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THE USE OF INFORMAL DRAMATIZATION
IN THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
OF PRIMARY CHILDREN

By

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A Thesis

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INTRODUCTION

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Problem Stated, Defined, and Delimited

1. The Statement of the Problem

Teachers of Christian Education are prone to be satisfied when the children they teach can tell or repeat the Bible story or Christian truth they have been taught. Although subject matter is important, it should not be the end result, for head knowledge does not in itself bring about changes in the lives of children. Therefore the problem is to find ways and means by which the teacher can transfer this knowledge into the children's everyday living experience. Informal dramatization is one way in which this desired outcome can be achieved. The writer of this thesis will attempt to show how informal dramatization can be used to make the Christian Education program more effective.

2. The Definition of the Subject

Informal dramatization is often confused with formal dramatization.

"Playmaking"¹ as Ward calls, "Creative Dramatics,"² as Lease and Siks refer to it, and "Educational Dramatics,"³ Raine's name for it, are terms used inter-changeably with the term 'informal dramatization.' Since informal dramatization is confused with formal dramatization, both are discussed in the following pages as to their

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1. Winifred Ward: Playmaking With Children. (As indicated in the title).
2. Ruth Lease, and Geraldine Brain Siks; Creative Dramatics in Home, School, and Community. (Title).
3. James Watt Raine: Bible Dramatics. (As indicated in title).

various characteristics.

1

a. The Characteristics of Formal Dramatization

Daily Vacation Church School is in full swing; each department superintendent has been informed she is in charge of the closing program for her department. As she thinks about what her department will do for the occasion, she may decide to have them put on a play.

Once the decision is made by her, she informs her teachers, a teacher is appointed to take charge and proceed. The teacher frantically looks for a play that will be suitable for the occasion. The most capable children are chosen for the parts, and they work hard at memorizing their parts. The constant repetition of the same scenes tends to make the rehearsals boring. The rehearsals are squeezed in at the sacrifice of class lessons and other activities. The teacher tells the children just exactly how to move and how to express themselves. Many hours are spent making elaborate costumes and scenery for the play. At last the night for the closing program comes, and the children do their parts, some of them forgetting their lines in their stage fright. The director is worried lest something should go wrong. Finally, the play over, the audience claps and praises the children for their fine performance.

The above is a sample of how formal dramatization may be

.

1. Cf. Lease and Siks; op. cit., pp. 2-3.
Elizabeth Miller Lobingier; Activities of Child Education, pp.167-175.
Elizabeth Miller Lobingier; Dramatization in the Church School,
pp. 5-7.
E.M. Lobingier; The Dramatization of Bible Stories, pp. 9-10.

developed with children. There are eight characteristics that are typical of formal dramatizations:

1. The teacher decides whether or not a play will be performed.
2. The teacher decides on the play to be given.
3. Capable and well-qualified children are chosen for the part.
4. The conversation is memorized by the children.
5. There are many tedious rehearsals.
6. The teacher tells the children what they are to do.
7. Costumes and scenery are elaborate.
8. At the end of the performance the audience applauds. The children are praised for their part in the play.

b. The Characteristics of Informal Dramatization¹

Daily Vacation Church School is in full swing. Each department head is informed she is in charge of the closing program for her department. She looks in on each group to see what possibilities are at hand. In one room she sees a group of children informally dramatizing the story of Jesus blessing the children. On talking with the teacher, the superintendent finds out that the class has had much enjoyment acting out the story. The teacher also enthusiastically tells how much learning experience she has observed. Discussion follows on the possibilities of sharing this play or another that the class has dramatized, with the whole department.

The next day the teacher approaches her class and asks them

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1. Lease and Siks; loc. cit.
 E.M. Lobingier; Activities in Child Education, loc. cit.
 E.M. Lobingier; Dramatization in the Church School, loc. cit.
 E.M. Lobingier; The Dramatization of Bible Stories, loc. cit.

if they would like to share their activity with their friends and parents on the closing night. They vote to give their play. When the time comes, both the children and the teacher are calm. The informal dramatization which has become a part of the children's experience through their own planning is shared with the audience. The speaking parts are more simple in expression, but the basic idea is present. The setting is simple and the costumes are plain, merely to suggest the atmosphere and the setting. When the play is over the children are happy because they have shared their work and experience with others. The audience does not applaud or praise the youngsters for their fine performance. Instead they thank the class for sharing their play with them.

This illustration shows how informal dramatization may be used as a sharing experience. There are eight characteristics that are typical of informal dramatization:

1. The children decide whether or not they will share the play with an audience.
2. The children decide which story related to their lessons they will dramatize. They discuss the story and plan how to act it.
3. Each child has the opportunity of playing the part of more than one character.
4. The conversation is in the children's own words.
5. The children informally dramatize the play as many times as necessary to have a polished product.
6. It is decided through discussion how the play can be improved.
7. Costumes are simple if they are used. Scenery is not elaborate.
8. There is no applause at the end of a performance.

c. Informal Dramatization and Formal Dramatization Contrasted

In informal dramatization the children choose, develop, and act the play spontaneously under the teacher's guidance, whereas in formal dramatization the teacher chooses and directs a play written by an outsider to the group, the children memorize the parts and the teacher directs every movement. The main difference between the two is that informal dramatization is pupil-centered, while formal dramatization is audience-centered.

3. The Subject Delimited

The writer is limiting the subject of the use of informal dramatization in the Christian Education program to primary children, ages six through eight.

B. The Problem Justified

According to Wood the majority of churches prove or reveal on observation that "much haphazard pedagogy,"¹ exists through proven unsound educational methods.

Lease and Siks say:

"Today more than ever before, education recognizes its responsibility in providing methods of teaching children in such a way that learning is significant and effective."²

They continue to point out that one way of promoting good teaching, though by no means the only method, is through the use of informal dramatization.³

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1. Cf. W. Carleton Wood: *The Dramatic Method in Religious Education*, p.51.
2. Lease and Siks; *op. cit.*, p. 122.
3. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

Wood states that he believes informal dramatization should come into religion as another successfully employed method discovered by secular education.¹

Since so little is written about the use of informal dramatization in Christian education the writer feels the need for a thesis on the subject. What secular educators have found out about the subject then can be properly related to Christian education, thereby making informal dramatization a more usable method in Christian teaching.

C. The Method of Procedure

In the first chapter the values that primary children receive from informal dramatization are given.

The second chapter deals with the principles that should guide the teacher and the techniques that the teacher may use in directing primary children in informal dramatization.

The third chapter discusses the various types of informal dramatization that the leader can use with primary children.

D. The Sources of Study

Winifred Ward, Ruth Lease and Geraldine Siks, and Elizabeth Lobingier's works have been the most useful books on the subject,² since they deal exclusively with informal dramatization. Most of the other sources listed in the bibliography were not very helpful

.

1. Cf. Wood: op. cit., p. 51.
2. Lease and Siks, op. cit.
Lobingier; Dramatization in the Church School, op. cit.
Lobingier: The Dramatization of Bible Stories, op. cit.
Ward: Playmaking with Children, op. cit. (These are the books that the writer is referring to as the most useful works.)

because they contained little on informal dramatization. They included much material that was not usable due to the subject's being limited to primary children.

The writer will draw on her experience with informal dramatization as a second grade public school teacher, as a Vacation-Church-School director and teacher, as camp counselor, as a Church-School teacher, and finally as weekday religious education teacher.¹

1. Public-school teacher at Edgewood School, Taylor Township, Dearborn, Michigan.
 Vacation-Church-School teacher and director under the Vermont Church Council in Underprivileged areas of Vermont.
 Camp counselor at Goodwill Industries camp, New Jersey.
 Church School teacher at Brick Church, New York City.
 Weekday religious education teacher, Indianapolis, Indiana.

CHAPTER I

VALUES OF INFORMAL DRAMATIZATION FOR PRIMARY CHILDREN

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PRIMARY CHILDREN

A. INTRODUCTION

As a first step in considering the use of informal dramatization with primary children, it is the purpose of this chapter to discover the values inherent in this method. The emphasis of the books the writer studied was mainly upon the values gained by children, but several writers also considered the values of this method for the teacher. Therefore, the first step will be to consider the values received by primary children through participation in informal dramatization and the second step will be to consider the values inherent in the use of informal dramatization for the leader.

B. VALUES RECEIVED BY PRIMARY CHILDREN

THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN INFORMAL DRAMATIZATION

Two aspects of an experience in informal dramatization are stressed by writers as being of value to the children participating. These are the playing of a character and the being a part of a group. Both experiences are valuable for the children.

1. Values Derived by Children Through Character-Playing

Through character-playing the individual child gains both personally and socially.

1

a. Personal Values Gained

Every child has had the experience of identifying himself with a character in a story read or told to him. In playing a character he enters into as great an identification with the character as is humanly possible.²

Washburne, as quoted by Ward, puts it this way:

"Dramatic expression lets one step out of one's own personality into that of another. It lets one transcend one's own limitations and frees one from many of the taboos and inhibitions that circumscribe daily life."³

Self-consciousness is lost as he becomes another person for whom he can act with freeness since he has identified himself with the character both in thought and feeling. What he says and does is no longer an expression of his personality, but that of the character played.⁴

In playing a character the timid child, the show-off, the mentally handicapped, and the physically handicapped are all given a chance to become someone else. The experience helps to give some release from tied-up emotions.

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1. Cf. Corinne Brown: *Creative Drama in the Lower School*, p. 213
Gertrude Hartman and Ann Shumaker, Editors; *Creative Expression*, p. 260.
Lease and Siks; *op. cit.*, p. 126.
Lebingier: *The Dramatization of Bible Stories*, *op. cit.* p. 12.
Josie Robbins and Marjory Louise Bracher: *Puppets and Bible Plays*, p. 3.
Ward; *Playmaking with Children*, p. 24.
2. Cf. Lease and Siks: *loc. cit.*
3. Ward; *loc. cit.* Quoted from Carleton Washburne: *A Living Philosophy of Education*.
4. Cf. Brown; *loc. cit.*
Cf. Hartman; *loc. cit.*

(1) Values for the Shy or Timid Child¹

According to Ward, "Creative dramatics helps the timid child perhaps, more easily than any other."² In class he is known as the child who remains silent, while others freely express their ideas. Such a child, regardless of his reasons for being timid, longs for freedom of expression. With encouragement from the teacher such a child gradually learns to play minor parts.³ As the child plays these characters, he loses consciousness of himself and becomes another personality.⁴ Experiences which such children have never known before become theirs. As the child is made aware of his success in playing other characters, he attempts to live these characters in everyday life. The result is a more confident and happy child who freely expresses ideas and emotions that were once hidden.⁵

Nine-year-old Susan was spending her second year at summer camp. Her quietness and withdrawal from participation in new activities were soon noticed by the writer who was her counselor. Susan's group decided to play the Bible story of Baby Moses, for the Sunday Evening Vesper Service. Someone suggested that Susan play the part of the daughter. The encouragement of her comrades helped

.

1. Cf. Isabel B. Burger: *Creative Play Acting*, p. 140.
Brown; *op. cit.*, p. 220
Lease; *op.*
Grace Sloan Overton: *Drama in Education*, pp. 76-78, 83-84.
Wood; *op. cit.*, p. 44.
Ward; *Playmaking with Children*, pp. 210 ff.
2. Ward: *Playmaking with Children*, p. 210.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 211.
4. Cf. Ward: *Playmaking with Children*, p. 211.
5. Cf. Brown; *op. cit.*, p. 220.

her to do so in the preliminary playing of the story. It was obvious that she had identified herself with the character, for she showed freedom of expression. When the children were asked who in their opinion had best portrayed the daughter and should have that part in the play, they all agreed that Susan was the one. When the play was shared with the rest of the children, the freedom she had had in rehearsals was still there. Her success carried over into other activities. Freedom of expression and acceptance by other children made a much happier girl of Susan.¹

(2) Values for the Show-Off Child²

When normal expression is denied, the feeling of inhibition and a sense of rigidity sets in. The desire for expression sometimes "breaks forth in a disorder which is the significantly termed 'acting up' or 'showing off,'"³ as Merrill puts it.

These tensions can be released in a healthy way when the child is free to play them out through the emotional pattern of another individual. Gradually the child will permit emotions that are more

.

1. Goodwill Industries Camp, Butler, New Jersey, Summer 1954. Though Susan was no longer a primary child, her experience could well be duplicated in children six to eight years old.
2. Cf. Burger; op. cit., pp. 140-141.
 Evelyn Hilliard and Theodora McCormick and Kate Oglebay:
 Amateur and Educational Dramatics, p. 6.
 John Merrill and Martha Fleming: Playmaking and Plays, p. 57.
 Lease and Siks, op. cit., p. 16.
 Winifred Wards: "It's Fun to Dramatize," Children's Religion, p.8.
 Wards: Playmaking with Children, p. 211.
 Wood; op. cit., p. 37.
3. Merrill; op. cit., p. 57.

admirable and desirable to replace those that are not healthy. The experience then becomes "one of release and control set in fine balance."¹

Lease points out that when the child has gained "the approval of others he gradually develops a feeling of harmony within himself as he becomes 'all of one piece' emotionally, mentally, physically, and socially."²

(3) Values for the Mentally-Handicapped Child

Children who are mentally retarded or are sometimes called slow learners are made miserable, for they are never chosen by others and are never able to do their work like other children. They feel they are complete failures and know they are not bright. Such children need to gain self-respect.³ The feeling of success they are looking for can be found through character playing. Since informal dramatization is used not for the sake of a polished play but for the sake of the values children receive from it, the retarded child, as a result of playing various characters, is free to participate. Winifred Ward illustrates how one mentally handicapped boy became a happy boy and lost his fears and repressions.⁴

In her speech to a group of teachers, Mrs. Glancy said that

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1. Burger, op. cit., p. 6.
2. Lease and Siks, op. cit., p. 130.
3. Cf. Mrs. Leonard Glancy: "Understanding the Slow Learner," speech made at the Weekday Religious Education Institute of Indiana, October 21, 1954. She is a public school teacher at School 44 in Indianapolis where she teaches mentally-handicapped children.
4. Cf. Ward, op. cit., p. 220.

one of her best teaching methods with her fourteen slow learners (with I.Q.'s of 50-80 and between the ages of 9-13) is the use of informal dramatization.¹

(4) Values for the Physically
Handicapped Child²

This child may have a crippled arm or leg or back. All of these handicaps make "it impossible for him to take his rightful place in any social group."³ Since many of these children will never be permitted to move freely about so that they can act out a character, another form of informal dramatization is used, this being puppetry. Of this method of dramatization Ward says,

"Puppetry is an especially effective form of playmaking for crippled children, partly because it does not require much moving about and partly because the players do not have to face their audience."⁴

Children who can not speak well manipulate the puppets while others speak for them.⁵ They are able to be characters they never could be in actuality and are able to live in an environment denied them in real life.⁶

b. Social Values Gained

It is possible for the child playing a character to be transplanted to an environment which is entirely new to him. His concept

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1. Glancy: speech, op. cit.
2. Cf. Ward: Playmaking with Children, op. cit., p. 215
Winifred Ward: Stories to Dramatize, p. 2.
3. Cf. Ward, loc. cit.
4. Cf. Ward: Playmaking with Children, p. 216
5. Ward: Ibid, p. 216
6. Cf. Overton: op. cit., p. 76.

of people in social and economic ranges other than his own as well as of people of other nations, can be moved to a higher level of understanding.

(1) Understanding People in Another
Social and Economic Range¹

Children who desire to be rich and great can enter into the experiences of such an individual. They come to learn as a result that money can be a curse. Their change in outlook on life is the subsequent result.²

A child who is socially and economically favored can become an underprivileged child. After living out this experience he begins to understand some of the problems such a child faces. Sympathy and the understanding of these people replaces wrong attitudes toward the underprivileged class.³

(2) Understanding People who live in
Other Countries⁴

Life experiences of children in other countries can be played by the children. Through these vicarious experiences the children have a much "better understanding and appreciation of other peoples and their way of life..."⁵ The result is the development of

.

1. Cf. Hilliard: op. cit., pp. 6-7.
Overton: op. cit., pp. 76-78.
Raine: op. cit., p. 8.
Ward: "It's Fun to Dramatize," op. cit., p. 8.
Wood: op. cit., pp. 42-44.
2. Cf. Hilliard: loc. cit.
3. Cf. Overton: op. cit., p. 43.
4. Cf. Elizabeth Miller Lebingier: *Informal Dramatization in Missionary Education*, p. 7. Wood: op. cit., p. 89.
5. Lebingier: loc. cit.

friendly attitudes toward people of other countries and races.¹

(2) Values Derived by Primary Children

Through Group Experiences

It is almost impossible, if at all possible, to have a more perfect social situation, even though it involves pretending, through which children can develop in character than that offered in informal dramatization. Through that experience of working as part of a group, the authorities point out, the children learn to evaluate ideas on an impersonal level, to subordinate their own ideas with others when there is disagreement, to adjust their behaviour to group standards, to live together happily, and to think creatively and independently. When these things are being accomplished a well-rounded personality is in the making.

a. Learning to Evaluate on an Impersonal Level²

There are many opportunities in the presentation of an informal dramatization for children to evaluate. An evaluation of the many different ideas of a group brought together when the children consider how a character should be portrayed, what parts should be put into the play or omitted, what children could best portray the characters, and how the play could be improved is necessary. With proper super-

.

1. Cf. Ibid.

2. Cf. Bernice Buehler: Let's Make a Play, p. 6.

Lease and Siks: op. cit., pp. 8, 9, 118, 120-121, 131.

Lobingier: Dramatization of Bible Stories, pp. 12, 14.

Lobingier: Activities in Child Education, p. 175.

Lobingier: Informal Dramatization in Missionary Ed., pp. 6-7.

Raine: op. cit., p. 7.

Ward: Stories to Dramatize, op. cit., p. 14.

vision the children gradually learn when they criticize to give good comments.¹ When they choose a child for a certain part it is for the good of the group and not for personal reasons.² The child's power in forming correct judgments gradually increases, not only in the making of the play, but in his everyday life.³

b. Learning to Subordinate their Own Ideas⁴

Ward seems to be the only author who deals directly with this particular aspect, whereas other authors seem to deal indirectly with it in relation to group evaluation. The child is made aware of the fact that everyone's ideas do not always coincide with his. He is made to realize that this is a group of boys and girls working together and that cooperation may mean that he be willing to accept the decision of the group to accept, change, or reject his particular view. Thus the child gradually learns to get along with others who disagree with him.

c. Learning to Adjust Behavior to Group Standards⁵

Sometimes a child lacks a knowledge of how to gain needed friendship. All means are tried to be the center of attention. "The aggressive child," "the show-off" or "the bully" are the names attributed to him. He observes that he is more accepted by the group when

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1. Cf. Ward: *Stories to Dramatize*, op. cit., p. 14.
2. Cf. Lobingier: *Dramatization of Bible Stories*, loc. cit.
3. Cf. Raine: op. cit., p. 70. Cf. Lease: op. cit., pp. 13-14, 131.
4. Cf. Ward: *Playmaking with Children*; op. cit., p. 22.
5. Cf. Burger: op. cit., p. 140. Brown: op. cit., p. 220. Frances Caldwell Durland: *Creative Dramatics for Children*, p. 64. Lease and Siks: op. cit., pp. 12-13. Ward: *Playmaking with Child*. op. cit., pp. 214-215.

he waits his turn patiently and accepts praise without over-doing it.¹ Over a period of months he gradually learns "to share responsibilities and ideas with others."² He loses consciousness of himself and now works toward an end which is outside himself.³

d. Learning to Live Together through Pretending
to Play Together⁴

Hartman stresses this as the greatest value that dramatics offer to the elementary schools.⁵ In informal dramatization children are living in an organized situation in which they are the participants. To quote Hartman: "Though the children are pretending, they are learning to live together harmoniously, and this alone is an invaluable experience for them."⁶ Through living in happy group life, the children show significant progress in character building.⁷

e. Learning to Think Creatively
and Independently⁸

Ward says, "Life holds so much of richness for the person who

.

1. Cf. Durland: loc. cit. Lease and Siks: op. cit., p. 13.
2. Cf. Lease and Siks: Ibid.
3. Cf. Brown: op. cit., p. 220.
4. Cf. Hartman: op. cit. p. 265.
Lobingier: Informal Dramatization in Missionary Education,
p. 7.
5. Cf. Hartman: loc. cit.
6. Ibid.
7. Cf. Lobingier: Informal Dramatization in Missionary Ed., loc. cit.
8. Cf. Brown: op. cit., p. 4.
Lobingier: Activities in Child Education, p. 173.
Lobingier: Dramatization in Bible School, pp.6-7.
Overton:op. cit., pp. 91-2.
Ethel Smither: Teaching Primaries in the Church School, pp.114-115.
Ward: Playmaking with Children, p. 20.
Wood: op. cit., p. 33.

has creative expression."¹ There are many opportunities for creative thinking when a story is being dramatized. The children are free to plan their scenes, individualize their characters, and omit portions. Each time a child plays a character he expresses himself differently, both in words and action.²

3. Spiritual Values to be Realized by Primary Children

Though by no means all writers recognize the fact, others are agreed that when dramatizing a Bible play children do develop spiritually. They develop habits of worship, develop in understanding how to live the Christian way of life, are helped in understanding what the Bible people were really like, and become better acquainted with the Bible.

a. Developing Habits of Worship³

Children are stirred to a deeper sense of the presence of God as they identify their lives with Bible people who had great experiences of worship.⁴ As a result of such experiences, Lobingier says, the children gradually "form habits of worship and begin to develop a religious feeling of their own."⁵

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1. Ward; Playmaking, op. cit., p. 20.
2. Cf. Lobingier; Dramatization in the Bible School, op. cit., p. 12.
3. Cf. Lobingier; Activities in Child Education, op. cit., p. 180.
Lobingier; Dramatization in Church School, op. cit., p. 66.
Wood; op. cit., p. 47.
4. Cf. Wood; Ibid.
5. Cf. Lobingier; Activities in Child Education, loc. cit.

In one vacation Bible School which the writer helped to direct, one group of five children between the ages of four and eight had at the climax of playing the Christmas story what was obviously a real worship experience. It was natural to thank God for Jesus then.¹

b. Developing in Understanding Christian

Ways of Living²

As children play together they are learning to share, to think of others, to remember to be kind, to make decisions, all of which are basically the way of Christian living.³ These children are ready to live out the golden rule, for they have learned to live in another person's place. According to Overton the failure to be able to do the above is the reason people fail in living out the golden rule.⁴

As a group works together the children become aware of the other person's ideas and problems. They then develop a sense of Christian love which helps children to realize the fellowship that exists in Christ.⁵

c. Coming into a Comprehension of Highly

Religious People⁶

Through dramatization children are given an opportunity to

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1. With Vermont Church Council, Pudding Hill, Summer 1953.
2. Cf. Paul King: "How to Find Teachers and Leaders," International Journal of Rel. Education, June 1949, p. 16.
Lease and Siks; op. cit., p. 177.
Overton; op. cit., pp. 90-91.
3. Cf. Lease and Siks; loc. cit.
4. Cf. Overton; loc. cit.
5. Cf. King; loc. cit.
6. Cf. Lobingier: Dramatization in Bible School, pp. 3, 6.
Ward: "It's Fun to Dramatize," op. cit., p. 7.
Wood; op. cit., p. 72.

live out the experiences of a highly religious people. Through this they are able to realize some of the problems those people had to meet and have a chance to compare them with their own problems.¹ The children are made aware of the fact that these people are really ordinary people, rather than people who lived on a different plane and who must be spoken of with reverence and awe.² These characters then become real to the children and the truth contained in the Bible takes on meaning.³

d. Becoming Acquainted with the Bible⁴

Sometimes the children decide to use the exact wording of the Bible. The Scripture then is made much more meaningful to them and helps to give the play the proper dignity and atmosphere.⁵

C. Values for the Teacher of Primary Children

Only four of the authors discuss informal dramatization from the standpoint of the teacher, but these agree that the teacher will find dramatization a good teaching method. The values stressed by one or more of these writers are as follows: Children remember longer what they are taught when they play it; they use what they are taught in everyday life after living it in the informal dramatization; the attention of the children is easy to get with this tool; and the teacher is able to correct wrong impressions.

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1. Cf. Lobingier; *Dramatization in Bible School*, loc. cit.
2. Cf. Ward; "It's Fun to Dramatize," op. cit., p. 7.
3. Cf. Wood; op. cit., p. 72.
4. Cf. Lobingier; *Dramatization in the Bible School*, op. cit., p. 11.
5. Cf. Ibid.

1. A Means of Securing Lasting Impressions¹

Ward makes this statement: "Experiments have shown that what is dramatized makes a more lasting impression than what is studied in most other ways."²

King relates that after two years of creative drama in the Church School the children showed an increase "in knowledge and understanding of the Bible and its teachings"³ over those who did not participate in the project.

2. A Means of Getting Teaching into Action⁴

Through informal dramatization the teacher is able to lead the individual to transform the subject-matter he is learning into values that extend into real life.⁵ As an educational procedure this is the thing all teachers should strive for.

3. A Means of Gaining the Attention of Children⁶

Wood, the only author who says anything directly about this aspect makes the following statement: "The dramatic method by its varied nature and colorful aspect, compels attention, secures a natural response, and invites expression."⁷ Children are naturally interested in playing a story and therefore put forth their undivided attention.

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1. Cf. Ward: Playmaking with Children, op. cit., p. 192.
King: op. cit., p. 16.
2. Ward: Playmaking with Children, op. cit., p. 192.
3. Cf. King: loc. cit.
4. Cf. Overton: op. cit., pp. 80-81.
Wood: op. cit., pp. 38-41.
5. Cf. Overton: op. cit., p. 80.
6. Cf. Wood: op. cit., p. 40.
7. Ibid.

Since only the children who are cooperative have an opportunity to play the various characters, the children are on their best behavior.

4. A Means of Discovering What the Child Has Learned¹

Informal dramatization becomes a test wherein the teacher is able to see what the children have not understood correctly. When children play the story the teacher is able to discover whether the right concepts she has attempted to set forth are understood. If she sees they are incorrect she can make the correction which is necessary.

D. Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to discover the values inherent in informal dramatization. Through a study of the authorities dealing with this subject, it was discovered that informal dramatization is generally held to be of value to the children participating in it. In the first place, through character playing, the timid, show-off, mentally-handicapped, and physically-handicapped children are all helped to become better adjusted individuals. They become aware of the fact that they can be like the characters they play in real life.

Moreover, the children gain in the understanding of other social and economic backgrounds as well as of people of other nations. Through the living of these characters they become more friendly in their attitudes and have more sympathy for those who need it.

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1. Cf. Wood: op. cit., p. 40.

In the second place, it was found that values are derived from the group experience. In the process of dramatization the children learn to evaluate, to permit the group to help decide on ideas, to adjust to group standards, to live together, to think creatively and independently.

Finally, some of the writers were found to stress the fact that children, in playing the Bible stories or stories pertaining to Christian living, gain spiritually. Habits of worship result from participating in the way of worship of long ago. They learn to live together as Christians. They are made aware of the fact that Bible people are ordinary persons. Through the use of Bible words in a play the Bible increases in meaning.

In addition to recognizing the values for children to be found in informal dramatization, a few writers stressed also the values for the teacher. The teacher of primary children will find in using informal dramatization that it is an excellent method for achieving results of lasting quality, putting teaching into action, gaining the attention of children and discovering what the child has learned.

CHAPTER II

PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES OF INFORMAL
DRAMATIZATION WITH PRIMARY CHILDREN

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A. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter it was discovered that there are many values that children can receive from their playing in an informal dramatization. Although a leader of primary children may be aware of these values she may hesitate to try this teaching method because of her feeling of inadequacy in using it. Therefore it is the purpose of this chapter to discover the principles and techniques involved in the use of informal dramatization.

B. PRINCIPLES OF INFORMAL DRAMATIZATION WITH PRIMARY CHILDREN

There are many principles which the leader should keep in mind in the development of the informal dramatization from her preparation to the last performance by the children. In the following discussion they are divided into five categories. These include the principles in choosing a motivation, the principles in selecting a story suitable for informal dramatization, the principles in telling stories to be informal dramatized, the principles in guiding primary children in the dramatizing of a story and principles in guiding primary children in evaluating their informal dramatization.

1. Two Principles in Choosing a Motivation

The leader should choose a motivation which will achieve its

intended purpose as well as to capture the children's interest.

a. The Leader Should Examine Intended Purposes.

The Leader needs to use care that she does not make her motivation mainly a means of entertainment.¹ Instead the motivation should be the means used to arouse the imagination of the children. This will be squelched though, if the leader provides the children with an overabundance of material. The children may be so satisfied that they will not be challenged in their thinking. It, therefore, is important for the leader to examine the motivation she plans to use to be sure it does challenge the children's thinking, invites group discussion, allows for self-expression, appeals to each child, and sets the desired mood.²

b. The Leader Should capture the Children's Interest.

Natalie Cole says, "Children cannot create out of a vacuum. They must have something to say and be fired to say it."³ Children will respond to the teacher who says, "I am going to tell you a story, and then we are going to play it," with the same enthusiasm.⁴ It is the leader's responsibility to seek a good motivation which will "involuntarily capture the child's interest."⁵ The children without realizing it are carried "into the enthusiasm of group discussion."⁶

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1. Lease and Siks, op. cit., p. 101
2. Cf. Ibid., op. cit., p. 105.
3. Natalie Cole: The Arts in the Classroom, quoted in Lease and Siks, op. cit., p. 101.
4. Lease and Siks, op. cit., p. 101.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.

Lease and Siks say,

During this time a friendly atmosphere is built up, rapport is established, barriers disappear, and the group becomes psychologically and socially ready for the activity which follows.¹

2. Principles in Selecting a Story Suitable for Informal Dramatization

Ward says, "There is no doubt that a well-chosen story goes far toward insuring a successful play experience."² Therefore the ensuing discussion considers the important principles a leader should know before she chooses a story to be informally dramatized.

a. The Stories Should be Full of Action.³

Buehler says that it is essential that something is happening all the time and that characters are constantly doing something.⁴ Many good stories exist that do not have enough action or the kind of action which can be readily dramatized.⁵ They depend more for their effectiveness on continuous action rather than on description or cleverness of dialogue.⁶ The story which jumps from one place to another can seldom be dramatized satisfactorily.⁷

b. Stories Should Have Direct Discourse.⁸

The conversation should seem natural and should be brief and

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1. Ibid.

2. Ward: Stories to Dramatize, op. cit., p. 4.

3. Cf. Buehler: op. cit., p. 7.

Lobingier: Dramatization of Bible Stories, op. cit., p. 110.

Overton, op. cit., p. 120. Ward: "It's Fun to Dramatize," p. 8.

Ward: Playmaking with Children, p. 58.

Ward: Stories to Dramatize, p. 4, 5.

4. Cf. Buehler: loc. cit.

5. Cf. Ward: Its Fun to Dramatize, p. 4.

6. Cf. Ibid.

7. Cf. Ibid.

8. Cf. Buehler, op. cit., p. 7. Ward: Playmaking, p. 54.

direct and seem to belong to the character who says it.¹ Such conversation accompanied by action lends itself well to informal dramatization. The leader, though, should avoid stories which have long description or long narrative speeches.²

c. Stories Should Have A Good Basic Structure.³

There are four parts which every story should have: beginning or setting, action, climax, and conclusion.

(1) Beginning or Setting Should Capture

Listener's Attention.

The beginning or setting should capture the listener's attention for the events which are to follow.⁴ Jeannette Perkins Brown says,

"The beginning, though not longer than a sentence or two in a short story, must introduce the leading character, put him in the proper setting, and awaken curiosity about his problem or situation. It must give a clue to what the story is about. It anticipates, without predicting, the end. It suggests the problem which the climax will resolve."⁵

(2) Action Should Be Guided.

There should be a feeling of movement straight through the story.⁶ Each event, given in logical sequence, should present only the necessary facts which will prepare for the climax and yet not give it away prematurely.⁷

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1. Cf. Ward: loc. cit.
2. Cf. Buehler: loc. cit.
3. Cf. Jeannette Perkins Brown: *The Storyteller in Rel. Ed.*, pp.11-23.
Lobingier: *The Dramatization of Bible Stories*, op. cit., p. 110.
Overton: op. cit., pp. 119-120.
4. Cf. Brown: op. cit., p. 17.
5. Ibid.
6. Cf. Ibid., p. 21. Overton: op. cit., p. 119.
7. Cf. Brown: loc. cit.
8. Cf. Ibid.

The dramatic quality of the story is its element of suspense. It keeps the outcome suspended till the end.¹ Jeanette Perkins Brown writes, "The greater the suspense the more rapt the attention, the more impressive the point, and the greater the real satisfaction and relief at the climax."²

(3) The Climax Should Be Strong.

The climax is the most important part of the story.³ It is in the climax that the point of the story is reached. If this is weak then the whole story is weak. The events of the story should lead naturally and purposefully to the climax.

(4) The Ending Should Give Sense of Completeness.

The ending of the story should give it a sense of completeness and satisfaction.⁴ All of the questions raised in the story should be answered before the story comes to a close. Brown says that when that point is reached "it is time to stop."⁵ Though the temptation may be strong to point out a moral, it should not be done.⁶ A moral added tends to weaken the story.

d. Stories Should Carry an Idea of Some Worth⁷.

A story which does not contain an idea of some worth is not

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1. Cf. Ibid.
2. Jeanette P. Brown: op. cit., p. 21.
3. Cf. Lobingier: Drama of Bible Stories, op. cit., p. 110.
4. Brown: op. cit., p. 23.
5. Ibid.
6. Cf. Ibid.
7. Cf. Buehler: op. cit., p. 7.
Curry: Dramatizing the Story, op. cit., p. 12.
Ward: "It's Fun to Dramatize," op. cit., p. 8.
Ward: Playmaking with Children, op. cit., p. 52.

deserving of the time consumed in making it into an informal play. This is more important in a story dramatized than in one which is read, since it makes a much deeper impression when dramatized.¹

e. Stories Should be Suitable for Age Group.²

The Stories used should be those in which primary children can reasonably express themselves. They should be stories readily understood by a child of that age.³ Overton feels that primary children are unable to see "beyond the symbol to the thing or act symbolized."⁴ Leaders of primary children should not have children play a story which is symbolic. Only stories that are concrete are suitable.⁵

The story should have a direct appeal to the children who are to dramatize it. Although the story may be well written and very dramatic, it may not appeal to that group.⁶ Children will not put their best effort into playing a story they half-heartedly accept. It is possible that the leader's telling of the story is to blame for the attitude of the children.⁷

Stories which may be very well suited to juniors and junior high age children, may be unsuitable for the primary child, since the subject matter may be unrelated to that child's experience.⁸

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1. Cf. Ward: Stories to Dramatize, op. cit., p. 4.
2. Cf. Buehler: op. cit., p. 7.
Edland: op. cit., p. 21.
Overton: op. cit., p. 106.
Ward: Stories to Dramatize, op. cit., p. 6.
3. Cf. Edland: loc. cit.
4. Overton: loc. cit.
5. Cf. Ibid.
6. Cf. Ward: Stories to Dramatize, loc. cit.
7. Cf. Ibid.
8. Cf. Buehler: loc. cit.

f. Stories Should Contain Accurate

Subject Matter

It is essential that the story be one in which accuracy is observed. For instance a missionary story should give a fair and kind representation of the people of that country.¹ This will help the children to appreciate people of other lands rather than ridicule them.

The main idea contained within the Bible story should determine how the story is played. If a great amount of emphasis is placed on the robbers in the story of the Good Samaritan, the real purpose of the story is lost.² Instead the stress should be placed on the Samaritan who proved himself the best neighbor. That certainly was the point Jesus tried to put across. When rightly guided, dramatization of Bible stories can be a most dynamic method.

g. Stories Should Hold to Poetic Justice.

Ward believes that ideal or poetic justice should be characteristic of every story chosen.³ Stories that do exemplify poetic justice according to Ward, "build sympathy for virtues such as courage and good sportsmanship, for kindness and integrity and arouses antipathy for cruelty, jealousy, and pettiness."⁴ Although most stories contain good and evil it is essential that the children's sympathy be on the

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1. Cf. Buehler: op. cit., p. 7.

2. Luke 10:25-37.

3. Cf. Ward: Playmaking with Children, op. cit., p. 55.

4. Ward: loc. cit.

side of the right. It is difficult for most primary children to see life realistically in the sense of evil triumphing over good. Since their standards are now forming they need to see good being rewarded. As they grow older they will begin to "understand that one's own self-respect and peace of mind are worth more than any material reward which could come to them."¹

For this reason there are many Bible stories which are very inappropriate for children to dramatize informally. Lobingier mentions that the story of Jacob's deceit is one story to be avoided.² She points out that Jacob's act of deceit brings him all the good things in life which rightfully belong to others.

Edland claims that the flood story probably would break down the children's ideas of the kind heavenly Father.³ It is then essential not to choose a story that will be likely to lower moral standards.⁴

h. Stories Should not Include Jesus as a Character to be Played

Three authors, Munkres, Overton, and Ward, agree that children should not play the part of Jesus whereas Lobingier does not mention the problem.⁵ Ward states that it is "difficult for children to

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1. Ward: Stories to Dramatize, op. cit., p. 6.
2. Cf. Lobingier: Dramatization of Bible Stories, op. cit., p. 112.
3. Cf. Edland: op. cit., p. 23.
4. Cf. Stories to Dramatize, loc. cit.
5. Cf. Munkres: op. cit., p. 142.
Overton: op. cit., p. 120.
Ward: It's Fun to Dramatize, op. cit., p. 8.

impersonate the character of Jesus with sufficient dignity and reverence."¹ If they play the part of Jesus they are apt to lower their estimate of him rather than to increase it.

If the portrayal of Jesus is barred by the teacher then such stories as the Triumphal Entry, Jesus Feeding the Multitude, and Jesus Healing the Blind Man will need to be eliminated as possibilities.

The writer discovered a way in which it is possible to dramatize the story of Jesus blessing the children, without actually having a person act the part of Jesus.² At the point where Jesus speaks in answer to the disciples' rebuke to the mothers, the leader asked the group: What did Jesus say to the children? And together they say, "Let the children come to me."³ The children then gather around a chair, some can sit on the arms of the chair, others can sit at the foot, while a picture of Jesus rests on the seat. The writer found out that the children can readily accept this procedure, and the dramatization can be very effective.

1. Stories Should Contain Real Characters.

The characters in the story should have reality, although it is not necessary for them to have strong individuality.⁴ The main characters should be alive, whereas background characters must have

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1. Ward: loc. cit.
2. Cf. Matthew 19:13-15, Mark 10:13-16, Luke 18:15-17.
3. R.S.V. Bible: Matthew 19:14a, Mark 10:14, Luke 18:16.
4. Cf. Ward: Stories to Dramatize, op. cit., p. 5.

at least one definite characteristic. The realness of the characters will help the children to truly live them.

j. Stories Should Appeal to the Group.

A story may meet the aforementioned principles and yet not meet the interest of the children.¹ In such case the dramatization at best can only be half-heartedly played. If necessary the teacher can tell several stories and let the children select the one that interests them most. This will help to prevent unhappy mistakes which can destroy the effectiveness of the playmaking.

k. The Story Should be More Effective in
a Dramatization than in a Reading.

According to Ward, "If a story is more effective read than dramatized,"² it should not be used for a play. Only when its value to the children is heightened as it comes alive in a dramatization should it be used. For this reason one should use stories which are more effective in a dramatization than in a reading.

3. Principles in Telling Stories to be
Informally Dramatized

It is important that the story be well told if it is to be used in play acting. The teacher should tell it well, using as much direct discourse as possible, presenting simple and vivid pictures of the action, and giving each character definite characteristics so as to distinguish him from the rest. The whole story should be

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1. Cf. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

2. Ward: Playmaking with Children, op. cit., p. 57.

told for the sake of continuity, even though only one part is to be informally dramatized.

a. Stories Should Contain Direct Discourse.

Four authors stress that direct discourse is essential to the telling of a story.¹ Children have an opportunity to get acquainted with how the conversation can run as they dramatize the play. The leader in telling the story should change any indirect conversation to direct discourse. As a result the children's interest is heightened. Ward illustrates the difference in this manner: "She asked Elf if he had really been in a story," which is not half as effective as "'Why, Elf!' she whispered, 'were you really - in a story?'"²

b. Stories Should Include Simple and Vivid Pictures.

The leader should tell the story in such a way that the listeners can see in their minds a continuous, moving picture.³ To do this the leader needs to use plenty of good action words. When the story is finished the children will have a visual picture in their minds

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1. Cf. Lobingier: *Dramatization of Bible Stories*, op. cit., p. 12.
Munkres: op. cit., p. 142.
Overton: op. cit., p. 121.
Ward: *Playmaking with Children*: op. cit., pp. 83-84.
Ward: *Stories to Dramatize*; op. cit., p. 11.
2. Ward: *Playmaking with Children*, op. cit., p. 84.
3. Cf. Lease and Siks: op. cit., p. 105.
Lobingier: *Dramatization of Bible Stories*, op. cit., p. 11.
Overton: loc. cit.
Ward: *Playmaking with Children*, op. cit., p. 83.
Ward: *Stories to Dramatize*, loc. cit.

and will be ready and eager to supply the physical action needed.¹

c. Stories Should Make Characters Appear Alive.

According to Ward characterization is of first importance in a play.² It is important that the storyteller make each character real and understandable. There are three ways in which children get their ideas of the character according to Ward: "from the story-teller's description; from what the character says and the way he says it; from what he does; and from the reaction of the other characters to him."³

d. Stories Should Have Variety in Timing.

There are times when the storyteller can increase his effectiveness in the telling of the story by speeding up or slowing down. Each story has its own timing. The teller therefore has to decide on the tempo that should be used for the various parts of the story. Ward illustrates the tempo with four examples: "There is the lively rhythm suggesting the constant running of the 'Ginger bread man'; the slow stateliness of 'The Sleeping Beauty'; the gay, light-hearted Milne stories; the strong, firm movement of 'Robin Hood.'⁴

When one is building toward the climax the timing is perhaps the most essential. Pausing just before the high point may prove very effective. Timing helps to make the story live in the children's minds.

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1. Cf. Ward: Playmaking with Children, loc. cit.
2. Cf. Ward: Playmaking with Children, loc. cit.
Ward: Stories to Dramatize, loc. cit.
3. Ward: Playmaking with Children, op. cit., p. 83.
4. Ward: Playmaking with Children, op. cit., p. 84.

e. Stories Should be Told as a Whole Unit.

Sometimes only a fragment of a story is to be played. Still the whole story should be told.¹ When the child has a complete understanding of the whole story, he is ready to play the fragment.

4. Principles in Guiding Primary Children
in the Dramatizing of a Story².

The children, with the leader's guidance, prepare the story that is to be played informally in a sketch form, using the form of written plays. They need to consider the scenes to be used, the characters that must be included, parts and incidents to be used or left out, and finally the individuals to take part in the first cast.

a. The Children Should Choose the Scenes
to be Played.

First, the children discuss in proper sequence the places where the story took place.³ They should then limit their scenes to no less than three and no more than five.⁴ Then they will need to decide the following: the point at which the story will begin; where the scenes will take place; what will happen at the beginning; how much of the story will be told in each scene; how each scene will end.⁵ This, naturally, will be very general in nature at first.

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1. Cf. Ward: "It's Fun to Dramatize," op. cit., p. 7.
2. Cf. Lobingier: Dramatization of Bible Stories, op. cit., p. 16.
3. Cf. Buehler: op. cit., p. 19.
4. Cf. Ward: Stories to Dramatize, op. cit., p. 11.
5. Cf. Buehler: op. cit., p. 18.
Edland: op. cit., p. 30.

b. The Children Should Decide Which Characters

Are to be Included in the Story.

The children should name each character to be used in the play while the teacher lists them on the board.¹ Then it should be decided whether other characters are to be added. After the list is completed, time should be taken to study each character separately. The children then can 'try-out' the characters.² They can project themselves in pantomime into the personality of the character they play. In this manner they can begin to understand the character better.

It is important that no character be changed drastically, if some change is desirable. Ward stresses the fact that the players have an obligation to the author, and that obligation is to keep each character true to the author's portrayal.

It is also important to decide how many characters are to appear in each scene and which characters are vital to the story and should be included.

c. The Children Should Decide if Any Parts

of the Story are to be Omitted.

Sometimes to reduce the number of scenes, the less important episodes of the story are left out. A narrator or announcer can easily fill in the gaps and make the transitions that are needed.³

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1. Cf. Buehler: op. cit., p. 18.
Edland: op. cit., p. 30.
2. Cf. Ward: Stories to Dramatize, loc. cit.
3. Cf. Ward: Stories to Dramatize, op. cit., p. 11.

d. The Children Should Decide on the Method
of Choosing Cast.

There are three ways of choosing a cast.¹ The children may select those they feel are suited for the parts, the teacher may appoint parts, or the children may volunteer for the parts. Ward suggests that the last is the best method. She also suggests that it is a good plan to have the children volunteer for the major parts first. Then they are more willing to volunteer for lesser parts if they do not get their first choice.²

The teacher must use care in choosing the first cast. If well chosen, those children can create further interest in the playing of the story.³ It is also wise not to use all the talented children at one time, thus leaving those who are shy and more self-conscious to make one group.

e. Children Should be Aware that Characters
Are not Permanent.

When children have accepted or volunteered for a certain part they should be given the opportunity to understand that the part is only temporary.⁴ Children should try out various parts. Lobingier believes that children should play a different character every time the story is played.⁵

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1. Cf. Lobingier: *Dramatization of Bible Stories*, op. cit., pp. 14, 16.
Ward: *Stories to Dramatize*, op. cit., p. 12.
Wood: op. cit., p. 82.
2. Cf. Ward: loc. cit.
3. Ibid.
4. Cf. Edland: op. cit., p. 15.
5. Cf. Lobingier: *Dramatization of Bible Stories*, op. cit., p. 14.

Children also need to remember that once they play a character they are to continue with that part until the scene is finished.¹

f. Children Should Express Themselves in Action
Before They Use Words.

As soon as the children are confident they know their characters they can begin to play the story. Since action is the most important part of the play, shy children who feel uneasy about speaking their part should not be forced to speak.² Sometimes the first try out can be entirely done in pantomime. Then gradually as the play is repeated many times, the children begin to feel more confident and begin to use words.³

g. The Children Should Use Their Own Words.

Once the children begin to feel absorbed in the character they play and the incidents of the story are clear in their minds, they will be free to use words. These words should be expressed in each child's own way.⁴ Each time the story is played the words will be different. As time goes on the children may have the desire to use Biblical words to give color to their acting. In such events

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1. Cf. Wood; op. cit., p. 82.
Buehler; op. cit., p. 19.
 2. Cf. Edland; loc. cit.
Opening Doors; January-March, 1953, p. 48.
Lease and Siks; op. cit., p. 117.
 3. Cf. Lease and Siks; loc. cit.
 4. Cf. Brown; op. cit., p. 213.
Curry; op. cit., p. 13.
Lobingier: Activities in Christian Education, op. cit., p. 175.
Lobingier: Dramatization of Bible Stories, op. cit., pp. 11,16.
Wood; op. cit., p. 82
"Characteristics of Informal Drama.," Opening Doors, op. cit., p. 48.

the children naturally feel reverent and worshipful.¹

h. Setting, Costumes, Properties Should be
Kept Simple.

If costumes are used in the play they should be very simple. Perhaps a head dress or a sash in a Bible play is all it takes to give the child the feeling that he is dressed for the part. Costumes are to be used during every rehearsal, and not only for the sharing session.²

The setting also should be kept very simple. The children can make or gather the few properties that the group decide to use.³ Often children are content with less than the leader will accept or feel is necessary.⁴

i. The Leader Should Only Make Suggestions.

A leader may make suggestions, but should never dictate.⁵ The play should be the children's work. While the leader's ideas are superior to the children's ideas, a good leader will never force ideas on the group. It is easy for a child to lose confidence in his ability to create.⁶ When a child is forced to follow the adult's ideas, his actions and words become artificial. The leader's job is to help the

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1. Cf. Lobingier: *Dramatization of Bible Stories*, loc. cit.
"Characteristics of Informal Dramatization"; loc. cit.
2. Cf. *Ibid.*
3. Cf. *Ibid.* Cf. Buehler; op. cit., p. 20.
4. Cf. Buehler; loc. cit.
5. Cf. Wood; op. cit., p. 80.
6. Cf. Wood; *Stories to Dramatize*, op. cit., p. 9.
Ibid., pp. 14-16.

children to weigh their ideas one against the other and then make a final decision. Even when the decision is not the best, it should be accepted.

5. Principles in Guiding Primary Children in Evaluating their Informal Dramatization

The leader should follow three principles in guiding primary children to evaluate their work. Children can be cruel in their criticism; therefore, it is essential that the leader guide the children to make constructive criticism. Each suggestion made should be fully used to promote resourcefulness on the part of the class or group. The leader should make a point of guiding the children to evaluate essential points of the play.

a. The Children Should be Encouraged to Criticize Constructively.

It is difficult for the leader to maintain the role of guide during the session of evaluation. Criticism should come from the children rather than from the leader.¹ The leader can use leading questions to stimulate thinking. It is wise to lead the children to point out the good things and the strong points of the children's playing. Suggestions should be made in the form of ideas for improvement rather than criticism.² It is well to keep criticism impersonal by using the names of the characters rather than the children's names.

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1. Cf. Buehler: *op. cit.*, p. 23.

2. Cf. Lobingier: *Activities in Child Education*, *op. cit.*, p. 175.
Ward: *Playmaking with Children*, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
Ward: *Stories to Dramatize*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

The leader should see to it that no child is hurt by unkind personal criticisms.

The children should be guided in evaluating their characterization, story, action and grouping, climax, timing, dialogue, teamwork, voice, and diction.¹ The items to be evaluated should not be referred to by name with younger primary for the reason that they will not understand the meaning of the words.

b. The Leader Should See that Suggestions
are Utilized.

Suggestions made by the children should be followed.² For instance if a child should say, "We couldn't hear a certain character," the leader may say, "Next time let us see if each character can speak so that he may be heard."³ When children see that their suggestions are used they become more resourceful.⁴

c. Techniques in Guiding Primary Children
in Informal Dramatization.

How do I lead an informal dramatization? This question is often asked by an inexperienced leader. This section will attempt to answer the question. Each phase discussed here is related to the preceding section with a similar heading. The five general areas of techniques

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1. Cf. Ward; Playmaking with Children, pp. 105-106.
2. Cf. Wood; op. cit., p.81.
Lease and Siks, op. cit., p. 120.
3. Lease and Siks; loc. cit.
4. Cf. Ward; Playmaking with Children, p. 103.

which are discussed in relation to the principles are: (1) techniques in motivating the children to an informal dramatization, (2) techniques of choosing material to be informally dramatized, (3) techniques in telling the story to be informally dramatized, (4) techniques in guiding primary children in the dramatization of a story and (5) techniques in guiding children in evaluating their informal dramatization.

1. Techniques in Motivating the Children to an
Informal Dramatization.

"A good motivating force," writes Ward, "serves to awaken a tingle of excitement and to kindle an immediate interest among a group of children."¹ The leader needs to consider both the children and the material she wants the children to dramatize. An analysis of the story to find its theme and strong appeal will help the leader in her search for motivation.

The leader, for instance, may find that it is important for children to understand the background of a story to appreciate it.² One example is the story of the Baby Moses.³ The following background material may be presented: The Hebrews were slaves in the land of Egypt. They had to work very hard and build huge buildings for the Egyptians. One day the king of Egypt found out that the Hebrew people had more young children than his people had. He was afraid that soon there will be more Hebrew people than Egyptians and that they might become so many and so powerful that they would make the Egyptian people

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1. Cf. Lease and Siks; op. cit., p. 100.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 101.
3. Cf. Holy Bible: Exodus 2:1-10.

their slaves. It was then that the king of Egypt said to his servants, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live."¹

A leader could use some form of visual aid to stimulate the children's interest. A woven basket could be shown to the class and the leader could ask the question: What could you use this basket for? The children could enumerate ways in which they have seen baskets used. Then the leader would say: A baby's life once was saved in a basket similar to this.

Another means of motivating interest is to choose a situation in which the children are vitally interested. Most children who attend Church School that is held simultaneously with a church worship service, are curious about the way the adults worship. They want to know what their mothers and fathers do in church. The leader may decide to take the class to the sanctuary to attend worship service. One way to help prepare the children for the experience would be to have them informally dramatize the situation. To motivate the children the leader may say to the class: Next week we are going into the sanctuary where your mothers and daddies are worshipping God. How many of you have been to church before? What do we do in church? More questions and discussion can follow. At the appropriate time the leader could say: As I tell you the story of what your parents do in church you do it.

The children enjoy being the choir, the ushers, the organist,

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1. Holy Bible: R.S.V. Exodus 2:22b.

and the minister. This play acting can create in the children a desire for this new, meaningful experience. Quietness and reverence can be explained to the children as desirable behavior during the act of worship.

In another situation the leader may guide the children to play a story from the Bible that can teach right behavior and attitude, particularly in connection with a problematic situation. The children can see the connection between the two situations and can learn. This type of dramatization will not be in polished form due to the spontaneity of this form of dramatization.

These are few of the many ways of motivating primary children through the various steps leading to an informal dramatization.

2. Techniques of Choosing Material to be

Informally Dramatized

Sometimes the children suggest dramatizing a story they have heard and liked. They can see the dramatic possibilities of the story. Guidance then can help the children carry out their ideas and suggestions.¹

Usually the initial suggestion for playing the story comes from the leader. The leader also has to learn to recognize the dramatic possibilities of a story or a situation.²

Before searching for the story, the leader must consider the type of story that will be best suited to the unit of work presently

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1. Cf. Buehler; op. cit., p. 7.
2. Cf. Ibid.

under study. The next step to be considered is the time within the unit that will be best suited for the dramatization. Should the play come early in the unit and be a sort of introduction, or should it come as the climax of the unit during the review?¹

When the leader is selecting a story, whether it be Bible story or otherwise, that leader must keep in mind the principles or guides for selecting a story given earlier in this chapter.² When choosing a Bible story, the leader will have to "take the responsibility of changing the Bible version so as to make an organic unity of the story and yet keep the spirit and big meaning."³

The leader can look through Bible Story books for a simplified, written version that will serve her purpose. One may discover that such stories, while simplified, are poorly written. The leader can rewrite the story to fit her own need.⁴

In analyzing the story, the leader may discover that it lacks the quality that gives it what in every-day use is called 'punch.' The story may be too long and rambling, or it may lack needed movement toward a climax. The leader could make the necessary corrections and improvements.⁵ Brown emphasizes an important point when she writes, "If you do not like it (the story), don't try to tell it yet - for your own attitude towards it will keep the story from being effective."⁶

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1. Cf. Buehler; op. cit., p. 15.
2. Ante; pp. 27-37.
3. Lobingier; Dramatization of Bible Stories, op. cit., p. 111.
4. Cf. Brown; op. cit., pp. 51-52.
5. Cf. Ibid.

Stories are not the only type of material that can be dramatized. Lease and Siks feel that many of the significant Old Testament teachings can have deep meaning to children when related to their family experience and other aspects of their lives. Some of these teachings that can be dramatized are the following: helping others, sharing, following rules, and being fine friends.¹ Stories that contain these teachings are generally easy to dramatize on the spot.

If the leader has been developing the idea of sharing, it could easily be brought down to the children's level and experience in an informal way. To illustrate this the leader may say: Think of one time when you shared something with someone else. The children then could share their experiences in conversation. The leader may then say: Let's pretend I have just given you some candy. You are now eating a piece. Billy and Mary are just coming over to see you. You have two pieces of candy left. What are you going to do? Show us what you would do, Sue. The children will then act out the situation very informally and simply.

If the leader desires to use a story of the life of a Christian person or community in this age, she can look through indexes of books and magazines to find the story she wants. Often primary story books may have such stories. It is often wise to start a file of stories and materials that can be used with children of primary age. This will often save hours of searching.

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1. Cf. Lease and Siks; op. cit., p. 176.

A story told by a missionary, or an actual event that has taken place, may very well be the story chosen if it suits the desired purpose.

3. Techniques in Telling the Story to be

Informally Dramatized

The first sentence is often the most important sentence in a story. It is the attention-getting introduction. In telling the story of Jesus and the children, one might give the introduction in this manner: All the boys and girls were very excited when they heard the good news their daddies brought home. Jesus was coming to their very own town.¹ The children would eagerly listen to find out what the good news was.

A story that is well told is much more effective than a story that is read. The eye contact with the children can bring about a closeness with no barrier between.² If notes are desirable to help the leader remember sequence of events, then they are good to have. But the leader must not rely too closely on notes. The notes will include the following:

1. "Introduction: names, setting, situation, with indication of the hope or problem;
2. Action: the sequence of events which show progress towards the climax and obstacles as they are met;
3. Climax (be sure it is an answer to the curiosity and anticipation aroused in the introduction);
4. Conclusion, which winds everything up quickly and satisfyingly."³

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1. Cf. Holy Bible; Matt. 19:13-15, Mark 10:13-16, Luke 18:15-17.
 2. Cf. Brown: op. cit., p. 61.
 3. Brown: op. cit., p. 53.

As the story is being told the leader must be aware of the importance of the characters. They must live and breathe and be real. Direct discourse and action verbs can make the scenes vivid and create suspense.¹

If the leader finds that she does not have the attention of the group, she should bring the story to a close. Under the above mentioned circumstances, it is unwise to have the children dramatize the story. The leader then should take stock of the situation and analyze the cause of failure. Such analysis can mean future success.

4. Techniques in Guiding Primary Children in the Dramatizing of a Story²

In the following paragraphs the writer will use the story of the baby Moses to demonstrate the techniques and principles in guiding primary children in the preparing of stories for informal dramatization.³ It is presupposed that the story has been told and that the children are eager to play it.

The leader would then ask: "How many scenes should we have?" If the children are not familiar with the meaning of the word 'scene,' then the teacher could ask the question differently: In how many

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1. Cf. Brown; op. cit., pp. 63-70.
2. Cf. Buehler; op. cit., pp. 18-20.
Lobingier; Dramatization in the Church School, op. cit., pp. 14-15.
Lobingier; Informal Dram. in Missionary Ed., op. cit., pp. 12-13.
Lobingier; The Dramatization of Bible Stories, op. cit., pp. 17-43.
Ward; Stories to Dramatize, op. cit., pp. 11-13.
3. Cf. Holy Bible; Exodus 2:1-10.
Ward; Stories to Dramatize, op. cit., pp. 116-121. The story is retold here in a way suitable for preparing for dramatization.

places did the story take place? In this particular story the children may decide on the following scenes based primarily on location.¹

1. At the home of baby Moses
2. At the river
3. At the home of baby Moses

Once the scenes are determined, the leader could ask: "What persons do we need in the first scene?" The persons who appear in the first scene are the mother, Miriam, and the baby Moses. Lobingier includes Aaron and a visitor, two characters that are not in the Bible text.² Characters are added to give more children the chance to participate. Ward in the telling of this story keeps to the original three characters in the Bible story.³

"What happens in this scene?" the teacher could then ask. It is the next logical step in the dramatization preparation.⁴ The primary children may make the following comments: "Moses' mother was afraid that the soldiers would kill her baby. She hid him from them. But she was afraid they would hear Moses crying. Miriam and her mother talked about it. They decided to make a basket for Moses. In the basket they would place the baby Moses and put it in the river."

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1. Cf. Lobingier: *Dramatization in Church School*, pp. 72-75. Although the play is written for junior children, the scenes will remain the same for primary children. The words would be simpler.
2. Cf. Lobingier: *Ibid.*, pp. 72-75.
3. Cf. Ward: *Stories to Dramatize*, op. cit., pp. 116-117.
4. Cf. Lobingier: *Dramatization of Bible Stories*, op. cit., p. 26.

"Who would like to be the mother? Who would like to be Miriam? What shall we do about the baby Moses?" This will be the way to get the cast and solve the problem of having a baby.

Following the discussion children will be chosen for the parts. The leader should keep in mind the principles for choosing the cast.¹

Buehler suggests that in the first playing experience for the children, the story be pantomimed while a narrator tells the story.² Again because it is difficult for the children to tell the story for dramatization, the leader is the most capable person for the role.

The evaluation of each playing is then made by the children. This phase will be discussed more fully in the next paragraphs.³

5. Techniques in Guiding Children in Evaluating

Their Informal Dramatization

The leader sets the stage that determines how a group will report their findings. As soon as a group of players return to their seats, the leader can make these remarks: "Good work! That was a fine climax. Now we are getting the idea."⁴

The children may be asked the question: "What were some of the good things you saw in the play?" In evaluating the scene of 'The Baby Moses,' which has just been informally dramatized such remarks may be made as the following: "The scene moved right along. Moses'

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1. Cf. Ante, pp. 9-13.
2. Cf. Buehler: op. cit., p. 18.
3. Cf. Post; pp. 52ff.
4. Cf. Ward: Playmaking with Children, op. cit., p. 101.

mother showed that she really loved her baby. Miriam and her mother really acted scared. When Miriam and the mother spoke we could hear them. Their voices sounded like it was real." It should be noted that during the period of evaluation, the names of the characters in the story are used rather than the children's names.

One leading question for constructive criticism could well be: "What are some ways we can make our play better next time?"¹ Here again the children will have many comments. The tendency will be to make such remarks as: "Jean took up too much time," or "Mary just sat there and didn't do anything."² The leader needs to encourage the children to use the character's name, and to guide negative criticism to more positive and impersonal criticism.³

Each child's comment should be valued according to worth.⁴ Ideas not worth developing, or comments already made, can be dropped. This, however, should not be done in a manner that will hurt the child or that will make him feel that his contribution is worthless. The leader could make brief comments such as: "That is a possibility," or "I never thought of that," or "I wonder if that would make it clearer."⁵

An idea that is worth developing may be the following: "The play dragged." The leader may say: "Let us see if we can figure out why it was so slow, and may be we can make it move faster."⁶

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1. Cf. Ward: *Playmaking with Children*, p. 102.
2. Cf. Buehler: *op. cit.*, p. 22.
3. Cf. Ward: *Stories to Dramatize*, p. 14.
4. Cf. Lease and Siks: *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.
Wood: *op. cit.*, p. 81.
5. Cf. Ward: *Playmaking with Children*, p. 103.
6. Cf. Lease and Siks: *op. cit.*, p. 120.

Lease and Siks write,

"As long as a leader sees new opportunities in a creative play and indirectly points them out to the children, she keeps the class keenly interested in a certain scene. When children are enthusiastic about making a scene better, they will work again and again on the same material, and in so doing they gradually develop discriminating attitudes toward high standards of work and toward drama as well."¹

D. SUMMARY

Since it has been determined that informal dramatization has many values, it was the aim of this chapter to discover the principles and techniques that one should use in developing the informal dramatization from the leader's preparation through the children's last performance.

First, it was learned that the motivation was a determining factor to the success of the informal dramatization. The leader must remember that motivation is the key to capturing the children's interest toward the end that the purpose be achieved. Samples of types of motivation the leader may use were given. Those samples pointed out how background material, visual aids, a desired experience and the leader's pantomime could be used as means of motivating children to participate in an informal dramatization.

The next step was to point out the need for selectiveness on the part of the leader in the choice of story. It is important to watch for the form of the story, the interest of the children, and

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1. Lease and Siks: op. cit., p. 120.

their need. It was discovered that at times it is difficult or impossible to find the desired story. It was suggested that the leader could write her own story. It was also discovered that there are various types of stories that can be used for informal dramatization: stories from the Bible, stories related to the children's experience, stories with Christian emphasis, stories told by missionaries, and stories from the leader's own experience.

It was further discovered that a story that is to be informally dramatized needs to be well told. In the telling of the story, it was found to be more effective to use direct discourse, keep a continuous moving picture before the children's mind, make the characters appear alive, speed up or slow down the tempo for effectiveness. It is desirable to have notes on hand with the outline of the story.

It was found to be desirable, in the guiding of primary children, to guide the children to develop the play. The leader's role is to help them to make the suggestions and develop those that are good and worthwhile.

Finally, it was discovered that after each scene is played the group should evaluate the work done in as objective a manner as possible. The author suggested that the good points be mentioned first in the evaluation session, followed by suggestions for improvement.

CHAPTER III

TYPES OF INFORMAL DRAMATIZATION TO BE USED
WITH PRIMARY CHILDREN

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WITH PRIMARY CHILDREN

A. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the main emphasis was placed on the children playing a story informally. It was found that there are other types of informal dramatization which can be used with primary children. Therefore, it is the purpose of this chapter to learn what these types of informal dramatization are and how they may be used. The first step then is to find the different types of informal dramatization one can use with stories. The next step will be to discover what types of informal dramatization can be used in connection with other media.

B. THE USE OF INFORMAL DRAMATIZATION IN

CONNECTION WITH STORIES

Pantomime, story dramatization, and puppets are the types of informal dramatization the leader can use in connection with stories. In the following discussion these types are defined and the uses are listed.

1. Pantomime¹

Ward says, "When drama is expressed in action without words, it is pantomime."² In the first place it may be used to prepare a

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1. Cf. Marion Poppen Athy: *Jesus, Our Friend*, pp. 23-27
Durland; *op. cit.*, p. 98
2. Ward: *Playmaking with Children*, p. 10.

group for the informal playing of a story. In the second place, it may be "a dramatic reading, visualized through a living picture representation of the text."¹ Last of all it may be used incidentally in a class.

a. Pantomime used in Preparing a Primary Group
for Informal Dramatization

Pantomime is one of the first steps in informal dramatization.² The leader can have the whole group portray the action of one character at the same time.³ The child who does an especially good job, can do the pantomime before the whole group.

After that scenes from the story can be pantomimed, though Durland feels that it is unwise to put a complete story into pantomime.⁴ This type of pantomime is a definite aid in helping children overcome the fear that might develop when speaking and action are both required. Shyness gradually diminishes as children become more confident, and speaking becomes easier.⁵

b. Pantomime used with Dramatic Reading

The children can act out the story as it is read by a narrator. Both action and words move together.⁶ In the playing of the Christmas story, for example, the reader will read portions chosen from the

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1. Overton: op. cit., p. 110.
2. Cf. Ibid.
3. Cf. Lease and Siks: loc. cit.
4. Cf. Durland: op. cit., p. 99.
5. Cf. Lease and Siks: op. cit., p. 117. Overton: op. cit., p. 110.
6. Cf. Overton: op. cit., p. 110.

Bible while the children act it out.

c. Pantomime Used Incidentally

Marion Poppen Athy suggests that children in a primary class divide into small groups and plan short play stories in pantomime. One subject that does interest primary children is life in Nazareth in Jesus time. Each group can work on a different phase of life in Nazareth.¹

Children may pantomime various Bible stories or else stories dealing with everyday life covered in earlier lessons during the year.² The rest of the group can play a guessing game and name the story being played. This is a good review technique.

2. Story Dramatization³

Informal dramatization generally implies story dramatization. The content of this thesis dealt primarily with story dramatization. Children are experiencing this type of informal dramatization when they "make a story come alive by playing it spontaneously."⁴

3. Puppets⁵

Beck stresses the fact that puppets should seldom be used with

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1. Cf. Athy: op. cit., pp. 11, 23, 24.
2. The writer has used this technique successfully with juniors in Weekday Religious Education classes in Indianapolis, Ind. This procedure could well be duplicated with third graders.
3. Most of the sources listed in the bibliography deal directly with this type of dramatization.
4. Cf. Ruth Armstrong Beck: "Using Simple Puppets in Teaching," I.J.R.E., Sept., 1950, pp. 4-6.
Bessie Alexander Ficklen: A Handbook of First Puppets, pp.4,208,209.
Emma Pettey: The Puppet as an Elementary Project, pp.10,15-16, 25, 60-64.
Josie Robbins, M.L. Bracher: Puppets and Bible Plays, pp. 1-47.
Ward: Playmaking with Children, op. cit., p. 11.

primary children.¹ However, she also mentions that older primaries might enjoy acting out a story with simple puppets. Puppets can be used when the size of the room makes active dramatization impossible. A shy child can be more readily drawn into active part with the use of puppets than with any other form of dramatization.²

Some people object strongly to the use of puppets in playing Bible stories.³ They feel that the puppets "tend to lessen the dignity and significance of the Bible Characters portrayed."⁴ They reason that since many puppets are fictitious make-believe characters, such as Punch and Judy, the children may begin to feel that Biblical characters are fictitious also.⁵

There are several types of puppets. The first type consists of a small garment or mitten to which a head is attached. The puppet is worn on the puppeteer's hand like a glove and is manipulated with the fingers.⁶

Robbins describes spool marionettes as puppets made entirely from spools and discarded materials. Children in third or fourth grade have enough skill to make them in two to three hours.⁷

Stick puppets are cardboard figures attached to a stick. Pettey calls them shadow figures.⁸

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1. Cf. Beck: op. cit., p. 4.

2. Cf. Ibid.

Ficklen: op. cit., p. 209.

3. Cf. Beck: op. cit., p. 4.

4. Beck: loc. cit.

5. Cf. Ibid.

6. Cf. Ficklen: op. cit., p. 4.

7. Cf. Robbins and Bracher: op. cit., pp. 1-2. See directions for making puppets.

8. Cf. Pettey: op. cit., p. 16.

In one public school a group of fourth graders were very eager to share a puppet play they had been working on.¹ They had seen puppet plays where the children manipulating the puppets either did not speak their parts in voices loud enough to be heard, or failed to put enough expression and movement into their puppets. To overcome the problems, the children decided to record the speaking parts in advance. They could thus concentrate on one thing at a time. The result was excellent and the children were proud of their work.

C. THE USE OF INFORMAL DRAMATIZATION IN
CONNECTION WITH OTHER MEDIUMS

1. Picture Posing²

Children like to make pictures, often called living pictures, by grouping themselves to act a certain moment in a story. They may use a painting for their model or they may make up their own picture grouping.³

The children in the primary department of the Sunday Church School of Brick Church carried this idea out in the form of shadow pictures.⁴ A sheet was used behind which the Christmas story was told in a series of pictures. When the light was turned on behind the children, their silhouettes were seen by the audience.

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1. Fourth grade in Vassar public school, Mich., under the direction of their teacher, Mrs. Rhally Abke in the spring of 1952. This could well be duplicated with primary children.
2. Cf. Margaret M. Clemens: Primary Year One, Fall Quarter, Course I, Part 1, Oct.-Dec., 1950, pp. 2, 104, 128.
3. Cf. Ibid.
4. Brick Church, New York City, Christmas Sunday, 1953.

2. Dramatizing a Bible Verse¹

Clemens suggests that after the primary children discuss the meaning of the Bible verse, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord,"² that they informally dramatize it. The children play the part of pilgrim on their way to Jerusalem, singing songs of praise as they walk on their way.³ In this same way many other Bible verses could be dramatized.

Primary children could dramatize what the verse "Love one another,"⁴ means to them. Various ways of showing love could be played.

3. Dramatizing a Religious Song⁵

First, the primary children learn the song and its meaning. Then they put action to the song. The action could suit the rhythm of the music. One group can sing while the other group pantomimes the song.⁶

Clemens suggests the use of this procedure with the song entitled 'A Christmas Carol.'

The little Baby Jesus is asleep.
If you tiptoe very softly you may peep.
Can you see him in the hay
On this happy Christmas Day?
Hush! He's asleep.

The little Baby Jesus is asleep.
The shepherds in the fields have left their sheep.

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1. Cf. Clemens: op. cit., p. 26.
2. Psalm 122:1 King James Version.
3. Cf. Clemens: loc. cit.
4. I John 4:7a. King James Version.
5. Cf. Clemens: op. cit., pp. 117, 126. Munkres: op. cit., p. 130.
6. Cf. Munkres: loc. cit.

They have heard the angels sing
 And they've come to find the king.
 Hush! He's asleep!¹

In the first stanza one group could tip-toe quietly to the manger and gaze in awe and wonder at the child in the manger. In the second stanza the shepherds enter. Seeing the children standing quietly, they too walk in softly and gaze upon the child. No doubt a feeling of the presence of Christ will be felt by all.

D. SUMMARY

In this chapter the various types of informal dramatization usable with primary children were considered. It was found that the informal dramatization of a story could be done in pantomime, with the combination of acting and speaking, and with puppets.

It was also discovered that informal dramatization could be used with other media, such as picture posing, dramatizing a Bible verse, and acting out a religious song. The Judson Press curriculum suggested these form of informal dramatization in their primary church school curriculum.

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1. Clemens: op. cit., pp. 117-126.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study has sought to give the primary department leader a realization of the values that can be derived by primary children who participate in an informal dramatization. As an aid to those who desire to use this teaching tool, the principles and techniques involved in the preparation and the guidance of an informal dramatization were discussed. In order that the leader may use informal drama in ways other than with a story, the various types of informal dramatization and their uses were given.

In the first chapter it was seen that informal dramatization is of value to all children who participate in the experience as well as to the teacher who uses it as a teaching method. The children grow in their understanding of themselves and others as they become the people they play. As the children work together, they learn to co-operate, to think, and to respect others. In the spiritual realm they learn habits of worship, Christian ways of living, and become acquainted with the Bible. They can learn to comprehend the ways and habits of a highly religious people.

The teacher who leads a group in an informal dramatization, can quickly gain the attention of the class, help the class to put learning to action, and discover what the children have learned. The leader discovers that the story once experienced is more easily and readily remembered and understood.

The second chapter, presented some basic principles and techniques which should be applied in the development of an informal dramatization. The principles outlined how the leader should choose a motivation, select a story, tell the story, and guide the children in the dramatization and the evaluation of their dramatization. The techniques showed how these principles could be used in various situations.

In the choosing of a motivation the leader must be sure that the goal she has set is achieved at the end of the work. The choice of a story for an informal dramatization is determined by the following characteristics: action, conversation, good basic structure, suitability for primary children, and appeal to the group.

When a story is to be dramatized, the study revealed, it must be told well with a great deal of conversation, simple and vivid pictures, variety in timing, and it should be told in its entirety. The characters must be made vivid.

It is the leader's responsibility to guide not to dictate to the children. The children should be encouraged to criticize their playing and evaluate it.

The conclusion of this study is that while informal dramatization is of great value in the program of Christian education, very little material is written in the field. The sources most helpful to the writer of this work were Lease and Siks, and Ward whose emphasis on informal dramatization is in the secular education area. The writer gathered much of her material for the Christian education

values inherent in informal dramatization from the works of Lobingier whose books were written in 1918 and 1930. Lobingier does include one chapter on this teaching method in her book called Activities in Child Education published in 1950. It is encouraging to note that Sunday Church School curriculums of the major denominations do encourage the use of informal dramatization for primary children. There is a question as to whether the teachers know how to use it effectively. It is for this reason that it would be desirable to have new and up to date material written on the subject.

In the third chapter it was learned that there were various types of informal dramatization that could be used with primary children. Three different ways of leading an informal dramatization with a story were discussed. Children who participate in the pantomime provide only the action. Acting and speaking informally are the characteristics of story dramatization of which the primary content of this thesis deals.

Puppets can be used successfully with older primary children. This type of informal dramatization used with a story is unique in that it takes less room than any of the other types of informal dramatization. Some question the use of puppets because they feel some of the dignity possessed by Bible characters is lost and because puppets may make children feel they are fictitious make-believe characters.

Other types of informal dramatization were picture posing, dramatizing a Bible verse and dramatizing a religious song. Children

may make their living picture from an artist painting or from pictures thought up by themselves. A variation of this type is the shadow picture.

Bible verses can be dramatized both for the meaning it had for the people in the times it was written and for the meaning as applied to the children of today.

In dramatizing a song one group of children could sing whereas the other group could pantomime the song.

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