	0													
0	0	0	0													
Question and Answer (Recitation)	Teacher questions students or students ask questions of teacher	 <table border="1" data-bbox="771 929 933 1120"> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Allows some student participation. Teacher may determine whether or not members of group are learning material.	Does not allow interaction among students. May put too much stress on right answers, thus threatening the student. Its formality may be boring.			
0	0	0														
0	0	0														
0	0	0														
Discussion	High degree of group interaction		Allows for group interaction. Subject can be related to individual experience of group members. Pooling of knowledge. Maximum student interest.	Looseness of organization. Time-consuming. Not adapted to presentation of authoritative or technical material.												

*Adapted from Malcolm Knowles, Informal Education

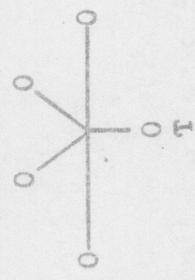
METHOD

Project

CHIEF CHARACTERISTIC

Investigation of problem as a whole thru cooperative effort.

INTERACTION PATTERN



ADVANTAGES

Group or individual responsibility; actual experience; interest. Accomplishment.

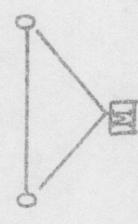
DISADVANTAGES

There may be some wasted effort. Process is long and not suitable in many situations.

Laboratory

Working with materials

T S



First-hand experience and guided practice.

Time-consuming. May be expensive.

Demonstration and visual aids

Illustration of processes by teacher.

T O → O O O O

Visualization of process.

Limited participation.

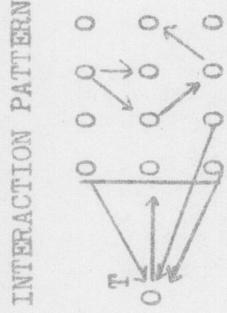
O O O O

METHOD

Lecture forum

CHIEF CHARACTERISTIC

Formal speech followed by questions and discussion by the audience.



ADVANTAGES

Advantages of lecture method plus some group participation.

DISADVANTAGES

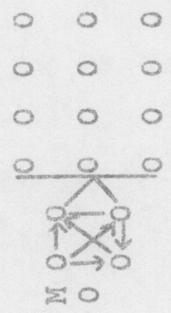
Difficult to involve large group in discussion. Dependence on one person's point of view.

METHOD

Panel discussion

CHIEF CHARACTERISTIC

Several people engage in discussion before audience.



ADVANTAGES

Exchange of ideas is stimulating. Many points of view may be expressed.

DISADVANTAGES

Without skillful moderation may become series of short lectures.

HOW ADULTS LEARN

Dr. Jack London

1. Adults have the ability to learn. The old proverb, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," is not true, at least as far as human beings are concerned. It is more accurate for us to change the proverb to read, "You can't teach a trick to a dog or a child who is too young." Research and what we know about the ability of adults to learn definitely establishes the fact that no person should feel handicapped by his age. One study found that men and women of genius have made their most important contributions at the average age of 47.
2. What is learning?
3. Principles of Learning:
 - A. Learning is an active process
 - B. Learning is affected by the total situation
 - C. Learning should be meaningful
 - D. Learning must be adjusted to individual differences
 - E. Learning should result in transfer so that past experience is enhanced and future experience is better directed
4. There are different types of learning which require different methods, ways of teaching, equipment, etc.
 - A. Learning a skill like tennis, typing, painting, etc.
 - B. Learning ideas like the meaning of brotherhood, democracy, etc.
 - C. Learning to solve problems
 - D. Learning an appreciation
5. The road to effective learning
6. Limits to learning ability

FILM: HOW TO CONDUCT A DISCUSSION*

This film has been produced primarily for use in programs designed to train non-professional discussion leaders.

The film also has certain secondary uses which are largely self-explanatory.

First, to help a discussion group evaluate itself and thereby improve its own procedures.

Second, to help a group of potential discussion leaders understand what it is that they will be called on to do if they take on the proposed responsibility. Very often leaders are hesitant, fearing that they will not be adequate to the task. The film will reassure them, since it identifies leaders as persons very like them using principles that are understandable.

Third, to help a professional group of educators, potential educators, or community workers to understand how to lead a discussion group.

Eleven Qualities for a Good Discussion

1. The physical setting should be attractive and comfortable.
2. There should be a good social feeling.
3. The leader should have a basic plan but be flexible in his use of it.
4. There should be direct interchange among the group members.
5. The path of progress should be kept open for each individual member.
6. The experience of the members of the group should be used to enrich the discussion.

*Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, 5625 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood 28, Calif.

7. All of the members should feel a responsibility for the effective conduct of the group.
8. All members of the group should understand both the immediate and the ultimate goals.
9. Methods and procedures should be as varied as possible.
10. The group should base the discussion on facts and experience as well as opinion.
11. All the members of the group should try to improve the group performance.

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