

content increase, there will be more and more need to rely on full familiarity with the language of mathematical thought, and eventually, much of this will be the use of purely symbolic forms. One cannot learn mathematics effectively merely by familiarity with the language of mathematics; familiarity with the language is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the learning of mathematics. Thus, to acquire any real power over mathematics, one must acquire power over the symbols, and these, like the patterns of a foreign tongue, must be learned thoroughly as they come along — not all at once — but as the need for them arises.

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**THE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES PROGRAMME
ANOTHER ASPECT OF ACTIVIST TEACHING
AT MCGILL'S FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

In the Spring of 1966, the Department of Instruction in Geography and History at McGill's Faculty of Education, attempted to introduce groups of prospective teachers to environmental studies as an aspect of activist teaching method. Taking advantage of the Sunday traffic lull in Montreal, parties of student teachers and their instructors explored the geographical and geological structure of Mount Royal, and attempted an on-the-spot investigation into some of the historical and geographical principles influencing the growth of the old city itself. These expeditions were not conducted tours, but demonstrations of how teachers might guide children through a systematic, if informal, exploration of the local environment.

To illustrate further the possibility of this kind of activist teaching, the Department, in close association with the Macdonald Elementary School and the Faculty of Education's Audio-Visual Centre, worked with a Grade VI class in a similar project. On this occasion the geographic and historical features of Ile Perrot were substituted for the conventional textbook, and the children, using the inductive method where possible, discovered for themselves, meaning in the local environment. The results were recorded in a modest but interesting colour film.

Encouraged by the success of these early attempts, a number of Departments of the Division of Curriculum and Instruction plan to cooperate in developing an Environmental Studies Programme as a regular part of teacher education at Macdonald College in the 1966-1967 session.

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