

SKETCH OF YEAR'S WORK IN A COMMUNITY IN ADULT EDUCATION

1st period

Staff is chosen by literacy directors (Silas Normon, Mary Varela)

Orientation will be in the community. The orientation will attempt to combine actual experience with theory by having the new staff plunge immediately into recruiting adults and teaching them on a tutorial basis (enabling them to get a feel of teaching and how an adult learns) while the literacy director is holding work sessions. These work sessions will deal with such things as the values underlying adult education, theory and methods of teaching adults and writing materials.

The purpose of the orientation period is to bring the staff to a point where they can carry on the work independently--this means they are thoroughly familiar with the goals of the program and have the tools to build programming that will be effective and relevant to the community's needs.

2nd period

Staff continues the work independently.

Recruiting adults probably will be running into difficulty and the new staff will have to make decisions on better recruiting methods. They will start to build classes and adapt their theory to class room situations.

We may also experiment with setting up discussion-reading clubs in Negro history, government and any other areas of interest. (It seems that where a freedom summer school has operated and the kids have come home with so many new-learned things, that adults have also become interested in education for themselves). These clubs can be a source of contacts into the community to recruit non-readers and also may be a source of future teachers to carry on the program.

By this time the staff should have a sense of the informational needs of the adult community (social security information, unemployment comp., health, etc.), and what reading and writing skills are necessary for an adult to get what is coming to them. They will gather printed materials found in the community and will write materials for the classes they will be having. They will also need to research regional peculiarities to add to the materials already developed by the Selma literacy project.

3rd period

Staff will work to set up educational programming under the existing adult movement (improvement associations, voter's leagues, etc.) In this way adult education will continue after the staff has left.

Staff will look for adults in the community who can be trained to teach reading in classes. By this time the staff should have a feel of what kind of personality would be best fitted to teach classes--(often the kind of person best fitted may not have even finished high school).

Staff will train those adults now going through the reading program to search out non-readers and on a tutorial basis start to teach them. (These adults can then be channeled into the classes).

Staff will look for adult leaders in the community who can plan and carry out discussion study clubs and do general adult education programming (optional).

Final period

Staff phases itself out of leadership position.

The responsibility for planning and running adult programming is turned over to people we will have reached through the year's work who seem most interested and able to continue our work.

Staff should use much of this time to write and revise teaching materials and teach one or two people in the community to write materials.

Staff should write up their research and experience.

QUALIFICATIONS OF STAFF

Teaching reading is not difficult; it does not require extensive training in a university or extensive educational courses. It does require a sense of values which is sensitive to the adults' needs and desires and works from there instead of imposing one's own idea of the adults' needs.

A staff person should work well with adults. This means maturity and it is preferable that staff personnel have degrees or are close to a degree. A person over 20 is preferable (doesn't matter what field a person is in).

A staff person must be able to work independently. This means a sense of responsibility and discipline that will carry the program on after the experienced staff has left the new staff on its own. It means an ability to plan in a day-by-day, week-by-week fashion to accomplish goals set up by the group.

A staff person should have a genuine interest in educational programming and see the implications such programming has for the movement.