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Through the Day at Nursery School

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A graduate student in child development, Martha Ericson, describes her nursery school work

IMAGINE being asked if the radio tower touches the sky or what makes the flowers grow. Such queries ring a familiar note in the ears of the graduate student teachers in the Child Development Department.

Campus people are accustomed to seeing nursery school teachers trekking out to the little red building beyond Chemistry. In cold weather, most of the teachers wear so many clothes that one is sometimes convinced that none but the tubbiest ever aspire to teach nursery school.

In the hall of the school, a graduate student stops each morning and glances at the thermometer, studies the sky to see if it looks like rain, or inspects the ground to discover how damp it is. If conditions are favorable for taking the children outdoors, the reason for her multitude of ski-pants, galoshes, scarves and mittens is obvious.

The graduate student has daily routine tasks to be performed. She checks which students are scheduled

Through the Day at

Nursery School

for laboratories, sees if the clay and paint are in usable condition, if there's enough wood on the work bench or if there's paper for drawing and painting. She checks the ventilation, the room temperature and looks for drafts. She glances at the plans for the week, notes which songs or stories are to be used, and tries to remember all the details of what the day's activities should include.

By this time, the children are beginning to arrive and are gathering in the front hall to wait for the nurse's inspection. If they are free from runny noses, or other signs of illness, they are ready to go outdoors.

A small group of children start out with the teacher and help with the arrangement of equipment. There are low boards for the littlest ones to walk, and boxes, ladders and slides for the bigger ones. Out come the wagons and tricycles, shovels, rakes or sleds, depending on the season and the weather.

The teacher stands a little apart from the children, observing their behavior and the action and interaction that goes on among them. Alert to what is going on in the play-yard, she stands ready to give help where help is needed.

When the children are ready to come indoors, there follows what is sometimes a lengthy process of removing snow-suits, galoshes, leggings and rubbers. In the playroom the teacher again stays in the background, guiding the activities of the children by suggestions, a question or a smile.

There are various materials for the children to use such as blocks, motor toys, clay, paint, wood and crayons. Helping the children to get out materials guiding them in their use, helping them with the

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mastery of technics—all of this is part of the graduate student's job.

Then comes the time for resting. The children gather up their toys or materials, put them away and stop for a glass of fruit juice. The children go upstairs, where each child has his cot for mid-morning rest.

Resting time over, they go down to the playroom for a story or for music. Clean and shining, they are ready to eat.

The noon meals which the children eat are served in the annex dining room. One of the graduate student members of the staff is responsible for the preparation of the food. She has charge of the kitchen and the undergraduate students who come to help with the food preparation.

Using the menus which have been planned by Miss Miriam Lowenberg, assistant professor, she orders the food and makes out daily work-sheets for the students to use. Someone must scrape the carrots, or start the stew; others must mash potatoes or watch the custard.

One of the most appealing scenes in nursery school is the children's dinner time. Watch the concentration with which each child carries his dinner plate to the serving table and brings back his dessert. See the faces after chocolate pudding. Listen to the dinner-table conversation between children and teachers.

Dinner over, another washing and putting on of outdoor clothing and away go the children with a wave of the hand and "Goodbye, see you tomorrow!" Although the nursery school day has finished for the children, there's much more for the graduate student to do. There are records to keep on materials used by the children and the amount of food they consumed.

There is a discussion with the head teacher as to how the morning has gone, and what shall be done tomorrow. Finally off goes the graduate student to a class—psychology for some, dietetics for some, bacteriology for others. For those who are writing theses, to the library or to a conference.

Saturday mornings bring staff meetings when the graduate students meet with other staff members to discuss plans for the department, new courses to be scheduled, speakers for special occasions and special problems of individual children.

Keeping in good physical condition is important to the nursery school teacher. No teacher may stay in school with a cold because of the need for many close contacts with the children.

Some think that the nursery school teacher has need of what might be called the "wholesomely split personality," for she must serve as musician, artist, nurse, psychologist and mother.

Ice Cream

(Continued from page 3)

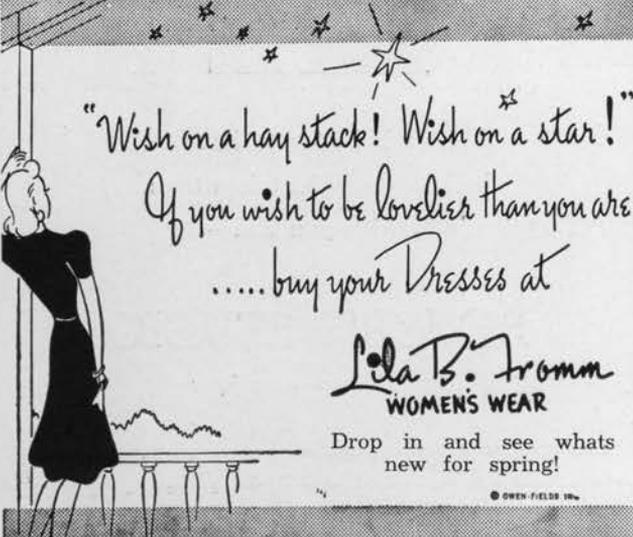
visited Iowa State several years ago, a special "royal flavor" was developed for a luncheon served in their honor. It was golden yellow, butter toasted, almond parfait.

Molded ice cream makes a festive dish for special occasions. Some of the popular molds are roses, foot-balls, turkeys, flowers and fruit. Washington's birthday may find the hatchet form popular, while ice cream hearts are featured for St. Valentine's day.

Ice cream also creates eye-appeal through color. Color is always carefully added, for too much or too little can ruin the product's sales appeal. Alma Mater colors of cardinal and gold were featured in a special

homecoming brick made by the ice cream department. It consisted of strawberry ice cream and golden par-fait.

The process of stenciling colored whipped cream on ice cream as a design, then freezing it to form a permanent pattern, was developed at Iowa State. The stencils are cut in transparent plastic and the whipped cream smoothed over while yet soft. Freezing the product at a low temperature for about 30 seconds results in a finished design.



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