

PROGRAMMED INSTRUCTION IN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

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Programmed instruction is the logical organization and presentation, in small step units, of instructional materials designed to elicit, from the individual student, numerous active learning type responses which are subject to immediate verification by the learner as to accuracy.

The role of the teacher in programmed instruction is very significant as follows:

1. Aiding the individual student in selecting and using appropriate programmed materials to accomplish important educational objectives.
2. Motivating the student in the pursuit of his educational objectives through the use of programmed instruction.
3. Using programmed material in preparing individuals to participate in group or classroom discussions or other educational activities. This is important in leading to a more complete understanding and application of basic information, suitable to the solution of individual and group problems in the agindustrial segment of the economy. In other words, programmed materials may be used by students in preparing themselves for classroom discussion as compared to using the typical assignment of ordinary text and other reading resources.
4. Devising ways and means of measuring and recording the educational progress being made.

Programmed instruction is much in the educational news these days. What is the prospect of using it in vocational and general agricultural education at the secondary level; for collegiate education in agriculture and for extension education in agriculture?

This question is of interest to me as a field for exploration, having just retired from active administrative duties in agricultural education. For about three years, I have been assembling a library of books and pamphlets in this field, and have been following some of the pioneer projects in programmed instruction under way at the Pennsylvania State University. Dr. D. R. McGloy, Head of the Department of Agricultural Education in the College of Agriculture, has been guiding some graduate student studies in this field. Interesting results have been obtained.

From my readings about programmed instruction, I have learned that the Armed Forces and various industrial concerns are using this method of instruction with what appears to be outstanding results. Of course there are now many examples of the technique as it is applied in numerous academic disciplines in elementary, secondary, and collegiate education. At present, however, there seems to have been very little special application to the broad field of agricultural education.

This leads me to ask the following questions:

1. Is there a need to explain or describe the basic principles of programmed instruction to educators in the field of agriculture?
2. As a corollary of the preceding question, would agricultural educators be interested in illustrative material applicable to the various aspects of agricultural education?
3. Would programmed instructional materials be a useful addition to the ways and means now employed in agricultural education?

I would appreciate correspondence and your suggestions on any phase of programmed instruction with special reference to agricultural education. My new address is:

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AATEA MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Among materials distributed late this past spring by the 1962-63 President of AATEA, Clarence Bundy, was included a dues notice. It was hoped that those members who had not paid their 1963 dues would do so. A few did.

However, a number of persons who had already paid 1963 dues, completed the dues information sheet and sent it with a check for \$3.00 to the treasurer. These have been applied to 1964 membership, and membership cards will be distributed at the beginning of 1964, as in the past.

The dues year may not be clear to all members. Since AATEA was organized, the fiscal year (and dues year) has been December 1 - November 30. This made it possible to close the books and prepare a financial report for the AATEA meeting during the AVA Convention in early December. Since the terms of officers of AATEA now run from July 1 - June 30, to coincide with those of AVA officers, consideration was given last December in Milwaukee to changing the dues year to July 1 - June 30, also. After considerable deliberation, it was decided by the executive committee and ratified by the membership of AATEA that the dues year should remain December 1 - November 30.

In keeping with past practice, AATEA dues will be collected at the AATEA breakfast during the AVA Convention in December, and those not present will be contacted by mail shortly thereafter.

V. R. Cardozier, Treasurer