



Integration of Graphic Material with the Textbook

THE CONTENT and organization of most courses are determined by the textbook. Films and other pictorial media are most effective when integrated with the text of the teaching material. Therefore, it would be highly desirable to have textbooks written with the idea of using selected graphic material such as motion pictures and filmstrips.

Ideally, the graphic materials should be an essential part of the instruction; we should have an integrated package of textbook writing and illustration, motion pictures, slides, models, and filmstrips. Since the author cannot be sure that all of his readers would have all of these materials available, the first step probably must be to have them included as supplementary material. Suggested films, slides, and models (analogous to suggested outside reading and other projects) should not only direct the instructor's attention to the best visual material—thus circumventing some of the difficulties of using catalogs—but also should indicate when and how they are to be used for maximum effect.

Materials Should Be Tested

There is some danger, however, that the textbook would make too many suggestions, so that the teachers would be confused and not know what to select. We must avoid cluttering up the curriculum with more activities than any teacher can possibly carry on effectively. The only way to avoid such mental indigestion is to

test out a rough draft of the book and its supplementary materials by using them in a course, to make certain that the suggestions are actually practicable and effective.

Achieving Integration

The book is one of the greatest of human inventions—but the “snobbery of the book” is deplorable. Textbook writers often are highly verbal people who have little respect for the “audio-visual second-raters,” and little training and aptitude for graphic communication. Moreover, texts are often illustrated by people who are not subjectmatter specialists. In general, the verbal presentation is planned first and then pictorial presentation is tacked on. In addition, films are usually produced and sold by people who are not in the textbook business.

The ideal method would be to have a textbook writer who is also an expert in graphic communication. Failing that, we need intimate collaboration from the very beginning between the writer and the graphic communicator. They should go over the material and decide what can be best presented by the one medium, the other, or both. The textbook, its illustrations, the films and filmstrips, should be outlined together. Then the textbook writer should write the script for the film while the specialist in graphic communication is preparing the illustrations for the textbook. The result would be a completely integrated, maximally effective package, including the text, illustrations, filmstrips, and motion pictures.

Some Hopeful Steps in the Right Direction

A few publishers have begun to take bold steps forward. McGraw-Hill has been successful in the experiment of taking good textbooks, finding the concepts which are hard to teach, and making films to cover these concepts. Their book by Landis on *Your Marriage and Family Living* is a good example of graphic materials integrated with the text. Some of the illustrations in the text are

from a correlated set of motion pictures and filmstrips which were produced simultaneously with the book. Scott, Foresman is publishing high-school social studies books that are tied in with films and filmstrips. Certain publishers in the elementary reading field are using graphic materials in the teaching of reading.

But these tentative steps in the right direction are exceptional. Furthermore, the publishers have used chiefly the conventional types of materials rather than some of the newer types, thus indicating that they might be helped by expert advisory committees. It is to be hoped that these promising beginnings will continue to develop. If so, they will create a highly significant new trend among publishers of textbooks and will make an important contribution to education.

A Manual on How To Illustrate a Textbook

Because of the prominent role of the textbook in education, efforts at improvement should be concentrated on it. Our goal should not be to increase the mere number of pictures in textbooks, many of which are relatively irrelevant, but to increase the teaching effectiveness of the book by an increase in relevant illustrations.

A small manual on how to illustrate a textbook could be prepared for distribution by publishers to writers. This manual could answer key questions such as the following: What kinds of photographs should I use? What might the subjectmatter be? How large should the picture be? What different color processes can be used and what are the prices of these color processes? What are the sources of less stereotyped, warmer, and more realistic photographs? What should I specify in writing for a photograph? Which ones will I have to pay for and how much will I have to pay for them? What are the other kinds of illustrations I might use—diagrams, drawings, shaded drawings, caricatures? What are the common inadequacies in diagrams and how may they be avoided? What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of different kinds of illustrations?

A similar manual should be prepared on the importance of

integrating films, filmstrips, slides, and models with the textbook, and on how to do it.

A Conference of Top-Level Representatives

It would be highly desirable to get top-level representatives of publishing companies, specialists in graphic art, and educators together for a general free-wheeling discussion on a number of related topics. The group should include a research man, an artist, an advertising man, and someone who knows the technicalities of the printing business. This group should discuss topics such as the illustration of textbooks, the establishment of a central source file of illustrative materials, and the integration of the textbook with other instructional materials. It might initiate the production of the two simple manuals we have recommended. Such a discussion might also serve as a point of departure for significant research.