

# The School Media Program: The Alpha and Omega of Life-Long Bibliographic Skills

Elsie L. Brumback

Good educational school media programs are designed to assist students in finding, generating, evaluating, and applying information that helps them to function effectively as individuals and to participate successfully in society. Quality media programs serve students by providing a well-chosen collection of media at different levels of maturity, ability, and interest; providing guidance in the location, selection, evaluation, and use of these materials; contributing to the development of skills in reading, viewing, listening, evaluating, and communicating; developing skills in the production of special learning materials; and teaching them how to relate to and use outside resources.

Two integral components of good educational media programs are a sequential media study skills program and a balanced literature and literary enrichment program. Library/media skills instruction should be initiated with the students' first use of books and continued consistently through a unified plan (K-12), the ultimate goal being to help children become independent users of all types of resources. A carefully planned literature program (K-12) provides students with experiences enabling them to better understand themselves and their universe and affording them a basis for developing their own values and standards.

*The Educational Media Competency Goals And Performance Indicators*, (reproduced on pages 17 to 27 following this article) developed by library/media professionals of the State under the leadership and guidance of the State Department of Public Instruction's Division of Educational Media and distributed to all schools of the State for implementation, are based on the educational philosophy that:

- ..... students learn at varying rates and have different learning styles;
- ..... each student must be given an opportunity to develop to his or her potential intellectually, socially, and personally; and
- ..... each student must acquire the skills, attitudes, and concepts to enable him or her to function adequately in society throughout life.

For the purpose of this document, *competency goals* are defined as the ends toward which a student's performance is directed and *performance indicators* are reasonable measures of progress toward these goals. Each goal performance indicator is only one of several ways that may be used to assess a student's performance on a particular competency goal. The teacher and media professional should use these, as well as others which he or she might develop, to measure performance. It is in the modification and use of performance indicators that a teacher or media coordinator may tailor skills teaching to meet the individual needs of students.

The five major *Educational Media Competency Goals* follow:

**Orientation and Organization:** The learner will demonstrate a working knowledge of the media center's organization and of procedures required to use the center and its collections.

**Selection and Utilization:** The learner will select and use materials and equipment appropriate to personal needs and classroom assignments.

**Comprehension and Application:** The learner will identify concepts presented in media, interpret and organize information, and develop evaluative skills for understanding media at school and elsewhere.

**Production and Presentation:** The learner will design, produce and/or select a variety of media formats to present information.

**Appreciation:** The learner will value, use, and enjoy a variety of media throughout life for personal growth, vocational pursuits, and recreation.

A well-designed media skills program is sequential in nature. Children proceed from the mastery of the most simple (locating an EASY book) to the most complicated (researching a topic and accurately preparing an oral, written, or multimedia presentation) all through their school years.

Since students do learn and develop at varying rates, depending on background, abilities, needs and interests, few skills can be acquired with one brief exposure. Therefore, continued reinforcement of skills previously introduced intensifies the student's ability to be an independent user of all types of media resources. It is the joint responsibility of teachers and media personnel, working together as an instructional team, to ensure that each student has these experiences. It is imperative that the teaching of media skills be integrated with and relevant to curricular needs rather than in separate, unrelated units.

The following is a kaleidoscopic view of an elementary school media center where implementation of the new *Educational Media Competency Goals And Performance Indicators* is very evident:

- .... Children from all levels are in the media center simultaneously. Eight-year-old Mark and Sue are each threading a filmstrip into a viewer. Each is doing research on a different topic and using various kinds of media from the non-print section where they have browsing access.
- .... At the same time, five students from the intermediate classrooms are browsing independently in the fiction area for leisure reading books.
- .... More primary students enter for filmstrips and non-fiction books on animals. One of the girls asks the librarian for assistance in locating a record that has animal sounds. They find one! She sits down at one of the study carrels equipped with sound equipment to listen to the recording before checking it out for the class to hear.
- .... Three students from the upper grades are involved in researching information on Russia. Should they look under Russia, USSR, or Soviet Union? They find that it is listed differently in some of the encyclopedias and other reference books. They call this to the attention of their librarian — who appears to be pleased that they have made such an astounding discovery!
- .... In the A. V. Room, a group of four eleven-year-olds is previewing a video tape on China. They are taking notes from which they will conduct their introduction and follow-up discussion when they show the video tape to their entire class the next day as part of a Social Studies project.

... Wayne and Bob have done a research report on the identifying marks of various kinds of animals and have made transparencies to show the colors that help to identify some North American animals. They are waiting rather impatiently to get into the A. V. Room to audio tape their narration complete with animal sounds for the report.

The media professional's role is a demanding one. But this role has great compensations. There's no greater satisfaction for a media coordinator than to observe a successful skills instruction unit planned jointly with a teacher; to watch a student's self confidence as he shows the sound slide program he recently produced after many long hours of research, storyboarding, and various production activities; or to enjoy watching the development of a student's love of reading and increased interest in using other types of media. These examples of media skills development which bring so many rewards to media professionals could go on and on. Suffice it to say that this is one professional role in which there is joy in hard work, dedication, and perseverance.

**Elsie L. Brumback is Director of the Division of Educational Media in the N. C. Department of Public Instruction.**

## REFERENCES

*Competency Goals And Performance Indicators, K-12.* Raleigh, North Carolina: Department of Public Instruction, 1979. 281 p.

Competency goals in all content areas are broken down into performance indicators which are reasonable measures of a student's progress toward the stated goal; each goal is divided into a K-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12 configuration; approved by the North Carolina State Board of Education in 1979.

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