

A Day's Education in the One-Room Schoolhouses of Brazoria County, Texas (1918-1922)

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In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, changes in societal needs, farming conditions, and access to modern conveniences led educational reformers to ask how effectively rural American schoolchildren were being educated. To understand more fully what students of this era experienced and what factors contributed to teachers' instructional planning, researchers McIntush, Burlbaw, and Turner analyze 1) literature on one-room school curricula in various regions of the nation, 2) prescriptive journal articles for teachers in North Dakota and Texas, and 3) newly uncovered data on the schedules prepared by teachers in one-room schools in Brazoria County, Texas.

—Eds.

In a 2005-2006 series on one-room schools, Nina Ellis of National Public Radio reported on the struggles of one-room schools to stay open in the face of consolidation efforts in the name of efficiency and rigor. Ellis began her report, "In 1918, there were 190,000 one-room schools in America. Today there are fewer than 400."¹ The image of the one-room school with a lone teacher teaching all the children, regardless of their age, all of the subjects epitomizes our view of education in early twentieth-century rural America.

One-room schoolhouses commonly existed throughout rural Texas at this time. In her *1921-1922 Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*, State Superintendent Annie Webb Blanton reported, "In 1918, the number of one-teacher schools was 6173; in 1921-22, the number was 4223, a decrease of 31 percent."² Though *Biennial Reports* like this one reflect the

diminishing numbers of one-room schools, they do little to aid our understanding of how teachers in those schools that remained instructed their students. To gain a better understanding of the daily activities in the one-room schools of Brazoria County, Texas, we examined the classroom records of teachers who taught in the early part of the twentieth century in one-room, one-teacher rural schoolhouses. Through an examination of their Daily Programs of Work, we learned more about how teachers developed daily instructional schedules. What was the course content which teachers had to plan for their students in these schools? What variation in age and grade existed within each classroom?

Describing and Assessing One-room School Schedules

The available literature about the scheduling of one-room schools reveals similarities in the main subjects taught, how many course preparations were made, and the range of grades in a schoolhouse.³ Co-curricular activities were also similar in many schools, including opening exercises, the one-hour lunch, recess, and special performances or events.⁴

The literature that focuses on the curriculum reflects a general consensus about which basic subjects were most important. Reading received priority.⁵ Popular readers in rural schools included the *McGuffey Readers*.⁶ Other subjects of importance included arithmetic, spelling, and handwriting. Students in the older grades were taught history, geography, and science.⁷ Teachers were encouraged to have regular recitations in these subjects.⁸

In addition to teaching the basics, the one-room schoolteacher was advised to provide character education, a commonplace in the 1920s and a reflection of the culture of each community.⁹ In some instances, the community expected character education to include moral as well as religious instruction.¹⁰ While many schools were not religiously affiliated, the statement “whoever controls the affairs of the local church also control[s] the affairs of the local school” says a lot about the culture and values of the community.¹¹

In addition to character education, citizenship education (or patriotism) appeared in a variety of forms. Citizenship education was expressed in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of patriotic songs. Examples of popular tunes included “My Country Tis of Thee” and “Yankee Doodle.”¹²

One source available to today’s scholars that sheds light on the lived experience of one-room schooling are interviews with teachers. In an interview in 1924, for example, Marian Brooks, a

New Hampshire one-room schoolteacher in the 1920s, taught eleven children in the first to eighth grades. She stated that she was required by the State Department of Education to complete a “detailed timetable of each day’s daily program” showing how many minutes were spent on each subject and with which grade levels. She admitted to the frustration of creating a daily program from a form so much that she “ignored it” and used her own ability to develop a workable schedule.¹³

Marian Brooks’ interview discusses what occurred when one group of students received instruction while others worked alone or in small groups. Subjects like math and reading were studied together, and the children helped each other as the need arose. For example, Brooks’ accomplished eighth-grade students would read with the second-grade children while the teacher was instructing other students. Brooks states, “There was much tutoring and reading together from the library books, especially [for] project studies.” Additionally, many lessons involved the application of content to the real world around the children through projects, for example, using dandelions to study the life cycle of a plant, planting a garden, or creating caves in the snow and teaching the students about Eskimos.¹⁴

Attempts to standardize instruction gained ground at this time. For example, Brooks made reference to a form that she was supposed to use in scheduling and recording the daily instructional plan. The number of subjects she and other teachers had to teach in a given day was much discussed.¹⁵ In the article “Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, and Recitation: The Curriculum of the One Room School,” Rylance quoted a North Dakota school superintendent who stated that teachers might have to “conduct as many as forty-five classes per day” with class periods that could be as short as five minutes. The article provides a basic schedule of a school day as a guide for teachers of Norway #3 School, North Dakota, in the 1918-1919 school year, yet it does not specify what students were supposed to be doing during each segment of the day when they were not receiving direct instruction.¹⁶

In the early twentieth century, Texas teachers referenced a guide for creating daily schedules. The guide, found on page 3 of the *Texas Teacher's Daily Record*, included a table for teachers to use in planning their daily schedule of work. As early as 1889, the editors of the *Journal* recognized the teachers’ need for guidance in scheduling their instructional day.

Table 1: Daily Program of Work Published in the *Texas School Journal* (1889).¹⁷

Daily Programme for School of One Room

From	To	Dur.	A Grade	B Grade	C Grade	D Grade	E Grade
8:50	9:00	10	Opening Exercises				
9:00	9:10	10	<i>Reading</i>	Reading	Reading	Reading	Read or Spell
9:10	9:20	10	Write or print lesson just recited	<i>Reading</i>	Reading	Reading	Read or Spell
9:20	9:30	10		Write Lesson recited	<i>Reading</i>	Reading	Read or Spell
9:30	9:45	15			Arithmetic	<i>Reading</i>	Arithmetic
9:45	9:55	10	<i>Ex. Slates</i>	<i>Ex. Slates</i>	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic
9:55	10:15	20	Drawing	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	<i>Read or Spell</i>
10:15	10:30	15	Drawing	Arithmetic	<i>Arithmetic</i>	Arithmetic	Arithmetic
10:30	10:45	15	Recess				
10:45	10:55	10	Numbers put on board during recess	<i>Arithmetic</i>	Spelling	Arithmetic	Arithmetic
10:55	11:15	20		Numbers from work on board	Spelling	<i>Arithmetic</i>	Arithmetic
11:15	11:20	5		<i>Ex. Slates</i>	Spelling	Spelling	Arithmetic
11:20	11:40	20		Spelling	Spelling	Spelling	<i>Arithmetic</i>
11:40	11:50	10	<i>Numbers</i>	Spelling	Spelling	Spelling	Grammar
11:50	12:00	10	Out Doors	Spelling	<i>Spelling</i>	Spelling	Grammar
12:00	1:00	60	Noon				
1:00	1:10	10	Reading	Spelling	Reading	<i>Spelling</i>	Grammar
1:10	1:20	10	Reading	<i>Spelling</i>	Reading	Grammar	Grammar
1:20	1:30	10	<i>Reading</i>	Reading	Reading	Grammar	Grammar
1:30	1:50	20	Read., Spell.	Reading	Reading	Grammar	<i>Grammar</i>
1:50	2:00	10	Read., Spell.	Reading	<i>Reading</i>	Writing	Writing
2:00	2:10	10	Writing	<i>Reading</i>	Writing	Writing	Writing
2:10	2:20	10	<i>Writing</i>	<i>Writing</i>	<i>Writing</i>	<i>Writing</i>	<i>Writing</i>
2:20	2:35	15	Recess				
2:35	2:55	20	Read., Spell.	Spelling	Geography	<i>Grammar</i>	Geog., Hist.
2:55	3:05	10	<i>Read., Spell.</i>	Spelling	Geography	Geography	Geog., Hist.
3:05	3:15	10	Reading	<i>Spelling</i>	Geography	Geography	Geog., Hist.

3:15	3:25	10	Reading	Writing	<i>Geography</i>	Geography	Geog., Hist.
3:25	3:40	15	Reading	Writing	Reading	Geography	<i>Geog., Hist.</i>
3:40	4:00	40	Dismiss	Dismiss	Drawing	Geography	Arith., <i>Hist.</i>
4:00	4:15	15			Drawing	<i>Geography</i>	Arithmetic
4:15	Dismission						

Note: Italicized words indicate recitations (the practice of reciting from memory a poem, story, or other text).

Insights from the Brooks interview and the teaching schedule in Table 1 do not support the commonly held view that instruction in one-room schools was uniform across schools. Brooks explains, “I always had a very difficult time working within rigid structures that didn’t permit deviations.”¹⁸ Other findings indicate similar practices. According to Sitton and Rowold’s study of Texas country schools, peer teaching occurred regularly as a way to give each student what he or she needed¹⁹ as well as designated “study time” for students to practice skills.²⁰ Educators who supported this approach argued that it aided the younger students in further learning, increased the self-esteem of the older students, and fostered cooperative skills for all. “Spillover” was an important component of the daily schedule, enabling students to listen while others were presenting or discussing topics, hence allowing them to learn additional content.²¹

Brazoria County

Brazoria County, a rural area near Galveston and the greater-Houston region, is nestled along the plains of the Gulf of Mexico in southeast Texas and is intersected by the Brazos River. Among the towns in the county are Angleton, the largest town and the county seat, as well as Alvin, Pearland, Brazoria, and Freeport.²² Today, Brazoria remains a relatively thinly populated county. According to the 2016 U.S. Census, it spans 1,407 square miles and has a population of 354,195.²³

Until the 1930s, a majority of Brazoria residents earned their living by farming. Rice farming was a major source of agricultural production, and by 1948 the county was the largest producer

of rice in the nation.²⁴ Other primary crops included cotton and corn. Dairy farming also served as an important source of revenue.

The establishment of schools in Brazoria County occurred in 1827.²⁵ By the early 1900s, over two hundred teachers taught in the forty school buildings in the county's nine independent school districts and twenty-two White and seventeen Black common schools. In the 1920-21 school year, there were 5,113 children of school age in the county and 5,016 of those children attended school sometime during the year (4,502 at the elementary level; 514 at high school level).²⁶ The earliest available statistics on schooling in Brazoria County (1934) stated that 4,209 White children and 1,652 Black children attended school in the county. Twelve teachers in one-teacher schools taught 237 White students while twelve Black teachers in one-teacher schools taught 325 students.²⁷ The farming communities of the county had a major impact on the local schools. Due to the nature of rural farming life, many children did not progress far due to irregular attendance.

Daily Program of Work by Brazoria County Teachers

The George Memorial Library in Richmond, Texas, houses archival data from the Brazoria County schools. The records include various reports from schools and teachers for the years between 1916 and 1923; however, the type of data available is not uniform across years. In preparation for this research, the extant teacher reports from seventeen schools (similar information was included by these teachers) were reviewed for school years 1918-1919, 1919-1920, 1920-1921 and 1921-1922. Sixteen had only White students, and one had "Colored" (also referred to as Black) students. In seven of the schools, teachers taught students in grades first through seventh. Three teachers taught only first through third grade. These schools were chosen for analysis to show the range and diversity of grades in the county's schools. Table 2 shows what grades were taught at some of the county schools and the number of students in each grade.

Table 2: Student Enrollment in Select Schools of Brazoria County, Texas, 1920-1921 and 1921-1922.²⁸

School Name	School Year	Total # of students	# in 1 st Grade	# in 2 nd Grade	# in 3 rd Grade	# in 4 th Grade	# in 5 th Grade	# in 6 th Grade	# in 7 th Grade	# in 1 st Year
Anchor School	1920-1921	15	3	0	2	1	5	3	1	
Chocolate Bayou	1921-1922	12	3	2	2	3	3			
Illinois Colony	1920-1921	42	10	11	6	6	0	5	4	
Iowa Colony	1920-1921	32	4	4	0	7	7	4	4	2
Columbia*	1920-1921	36	17	13	6					
Columbia*	1920-1921	22				9	9	4		
Lynville Colored School	1920-1921	5	1	2				1		1

Note: Columbia was a two-teacher school; however, each teacher taught in a multi-grade classroom.

Evidence from Table 2 provides a glimpse into the workload of the one-room school-teacher. Teachers contended with a variety of content levels as well as subjects within each day as seen by the various grade levels and numbers of children in various grades.

A Prescribed Schedule for Texas Teachers

Focusing in depth on the schedules of Brazoria County schools provided a clearer understanding of what each student was doing during each segment of the day. The Daily Program of Work included in the Texas Teacher's Daily Record featured a detailed set of instructions on how to complete the form for organizing the day. A portion of the instructions printed at the bottom of the Daily Program of Work is found below.

Instructions for Completing the Daily Program of Work

The teacher is instructed to make [a] copy of her program in duplicate on separate sheets. Fill in the program both as to periods of study and of recitations, denoting recitation periods with red ink and study periods with black ink. When prepared submit one copy to the county superintendent for his consideration. The county superintendent is instructed to inspect carefully the program, note suggestions as to improvements, if there be any, and return to the teachers at once.

The attention of the teacher is directed to the fact that the program should take account of pupils who are not reciting as well as of those in recitations, and should indicate what each class is to do during each period of the day.

If there are a great many grades, classes should be grouped or combined in certain subjects. Authorities all agree that recitation periods should be at least fifteen minutes in length in the primary grades, twenty-five minutes in the intermediate grades, and thirty-five to forty-five minutes in the high school years.²⁹

The role of the county superintendent and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction in the development of the teacher's Daily Program of Work included accountability for completion. Monthly reports sent to the county superintendent allowed officials to review the documents for accuracy and completeness. Incomplete or improperly completed documents could result in the denial of vouchers for monthly teacher salaries. County superintendents used the monthly reports during school site visits to ensure the program was being followed by the teacher.³⁰

Teacher Responsibilities in the One-Room Schoolhouse

The illustrations below describe what a one-room school teacher may have planned in a given school year. The samples illustrate the variety of course content and the variety of grades and ages of students to which teachers had to attend.

Curtis Creek School: 1920-1921

The Daily Program of Work provided by Curtis Creek School generally followed the prescribed plan set out in the 1889 suggestions in Table 1. The day was to begin with "Opening Exercises" at 9:00 a.m. lasting for ten minutes. From the literature, inferences about what may have occurred during this time, included reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and singing patriotic songs. The schedule depicted in Figure 1 for Curtis Creek mirrors the suggested schedule printed in the

Texas School Journal in 1889 in other areas as well. Children were to receive two recesses, each 15 minutes in length, with one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Additionally, a lunch break was to start at noon and last for one hour. As previously stated, the school day at Curtis Creek was to start at 9:00 a.m. It was to end for the older children at 4:00 p.m. This is a slight variation from the prescribed schedule of 1889 in Table 1 where the school hours were to extend from 8:50 a.m. until 4:15 p.m. As was customary, and also shown in Table 1, children in primary grades were often dismissed at earlier times. At Curtis Creek, first grade was to end at 3:10 p.m. for example. As per instructions, the teacher indicated recitations in red ink.

The designated teacher of Curtis Creek, Mrs. B. L. Bagley, wrote the schedule for the school term beginning on September 20, 1920, and ending April 22, 1921. Her responsibilities included teaching grades first through fourth as well as sixth grade according to her Daily Program of Work pictured in Figure 1. Within these five grades, Mrs. Bagley taught twenty different children during the day, eight of whom were males and twelve females. Records of the students' grades as well as attendance appear in the Teacher Daily Register, which also reveals that while a group of students was classified as first graders, their ages ranged from five to eight years old. The variety of ages within one grade level existed for all of the grades Mrs. Bagley taught. The span of ages generally consisted of a three-year difference among students within a given grade level. Additionally, while no fifth-grade subjects are listed in Figure 1, two students were specifically listed in the Record of Attendance as being fifth graders. We infer from these details that while students were classified as fifth graders, Mrs. Bagley met their academic needs by overlapping instruction for students in grades above and below fifth grade. While the schedule above illustrates the complexities of covering multiple content areas with children of a variety of ages, the detailed records of enrollment add a further dimension to the complex task of teaching in a one-room schoolhouse.

			ELEMENTARY GRADES					HI			
			First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	First Year	S
ENROLLMENT BY GRADES											
Schedule for study and Recitation											
Begin	Close	Time
9:00	9:10	10	Opening Exercises								
9:10	9:35	25	Arith	Arith	Arith	Arith	Arith	Arith			
9:35	10:00	25	Read.	Arith	Arith	Arith	Arith	Arith			
10:00	10:25	25	Read	Read	Read	Arith	Arith				
10:25	10:40	15	Recess								
10:40	11:10	20	Read	Read	Read	Read	Read	Read			
11:00	11:20	20	Read	Read	Read	History	History				
11:20	11:45	25	busy	Read	Read	History	History				
11:45	12:00	15	Read	Lang.	Lang.	History	History				
12:00	1:00	60	Lunch								
1:00	1:20	20	Read	Lang.	Lang.	Lang.	Lang.				
1:20	1:50	30	Read	Geog.	Geog.	Lang.	Lang.				
1:50	2:10	20	Spell.	Geog.	Geog.	Lang.	Lang.				
2:10	2:25	15	Write	Write	Write	Write	Write				
2:25	2:40	15	Recess								
2:40	2:55	15	Spell.	Geog.	Geog.	Geog.	Geog.				
2:55	3:10	20	Spell.	Spell	Spell	Geog.	Geog.				
3:10	3:30	20	Dismiss	Spell	Spell	Geog.	Geog.				
3:30	3:45	15	Spell								
3:45	4:00	15	Dismiss	Dismiss	Dismiss	Spell	Spell				

Figure 1: Daily Program of Work, Curtis Creek, District 32, 1920-1921³¹

Illinois Colony: 1920-1921

Some teachers, such as Grace Higgenbotham, teacher at Illinois Colony from 1920-1921, completed their daily schedules a bit differently. Figure 2 shows what subjects and activities students at each grade level were engaged in but does not give a complete breakdown of the time

allocated for each activity.³² Yet additional details in the Teacher Daily Register shed light on shortcuts teachers may have taken when filling out the Daily Program of Work.

In Ms. Higgenbotham's classroom, forty-two students attended school, twenty-one of whom were male and twenty-one were female. Planning coursework for forty-two students included meeting the needs of a large number of students in first through seventh grades. Adding to that task, a large majority of students were in the primary grades, with ten in first grade and fourteen in second grade. Furthermore, the ages within one grade level varied significantly more than is seen in the Curtis Creek schedule in Figure 1. For example, in first grade, the ages ranged from six to ten years, and in second grade the age range varied from eight to fourteen years. Considering what is known about child development, this dynamic inevitably added considerably to the teacher's responsibilities. Another interesting find in the Illinois Colony School included the number of days of attendance of boys and girls. Girls attended school thirteen more days in the school year than boys. This finding corroborates the story of life in a rural community where boys often helped with farm chores during planting or harvesting seasons. The Daily Program of Work is shown in Figure 2 for Illinois Colony.

The schedule in Figure 2 also follows the basic outline recommended by the 1889 guide. Opening ceremonies were to be devoted to writing. Also planned were two fifteen-minute recess breaks and a one-hour lunch. Recitation times were underlined rather than written in red ink. The minutes to be spent on the specific morning activities per subject and grade level (between 9:25 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. when recess break was to occur) lack time allocations. Otherwise, the general pattern of the daily schedule follows closely that of the Curtis Creek example in Figure 2 as well as the 1889 guide in the *Texas School Journal*.

Preference of subjects is inferred from the sample schedules as well as literature on one-room schools. According to the schedules, reading, spelling, and arithmetic were to be the main focus of the morning's work for all grades. For example, in the Curtis Creek schedule in Figure 1, the focus on arithmetic was to comprise 275 minutes of the school day, while reading was to comprise 335 minutes. Writing is present in the schedule for all grades but on a more limited basis. Generally, subjects such as history, civics, geography, and physiology were to be reserved in time slots later in the school day. In Figures 1 and 2, history was to start as early as 11:00 a.m. and was generally found in the older grades.

Figure 2: Daily Program of Work, Illinois Colony, District 38, 1920-1921.³³

			ELEMENTARY GRADES							HIGH SCHOOL			
			First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year
ENROLLMENT BY GRADES													
Schedule for study and Recitation												
Begin	Close	Time											
9 ²⁵	9 ⁴⁵	25 Min	Opening Exercises - Writing										
9 ⁴⁵			Number	Study	Arith	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
			Study R	Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	
			" R	Study R	Study R	Arith S	" S	" S	" S	" S	" S	" S	
			" R	" R	" R	S. Read	Arith S	" S	" S	" S	" S	" S	
			" R	" R	" R	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	
			" R	" R	" R	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	
			" R	" R	" R	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	S. Arith	
10 ¹⁰	10 ⁴⁵	15 min	Recess										
			Reading	Study	Study	Study	Study	Study	Study	Study	Study	Study	
			S. R	R	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
			Study	Study	Reading	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
			"	"	Study	Reading	"	"	"	"	"	"	
			"	"	"	Study	Reading	"	"	"	"	"	
			"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
12 ⁰⁰	1 ⁰⁰	1 hr.	Noon										
			Reading - Study	Language	Study	Grammar							
			Study	Lang	Study - Study	"							
			" Spelling	Language	"	"							
			"	"	Study Geography	Grammar							
2 ⁰⁰	2 ⁴⁵	15 min	Recess										
			Study	"	Geography	Study Geo							
			Spelling	"	Study Spelling	Geography							
			"	"	"	Study Spelling							
			"	"	"	Study Spelling							

The teacher is instructed to make copy of her program in duplicate on separate sheets. Fill in the program both as to periods of study and of recitations, denoting recitation periods with red ink and study periods with black ink. When prepared submit one copy to the county superintendent for his consideration. The county superintendent is instructed to inspect carefully the program, note suggestions as to improvements, if there be any, and return to the teachers at once.

Managing a workload with such diversity in grades, ages, and subject levels provided a daunting task for the one-room schoolteacher. The sample schedules help depict a day in the life of such educators. Sitton and Rowold's³⁴ description of the "juggling" act conducted by teachers is reflected in the Lynville Colored School schedule. In this Brazoria County one-room schoolhouse, the teacher planned for students to study a short list of topics in small segments of time, generally ranging from ten to twenty-five minutes and totaling 245 minutes of study.³⁵ This general plan is seen in the sample schedules as well as others found in the literature.³⁶

Expectations for teachers included providing direct instruction for a short amount of time during the school day. This was especially true for younger students. The time for direct instruction increased the higher the grade of the students. For instance, students in first and second grade were to have received only twenty-five minutes of direct instruction.³⁷ However, students in third and fourth grades were to have received up to 105 minutes of instruction that focused on a larger range of subjects. Co-curricular activities, other than recess breaks and the one-hour lunch, are unclear from the schedules obtained from Brazoria County.

Summary of Schedules for Brazoria County's One-room Schools

In Texas during the Progressive Era, counties and districts were required to complete plans for the school day in each of its one-room schools. No list of all schools in the district during the timeframe reviewed exists. Regardless, a sampling of schedules provides an idea of what teachers planned for daily life in a rural one-room school. Typically, they scheduled co-curricular activities such as recess and lunch as well as subjects to be taught at a given time. Beginning activities were often referred to as “opening exercises” as seen in Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2. These exercises generally consisted of the Pledge of Allegiance, daily prayer, and a song.³⁸

Stepping into the shoes of Mrs. B. L. Bagley and Grace Higgenbotham through archival evidence sheds light on the responsibilities of teachers in Progressive Era one-room schoolhouses. While all teachers taught a variety of ages and grade levels, the number of students varied within each schoolhouse. Some teachers had twenty students for five grades, as is seen in Curtis Creek School (Table 1), while others may have had forty-two students spanning seven grade levels as was indicated in the Illinois Colony School. This may have led to teachers taking short cuts in writing out a daily schedule. At times, this caused confusion for the researchers, but fortunately additional documentation in the Daily Program of Work listed courses taught, grade and attendance entries and how many students were enrolled. The recently acquired data on Brazoria County provided greater clarity as to the goings-on of the one-room schoolhouse. It is not known whether the teachers actually followed their plans, as there are no records of how the teachers delivered instruction, but these documents nevertheless provide

important insights into the subjects valued and the level of complexity involved in the daily experience of teaching a one-room school.



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Notes

¹ Nina Ellis, "One-Room Schools Holding on in Rural America" 22 Dec. 2005, <https://www.npr.org/series/5178603/america-s-one-room-schools/>.

² Annie Webb Blanton, *Twenty-Second Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, School Sessions of 1920-21 and 1921-22* (Austin, TX: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1922), 215.

³ Dan Rylance, "Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, and Recitation: The Curriculum of the One Room School" (Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Humanities, 1981), 8, 10; Thad Sitton and Milam Rowold, *Ringing the Children in* (College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 1987), 81.

⁴ Rylance, "Reading, Writing, Arithmetic," 10, 19; Sitton and Rowold, *Ringing the Children in*, 72, 10, 19; Paul Theobald, "Country School Curriculum and Governance: The One-Room School Experience in the Nineteenth-Century Midwest," *American Journal of Education*, 101 (1993): 116-139; Ruth Dropkin, ed., "Recollections of a One-Room Schoolhouse (interview with Marian Brooks by Arthur Robier)," speech presented at Roots of Open Education in America in New York, New York (April 12, 1974), 8; <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED107431>; P. J. McNally, "Character Education in Rural Illinois: The One-room Schools of Macoupin County, 1909-1947," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 96 (Winter 2003-2004): 322.

⁵ Sitton and Rowold, *Ringing the Children in*, 73; Rylance, "Reading, Writing, Arithmetic," 17.

⁶ Rylance, "Reading, Writing, Arithmetic," 4; Sitton and Rowold, *Ringing the Children in*, 73; Ruth Thayer, "One-Room School, 1900" *Oregon Historical Quarterly* no. 72 (1971): 89; Paul Theobald, "Country School Curriculum and Governance," 116-139.

⁷ Michelle Bauml and O.L. Davis, Jr., "From School House to Hay Barn to Museum: The Columbia Rosenwald School in Brazoria County, Texas," *American Educational History Journal*, 35 (2008): 287; Sitton and Rowold, *Ringing the Children In*, 74-75; J. C. Lattimore, "Course of Study and Daily Schedule for a School of One Room," *Texas School Journal* 7 (December 1889): 354; Rylance, "Reading, Writing, Arithmetic," 8-9.

⁸ "The One-Room Country Schools," *The Journal of Education*, 76 (1912): 514-515.

⁹ McNally, "Character Education in Rural Illinois," 347; Rylance, "Reading, Writing, Arithmetic," 2.

¹⁰ Rylance, "Reading, Writing, Arithmetic," 15-17; Theobald, "Country School Curriculum and Governance," 121.

¹¹ Theobald, "Country School Curriculum and Governance," 125.

¹² McNally, "Character Education in Rural Illinois," 353, 356; Rylance, "Reading, Writing, Arithmetic," 14.

¹³ Dropkin, "Recollections," 5, 8.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 9, 10, 12.

¹⁵ Bauml and Davis, "From School House to Hay Barn to Museum," 288; Rylance, "Reading Writing, Arithmetic," 10; Sitton and Rowold, *Ringing the Children in*, 81.

¹⁶ Rylance, "Reading, Writing, Arithmetic" 8, 10.

¹⁷ J. C. Lattimore, "Course of Study and Daily Schedule for a School of One Room," *Texas School Journal* 7 (Dec. 1889): 355.

¹⁸ Dropkin, “Recollections,” 9.

¹⁹ Sitton and Rowold, *Ringling the Children in*, 85.

²⁰ Bauml and Davis, “From School House to Hay Barn to Museum,” 288.

²¹ Sitton and Rowold, *Ringling the Children in*, 85, 87.

²² D. J. Kleiner, “Brazoria County,” <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hcb12>.

²³ U.S. Census Bureau, “QuickFacts,” Brazoria County, Texas, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/brazoriacountytexas/PST045216>.

²⁴ Kleiner, “Brazoria County.”

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Blanton, *Twenty-Second Biennial Report*, 151.

²⁷ Texas State Board of Education, *Report of the Results of the Texas Statewide School Adequacy Survey* Austin, 1937.

²⁸ Teacher’s Daily Registers for Anchor School, 1920-1921, 3; Chocolate Bayou, 1920-1921, 3; Columbia (4th-6th Year), 1920-1921, 3; Illinois Colony, 1920-1921, 3; Iowa Colony, 1920-1921, 3; Columbia (1st – 3rd Grade), 3; and Lynville, 1920-21, 3.

²⁹ These are untitled instructions for completing the “Daily Program of Work,” Iowa Colony, 1920-1921.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Curtis Creek, 1920-1921, 3.

³² Illinois Colony, 1920-1921, 3.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Sitton and Rowold, *Ringling the Children in*, 81.

³⁵ Bauml and Davis, “From School House to Hay Barn to Museum,” 287.

³⁶ Lattimore, “Course of Study and Daily Schedule,” 355.

³⁷ Bauml and Davis, “From School House to Hay Barn to Museum,” 287.

³⁸ Sitton and Rowold, *Ringling the Children in*, 72.