

CONSERVATION IN THE SIXTH GRADE

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The problem of teaching conservation in the elementary school arose from a new Oklahoma law requiring that such instruction be given. The task of training pupils in the essentials of conservation has been delegated to the teachers of geography.

The immediate need for training in this field led the writer to direct a class of 78 teachers enrolled in "Methods of Teaching Geography" into special studies dealing with conservation principles. The work done by one student, who was an art major with very little teaching experience, was selected to show that such a course can be helpful in training the teacher for conservation instruction.

The project prepared by this student was planned for the teaching of conservation of bird-life in the sixth grade. It included: a foreword to teachers in which she says, "The teacher who first sells herself the idea of conservation will have little trouble in selling it to her pupils"; a statement of her objectives which are to arouse the child's personal interest and initiative and to give him specific factual information about conservation; a conservation story, "The Birds of Killingsworth" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow; plan for organizing a Bird Club; a project and poem on building a bird house; an original play entitled "The Children's Picnic"; and a bibliography of material.

That a short methods course can be used to furnish the inexperienced teacher with helpful training is evident because: first, this course afforded opportunity for emphasizing conservation problems; second, it helped this untrained geography teacher to grasp the philosophy of conservation; and third, it showed that the elementary teacher can well correlate conservation teaching with other school subjects.