

PHYSICAL TRAINING - MISS ELIZABETH JOHNSTON.

Feb. 17, 1909.

SECOND GRADE:

The second grade receives two half hour lessons a week, one in a small group of fifteen and one in a large group of thirty. In each lesson I have two definite objects in view, first, the correction of common faults in position, and, second, recreation.

The first object is accomplished by the formal marching, running and breathing exercises. The second object is present throughout the entire lesson but more especially in the last five or ten minutes.

During the month of January we had formal marching, running, skipping, simple arm and leg exercises, jumping over a rod and over a space marked on the floor, one simple vault, swinging on ropes and hand travelling on a horizontal ladder. The first two weeks of January I tried a story play with the children and it was not a success. Not in that it did not give the exercise I wanted, but rather because it brought an element of disorder and inattention into the class:

Games are a part of each day's lesson. They are simple running or ball games in which very little skill is required and in which one child is against another child rather than one group of children against another group. Very little time is needed to explain the games and they are simple enough to be played alone without the supervision of a teacher.

SIXTH GRADE:

The sixth grade meets once a week for a period of thirty-five minutes. This is the first grade in which a gymnasium suit is required and it is also the first grade in which the boys and girls are separated in their gymnasium classes.

The lesson is practically divided into four parts - formal marching, running, poise steps, exercises taken upon command, apparatus work and games. As I have them but once a week I put the greatest emphasis on posture and strengthening those muscles of the back and abdomen which do not get the exercise they should. During January I have shortened the game time considerably because of two half hour game periods during the last half of their lunch period. This half hour is devoted to Volley Ball. A game very much like Tennis with the exception that the net is 8 feet high, a soft basket ball is used, the open hand is used in place of a racquet and any number can play.

The formal floor work demands the attention, alertness and coordination. In apparatus work we have used parallel bars, buck, horse, horizontal ladders and ropes. As yet anything is simply demanding little endurance or skill.

EIGHTH GRADE:

The eighth grade has two thirty-five minute periods of gymnastic work each week. One lesson I give entirely to formal gymnastics and apparatus work, the other lesson I give to a short review of the preceding lesson and a game.

With this grade besides the elements of correction of faults, and recreation I find I must add the element of interest. With the younger children this is not necessary, but with this grade of girls they must be interested before their work will be of any

good to them.

In marching and poise steps carriage and rhythm is emphasized. In the formal floor work the exercises are given by commands requiring attention, coördination, balance and a sense of rhythm. The apparatus work is not neavy; the apparatus used during January was - ropes, parallel bars, horizontal ladders, horse and buck.

The games at present are team games, Captain Ball at present being very popular. This Captain Ball in a way is preparation for Basket Ball and in many ways I like it better than Basket Ball. A larger number of girls can play, positions on the team are such that comparatively weak girls are able to play and enjoy the game.

PHYSICAL CULTURE, MISS JOHNSTON

March, 1909.

GIRLS, SIXTH GRADE:

The lessons for the sixth grade have continued on the same principles as during the months of January and February. As they have but one lesson a week I still put more time on the corrective work, using exercises that correct the common faults produced by improper standing and sitting. About five minutes of each lesson I give to dancing steps with music, emphasizing carriage and rhythm, securing in these steps a series of leg exercises that are pleasing and which train the body. Five minutes have also been given to apparatus work and the one piece used more than any other has been the running high jump. Not how high a girl can jump, but how she lands, is taken into consideration.

I have no time for gymnastic games and at present all the game time the girls get is two twenty-minute periods a week during their noon recess period and as this is voluntary the girls that come out for it are those most interested and can play well while those that need it most do not get any game work. As soon as the weather is settled all gymnasium work will be taken out of doors.

EIGHTH GRADE:

In the time given to the eighth grade I find I can get in most of the work I want to do. The one feature of the work that I find hardest to do is the balance step work and gymnastic dancing. The girls are impatient at being made to do the simple, fundamental steps with perfection, ease and good posture. They are not ready for the more difficult steps which grow out of these simple ones.

With the eighth grade girls it seems more of an effort to hold a good posture for any length of time and the tendency is

to slump very often. Because of this I scatter the corrective exercises through the lesson, avoiding monotony and getting good results.

The side vault over the brick and running high jump have been the two new jumps and at the close of three or four lessons.

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Report for April, 1909. Gymnastics.

SIXTH GRADE:

As soon as it had been decided just what part of the open demonstration, given for the Parents' Association, the sixth grade was to take, more time was spent on those particular exercises. The sixth grade were to jump to bent arm position on the ropes and swing off, if any could climb they were to do so. One section was to play volley ball with the seventh grade and the rest of the class was to take the straddle vault over the low buck, and running mount to kneeling position on the horse. The only new things taken up during the month were various simple exercises on the parallels and new balance step work.

May, 1909.

After the first week in May the Social Dancing stopped and the time that the class had had for it came back to our department. This means that sixth grade, instead of having but one and three-fourths of an hour, has now two and three-fourths hour periods, and one and one-half hour period, each week. Two or three times the weather was such that all the work could be taken out of doors.

The work indoors has been marching, new balance steps, two couple dances, gymnastic exercises and more games than we have been able to play all winter.

The new gymnastic exercises has been a series ^{taken} on low benches for the purpose of strengthening the trunk muscles. The forward somersault over the horizontal bar and the backward somersault done on the ropes have also been taught.

We have been able to get a short game in at the end of almost every lesson, the favorite one is a relay obstacle race, the obstacles being a somersault and a bench under which the girls must ~~gymnastic work~~ ^{interest}, and the work was not very good, ~~now the interest~~ ^{now taken in} keen, and they enjoy their three periods immensely. Twice, on account of Memorial Day exercises and once because of a lecture, one of their periods was taken away, outside of this we have had no interruptions in our work.

EIGHTH GRADE - April, 1909.

During the lessons before our Demonstration, we spent more time than we had been spending on captain ball, as this was to be the game the eighth grade girls were to play. The new work taken up during the month was simple couple work on low benches, one girl taking the exercise another holding or supporting her. These exercises are strong abdominal and back work.

New balance step work and a new couple dance were also taught. Parallel bar exercises and jumping were also taken up and the girls did these exercises not so much for form and finish as to take the place of a game.

May, 1909..

When dancing stopped the period was given to gymnastics. giving the eighth grade girls three and three-fourths of an hour periods. With three or four exceptions this work has been taken out of doors in complete lessons or games. A new game called Long Base has been taught, in many ways it is like base ball and is an excellent game preparatory to Base Ball.

Captain Ball is still played during one period and Volley Vall during the last half hour of lunch period. The attendance at Volley Ball has fallen off considerable, because many girls play tennis on the Midway and because two days a week they must play along and keep their own score, this is because I have a corrective class of fourth and fifth grade boys at this time.

The University of Chicago

FOUNDED BY JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER

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