

1925

A Morning With the Children

Lydia Swanson
Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker>



Part of the [Home Economics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Swanson, Lydia (1925) "A Morning With the Children," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 5 : No. 3 , Article 3.
Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol5/iss3/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.

A Morning With the Children

MISS LYDIA SWANSON

Instructor in Home Economics



Shampooing Dollie's Hair During Work Hours

WOULD you like to visit the child care laboratory? Then come with me this morning. We'll take these chairs near the wall, be as well-behaved and non-committal as the original Stoics lest some toddler assume the role of actor.

At eight-thirty, a merry little voice chirps, "good morning" as Mother or Daddy deposit the child at the door. This is followed by another and another until a group of sixteen children between eighteen months and five years have arrived, with a certain air of independence and perhaps concealing some "bit of news," the child proceeds to the cloakroom. The clumsy little fingers remove the hat, coat, mittens and hang them on the hooks. It is only when a scarf is tied in a hard knot or galoshes prove stubborn that the teacher comes to the rescue.

After inspection as to "runny noses" and other evidence of illness, taboo in the laboratory, the child, with eagerness and anticipation steps into the laboratory. Here he finds his schoolmates seated on the floor, perhaps listening to a story, or singing little songs, which continue until all the children have entered quietly into the composed, pleasing atmosphere. Then follows one of the most interesting periods of the morning. "News". This is the child's particular news, which usually means a doll, pretty handkerchief, new hat, train; something of concrete interest to the child. He has brought this "news" to tell the other children.

After "news", there is the "work" period. At this time the children choose material interesting to them, from the low cupboard. There is a wide range for choice—paints, clay for modeling, paper for cutting, peg boards, beads, puzzles and Montessori apparatus are to be found there. Should the child desire to be a "homemaker," dishes, dolls, wash tub, clothes, brooms, and aprons furnish the necessary equipment. There you may see Gretchen giving the doll a shampoo. Blocks furnish material for railroads, houses and other buildings for the young architect. With hammers and saws the young builder may be seen constructing curious windmills, airplanes, and ships, evidences of little minds at work. The child goes from one piece of work to an-

other, putting each away as he has finished to his own satisfaction. Instruction or guidance by the teacher is only given when the child seems ready for it. When situations too difficult are encountered, assistance will be asked for. At all other times approbation and approval of success is all the child desires, and is all the stimulation necessary for further carrying on of the project.

The incentive for much of the work can be easily traced. Here you may see the "gingerbread man" or the basket of groceries the "groceryman" left, crudely modelled in clay. A circus in town furnished ideas for the following week. Tens and animals are constructed by ingenious mind.

This procedure continues perhaps an hour then all work is put away and to the music of the piano or Victrola the little workshop becomes a dancing, skipping mass of humanity. Sometimes blocks and the clapping of hands assist the child to keep time to the changing melodies. To march music, you find them marching like soldiers—while, "I See You" makes them want to skip. This is followed by the march to the wash room, where dirty faces and hands are transformed. This feat too is accomplished through the efforts of small, but willing hands.

Again the child returns to the laboratory, where he finds some of the group seated on the floor, quietly listening to a story, while two or three have chosen to set the tables for mid-morning lunch. The lunch consists of crackers or fruit and water. Good muscular control without conscious effort is here acquired as the little hands manipulate the

pitcher of water and try not to "spill a drop." A student observer is invited to be "guest" at each table. The honor of being chosen to serve is coveted by all. Visitors hold their breath while twenty-seven months Penelope carries the plate of crackers to the table, serving first the guest of honor and proceeding on her way around the table. She waits for each small person to help himself and give the necessary "thank you." Conversation at the table is quite free and unrestrained and a student in psychology may gain much of the child's point of view by eating with him at the table. When all have finished each one clears his own place at the table, proceeds to the cloakroom, dons his wraps and is ready for an extra hour of out-door play. Swings, teeter-totters, sand-bags, rings furnish opportunity for muscle development. Some ring game as "Ring-around-the-Rosy," proves interesting to those in whom the social instinct is most evident.

At 11:30, Father or Mother again appears on the scene and our little "study" speeds home for dinner. After the children have left visitors may come forward with questions—as they have had no opportunity before. Such questions as, "How is it they all work so contentedly and peacefully?" The answer may be—plenty of interesting material, standards of right and wrong set up by the group itself which will cause a child to do the right thing—where persuasion by adult seems to fail. "Traditions are carried on by the student body only" and the pre-school group is no exception. Obedience then is secured, too, by giving the child the chance to take a choice,

(Continued on Page 14)



"News"

United Cigar Store

Service and Smoking
218 MAIN STREET

ALM AND SON

Shoe Repairs

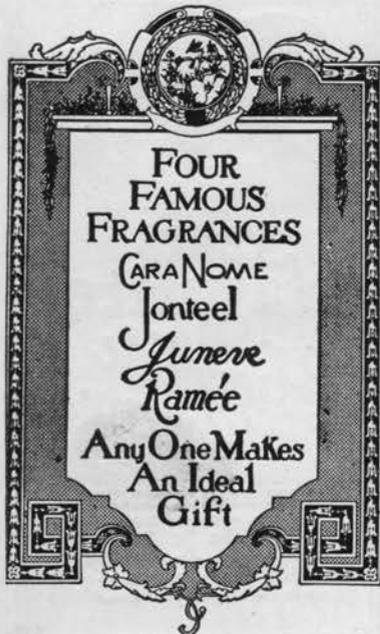
Speed and
Satisfaction.

Main Street

GODARD'S GIFT SHOP

Martha Washington
Candies

210 MAIN



Lowry & Theis

THE REXALL STORE

217 Main St. Ames, Iowa

met May 11, and a tentative program was suggested by the chairman, Genevieve A. Callahan. Other members of the committee present were: Fern Stover, Mrs. Beulah Schenk, Anna Olsen and Josephine Wylie of the publicity committee.

Miss Callahan has gone over the matter of the program for the annual meeting in November in a very thorough manner and it only remains to line up the various out-of-town people for the program.

The keynote of the whole program is, as planned, "The American Home", including interesting features for the Homemaker, the Home Economics business woman and the Home Economics teacher.

PARTY SPIRIT

Thirza Hull

"A Brazil nut! That's what I am!" proudly stated a curly headed lad as he held his place card up to view. "How dare you say that I'm a peanut?"

"You are a peanut, Billy," returned another boy, sure of his convictions. "Just ask Mrs. Jones if you aren't."

The weeping Billy was led to his hostess, who alone could pass the final verdict. The hostess had by this time discovered her mistake in the choice of place cards. On each was a picture of a different variety of nut and the identification of the varieties was designed to furnish part of the afternoon's entertainment. And now here she was with a weeping child on her hands and her pleasant little plan completely ruined.

Small boys and parties are things which, when taken together, are to be approached cautiously. Controversies are easy to start and hard to stop. Place cards should add to the spirit of a party without giving any chance for a disagreement to arise. Now, if the place cards, instead of being nuts, had been small candy trees, the boughs could have been easily stripped and no evidence left from which to conjure mischief.

Such place cards are made either from gumdrops or fudge, with the aid of small green wire. Fudge can be molded into very life-like tree trunks and gum drops, though not as pictorial, are just as palatable. Green wire can be fashioned into branches that can hold gumdrop leaves and a plain white card bearing the child's name. As a table decoration, a similar tree can be made on a larger scale. It is possible for such a tree to be very fruitful, even bearing lemon and orange drops on the same branch. The beauty of these place cards is that they are perfectly harmless.

One of the cleverest parties I have ever seen given for children was a Circus Party. Everything was there from the clowns to the calliope. The invitations were tiny paper elephants and the entrance to the dining room was a big circus hoop. The place cards were exceptionally clever and each one different from the rest. Here a fierce lion stood next to a white rabbit with pink ears and eyes. All the animals were drawn as lifelike as possible and were painted as nearly like the children's ideal as grown-ups could get them. The leopard **must** have big spots and the giraffe **must** have a long neck. Part of the animal was left unpainted so that the child's name could be printed on the card. Standards on the back made the animals stand up and they really felt that they were at a circus parade marching around the table.

In the center of the table was a circus

ring, in which paper dolls were posed in hair raising positions on a tight rope and on a trapeze, while down below in the ring was a group of funny clowns. At either end of the table were two camels—the jointed wooden toys of which children are so fond—and on the back of each were two saddle bags filled with candy and nuts.

From the moment the children stepped inside the circus hoop into the dining room they were entranced. Every child loves a circus and all that goes with it. They really felt that they were at a circus when the hostess served pink lemonade and animal crackers. We noticed that when every child left, he carefully took with him his place card and it is safe to say that nearly all of the children played circus the next day in their sand piles and back yards.

A Morning With the Children

(Continued from Page 2)

"Would you rather sit in our circle Jimmie, or sit on a chair by yourself?"

Another question might be, "Why do you not have more childish fights?" And the answer would be "children under normal conditions do not do this, only spoiled children do."

Some ideas of nutrition and good health are conveyed to these youthful minds. A desire to want to drink milk and eat spinach is stimulated by the granting of stars for the accomplishment of the feat. Four year old Doris, upon returning home from the laboratory said to her mother, "Mamma, teacher says I musn't eat fried bread or pancakes for breakfast so don't you give them to me."

"What may you eat?"

"Oatmeal, and milk and oranges."

The laboratory then without interference with the function of furnishing an educational unit for the preschool child—gives an opportunity to college students for psychological studies of child training and behavior problems.

Grade Crossing in Child Life

(Continued from Page 4)

dishes is to place a chore which is necessary and worth while in the wrong light from the boy's point of view.

Finally the best incentive is one which is commensurate with the behavior with which you are associating it. In other words, you should not reward too extravagantly or punish too severely. Let the degree or the amount of it be determined by the situation itself. The child will put down a punishment which is too severe as unjust and it may be the beginning of an unwholesome attitude toward the parent who has administered it. To reward unduly centers attention upon the reward rather than upon the act which you are trying to fix as a habit.

To Go To Potter Metabolic Clinic

Adele Herbst, '25 and Agnes Crain '25 are to go in October to the Potter Metabolic Clinic at Santa Barbara, California, as student dieticians.

Mrs. Floyd C. Klingman '11, and son, John Maxwell, sailed on February 27 for Port au Prince, Haiti, to join Mr. Klingman who is there in government service.

Ila French '24, is at present principal of the consolidated schools at Beaver, Iowa.