

Public Health

Adult Group Teaching

(in five sections)

By

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Section—4

D. Methods of Teaching

The teacher has a wide variety of methods to choose from in helping students learn. Health is a personal and intimate subject and lends itself to one or a combination of methods. The methods that the teacher uses will depend on the groups educational background, their experience with the situation, and their experience of working together.

1. Group discussion.

(a) Group discussion is considered by many teachers as the best method to use in adult education.

Adults have rich life experiences which can be utilized during the learning process.

Adults are in a position to draw their own conclusions.

(b) Discussion is an effective method of bringing new facts within the scope of known experiences.

The group leader may present a new fact and illustrate by giving an example familiar to the group; then other members will tell similar incidents known to them. The learner expresses how she feels about a thing, she tells why she does a thing in certain way and together, the group discusses possibilities of change.

(c) Discussion is a process whereby two or more people express, clarify, and pool their knowledge, experiences, opinions and feelings.

It is a co-operative process in which several minds work together toward a common understanding or agreement.

(d) Discussion, when not controlled, may be critical and lead to unpleasantness.

1. The group leader must control such discussions by bringing the group back to the scientific facts in the situation and by relating each side of the discussion to the facts and/or objectives.

2. The teacher should avoid controversial issues.

(e) In group discussion every person has an equal opportunity to contribute his ideas, experiences, and knowledge on the problem. Individuals learn to think independently and by wise leadership from the teacher, to think together.

(f) In group discussion, it is very important that the discussion should lead to a satisfying understanding or to a point for further discussion.

(g) Group discussion is a method recommended when the purpose is to develop social attitudes, relate knowledge to experience, influence personal values, deepen understanding, reach decisions, and *plan for action*.

2. The Lecture method of teaching.

(a) The lecture method is excellent for presenting a large number of facts in a short period.

(b) It is useful in introducing new subjects, in summarising the literature in a field, in reviewing, in integrating different ideas and concepts into an orderly system of thought.

(c) It is difficult to meet individual needs by the lecture method, as there is little personal relationship between

teacher and student.

(d) A lecture should be well organized, with ideas developed in logical sequence. Local experiences should be used to illustrate general statements.

(e) A lecture should relate past, present, and future materials on the subject. The main ideas should be summarised and conclusions drawn.

(f) A lecture should be limited to 10-15 minutes as concentration is lost after this time.

3. Question and answer method.

(a) Question and answer method is often used with the lecture method and provides for an exchange of ideas between teacher and student.

(b) This method has a disadvantage in that the student may be embarrassed in a group and it may become boring for other members.

4. Demonstration method.

(a) Demonstration, used with lecture and discussion, is the most commonly used method of teaching health subjects.

(b) The demonstration must be adapted to facilities in the home. It is effective when the mother or responsible person, helps with each step in the process, or when the demonstration is repeated immediately *i.e.*

1. The Public Health Nurse washes her hands before rendering any service in the home.

2. The helper should observe, then wash her hands, and so with each step in the procedure.

3. A discussion of WHY a skill or procedure is done in an exact manner should be carried on during the process.

5. Project method.

(a) The project method is interesting to students as it requires activity and gives a sense of accomplishment. Projects are tasks, that develop from the subject and are organized into units, that can be dealt with by a student or a group.

(b) Project assignment is especially adaptable to community health in which the learners work together in a group.

Example : Division into groups.

Theme : To study the fly menace.

Group I discussed and discovered by survey where and how flies breed in the village.

Group II interviewed the health authority to discover the kind and incidence of disease carried by flies.

Group III studied and reported on methods to control flies.

Group IV drew up a plan of action to interest and to get the co-operation of people in a campaign against the fly menace.

All groups reported on their findings. The study resulted in an organized campaign to rid the village of flies.

6. Workshops and Conferences.

Workshops and working conferences are educational methods particularly adapted to professional groups, such as teachers, health personnel and others.

The workshop group comes together for one or two weeks to work in small groups to explore all aspects of a subject and to reach specific goals. A person desirous of conducting a workshop or working conference is referred to specially written books on the subject.

E. Teaching Aids

Teaching aids are just what the title implies and supplements teaching by discussion and demonstration. Teaching materials are scarce and sometimes difficult to obtain. The teacher must be ingenious enough to make her own or, through the project method, assist the group in making its own.

1. The motion picture.

(a) The motion picture brings outside experience to the groups.

(b) Many health films made in India during the past few years are available from the Directorate of Public Health and other agencies.

2. The film strip.

(a) The magic lantern is popular in community group teaching, as it is easy to operate and can be used on battery or with kerosene.

(b) The film strip is particularly good to follow a demonstration, to emphasize special points in techniques, and to help fix and summarise the most important points.

3. Exhibits.

(a) Exhibits are the most popular form of aid used for public consumption.

(b) Live exhibits are best. Stalls are set up and demonstrations are carried out while the health worker explains each step or method of doing a procedure. She explains *why* while she shows *how*.

(c) Every exhibit should have a clearly defined purpose.

(d) The exhibit should be interesting and arranged to tell a story logically.

4. Models.

(a) Models are very popular in public exhibitions.

(b) Real models are best, such as the latrine, the model well, the smokeless *chulah* etc.

5. Blackboards or whiteboards.

(a) Both blackboards and white boards are almost universally used.

(b) White boards are white sheets of newsprint attached to a board; a charcoal stick or black crayon is used to write, draw, and illustrate.

1. White boards provide a full record of the problem or project.

2. White boards save time.

3. They are easy to see.

6. The Bulletin Board.

The bulletin board is a most important visual aid for any group work.

1. Key things to learn and to observe are kept on the board.

2. Informative schedules are placed on the bulletin board.

3. Current events are posted daily.

7. Flannel or Khadi graph.

(a) The flannelgraph is a popular and effective aid that can be shown anywhere at any time.

(b) The graph or story is drawn on

paste board and a piece of sand paper or Khadi is pasted on the back.

(c) As the story is told, the teacher places each piece of the picture on the flannel board in proper sequence and in perspective.

(d) The value of the flannelgraph lies in its ability to illustrate point by point as each point is explained. It is easy to carry about and it is not expensive. Anyone can make a flannelgraph.

8. Flash Cards.

Illustrative pictures in sequence.

(a) Flash cards have been used in Kindergartens, in elementary grades, and in adult classes for years.

(b) They are particularly useful in illiterate classes to review and drill the group on the important facts to be learned.

(c) Flash cards are easy to make and are inexpensive.

(d) Each flash card presents only *one* idea—or one step in a procedure.

9. Posters.

(a) Posters are the most commonly used aid, as is shown by their use in clinics.

(b) Posters should tell a story, but only *one* story to a poster.

(c) Posters should be clean and free from frayed or torn edges.

10. Puppets.

(a) Finger, wooden, or *papier-mache* puppets are interesting, novel and fun to make and use.

Care should be taken in planning the use of any one or combination of the above aids. The aid should be integrated with, and related to the lesson being taught. Visual aids are *supplements* to the real learning. Visual aids cannot teach alone.

In using films and slides, the teacher should review the aid to familiarise herself with the subject and the content. She should discuss the purpose *before the showing and discuss both the strong and the weak points after the showing of the film or slide.* (To be continued)