

Senior Generation Takes Second Look at Mathematics

By SAVILLA SLOAN Staff Writer

Unwise, your days may be numbered! Your competition is to be found in a group of fourth graders at Bloomfield Village School—or any other fourth grade in the Birmingham school system—all of whom are being taught arithmetic, paragon mathematics, from an entirely different concept than those poor students of another generation who have had to invent machines to do their calculations for them.

I visited the Village School because a group of its fourth graders are just back from a tour in Lansing where 12 of them demonstrated their mathematical skill in front of elementary school principals' state convention.

Their demonstration included the use of a fractional-decimal slide rule, which is a second step, introduced at the fourth grade level, for these children who usually use an abacus for calculations since the first grade.

THEIR TEACHER, Mrs. Olive Wangberg, gave them a problem for me to watch them solve. It was an addition of whole and fractional numbers, with the fractions in need of a common denominator.

As the children wrote down the problem they were asked to come up with an estimate of the probable answer in terms of a fractional estimate and also a decimal estimate.

ONLY SECONDS later, hands went up and estimates were given. Answers were written on the board (When the problem had been worked exactly, one of the answers—238.40 of 238 2/5 proved to have been estimated exactly).

As one of the children came to the board to work out the problem, another child stood by the large fractional-decimal slide rule, to check the accuracy of the mental calculations of the child solving the

problem. The children remaining at their seats watched the procedure like hawks to catch any mistakes by the two performers.

FACTORS (which used to be introduced at sixth or seventh grade level) was done at a speed which one rusty ex-fourth grader of many years ago couldn't follow. The use of the slide rule was equally as mystifying.

But the children knew exactly what they were doing, and what they were doing, they knew why.

They understood the relationship of fractions to decimals, because the operations were treated together—not fractions introduced at fifth grade level and then decimals taken up a year later, as they used to be taught.

When they added, they were not adding 75 and 72 together—they were adding so many units together that they could be grouped. This, the use of the abacus taught them in the first grade.

BESIDES ORAL classroom problems, the children work at their own speed in individual summary books. Wherever a child is able to work correctly in his individual summary book at the end of the fourth grade is the level at which he will begin his work in the coming year.

The whole Andrew Shott method of teaching mathematics is based on "individualization."

ONE OF MRS. Wangberg's pupils confided to her the other day that she watched an algebra class on TV and that she understood it. This is the result of the program is trying to reach—mathematics as a whole instead of being compartmentalized.

There is one problem it raises.

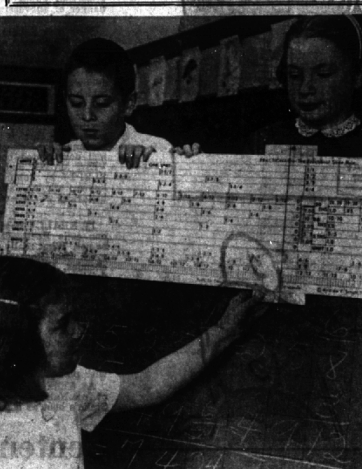
HOW IS MY generation going to help its children with its mathematical homework?

The answer is obvious. Give them your checkbook to balance.

The Birmingham Eccentric Features

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Work Mathematical Magic

Mrs. Gordon Wangberg watches proudly as her students perform their mathematics wizardry. Dick Siegemund, 315 Hupp Cross; and Lisa Turunen, 488 Wooddale, keep eye on fellow student, Martha Neff,

2584 Amberly, as she works a problem. A dozen of the Village School fourth graders recently demonstrated their ability with the new math procedure before a state convention of principals.

NATURE NOW

Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Nature Uses Various Rites for Pollination

Our knowledge of flower pollen is comparatively recent. It was not until 1793 that a German pasteurist, Konrad Sprengel, found that insects act as pollinators.

Pastor Sprengel noted a familiar fate for bees spent so much time studying the intricacies in the field and woods that his congregation dropped him. Like many another curious man he was a century ahead of his time.

It was not until 1859 that Darwin published and demonstrated cross-pollination by insects. The ancient Egyptians already knew how to hand-pollinate their date palms but this skill was lost somewhere in the turbulent years between.

NATURE KNOWS how she wants her pollinating rites performed. She uses the wind as her agent for a vast number of species including the pines, many broad leaved trees such as the willow, maple, birch, oak and poplar as well as the large grass family. A goodly percentage of our earliest blooming species are wind pollinated. For most of our insect hounds do not arrive until warm weather.

Wind-pollinated plants produce copious amounts of pollen and literally tons of it are wasted. Only comparatively few grains reach their destination on the stigma of a flower of the same species. Therefore the above groups often bear prodigious numbers of small flowers arranged in catkins, spikes or large clusters easily whipped by the wind. Nature seldom wastes pollen. Fragrance or fancy colors in the flowers for the wind is not susceptible to such lures as are insect visitors.

HAGWEED IS ONE of the most prolific of our wind-pollinated plants. Scientists in their study of her have measured a maximum of 425 pounds of this pollen per acre in the vicinity of Indianapolis at the season's height. Cross-pollination is a much more selective way for the pollen grains to reach their target.

When insects participate in this procedure but the honey bee is one of the most willing and diligent

for he is about early and late and his body is equipped with a kit of pollen collecting tools which rival those of the Puller Brush man.

NATURE FURTHER ensures the efficiency of this program by a close coordination of shapes between flowers and insects. Orbits illustrate this to a high degree.

Many are so selective that only the preferred flower gain entrance and exit to a particular flower structure. The yellow-billed cuckoo secretes a sticky fluid as it ejects its pollen masses thus insuring their safe journey to the next flower.

THE NECTARY of a single flower in the head of red clover can be as large as the humble bee. Many tubular flowers match their corolla lengths to the prospective pollinating butterfly. The shape of a moth's hood flower fits a dumble bee as a shoe fits a foot.

Our desert yucca can be pollinated only by the Pronuba moth which lays her eggs in the flower. Here the hatched larvae feed on some of the undeveloped seeds, in exchange the insect with her especially designed mouth parts gathers and then rolls the pollen into small balls which

(See NATURE, 4-B)

Residents Reach Destination, Now Off in 'Covered Wagon'

Several weeks ago, The Birmingham Eccentric did bon voyage to Bloomfield Township. Frank McGinnis and his wife Edie set off for a trip through Europe in a converted Ford Ambulance.

This week, George R. Squibb, president of the Automotive Conversion Corporation, forwarded a message to the McGinnises.

This is what McGinnis had to say:

"First, the ship-trip over was medium rough but in four days, the last three were beautiful. We began a long, narrow, sharp turns and scared wife. News item: There is no Presidential sign on Gibraltar!"

"MALLAGE... NICE clean, seaport city, wide streets and boulevards. Drove to Madrid... roads pitchy and turny. Took six and a half hours for 280 miles. Got good news to go with us to Toledo. Wonderful day. Good shoes. Good paella lunch in town square."

"ALSO VISITED El Escorial and Valley of the Fallen. This last year. Over 20,000 boys from Spanish Civil War now buried there. Many beautiful works of modern art in enormous vaulted crypt crowned by a high gothic archway."

"Well, that's it for now kiddies, don't you drop everything and join us?"

"Love from Mary and Frank from Madrid."

STRICTLY FRESH

One thing about keeping your feet on the ground, You'll never have far to fall.

The circus had a difficult time getting a replacement for the performer who was shot out of a cannon twice daily. It seems they couldn't find anyone else of his caliber.



Nice thing about sports cars is that if the carburetor floods, you can just put the car on your shoulder and burp it.

Our son posed a question the other day that we couldn't answer—while watching ballet on TV: "Instead of dancing on their toes, why don't they just use taller girls?"

Modesty is that unspoken belief that others will come to discover what a great person you are.

DOWN TO EARTH

Columnist Gives Hints On Lawn, Roses, Shrubs

By ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME

Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Your traveling reporter has just been to Chicago. An interview with a friend who is a horticultural scientist always brings forth some of the new introductions we may expect in the next couple years. He is experimenting with material to put on lawns to keep the dogs off. You can't buy it yet, so take your coat off.

On the Pacific Coast there was a popularity contest to decide what to bring home. Here is what the home growers liked best.

Here you can see the first five: Queen Elizabeth, Monzuzak, Chrysler Imperial, Charlotte Armstrong, Tiffany.



Mrs. Burlingame

These are not new roses; but if you have them on your roll call, you can be assured of success. The Chrysler rose is so beautiful I have often wondered why General Motors doesn't have a rose named for it. A rose as beautiful as this should be given the Chrysler Imperial surely has an enviable reputation.

IF YOU HAVE a metal fence,

you have over thought of planting your tomato plants two or three feet apart about five inches from the fence and allow the branches to develop which tend to grow east and west (like arms in an capsular fashion). It will be easy to tie them.

Perhaps growing vegetables on a fence does fascinate you. Then you will like to plant squash one inch deep, about three seeds in a hill and four feet between hills.

Butternut squash will be especially good grown in this manner. Of course you will want to be planting in full sun for best results. Pole beans will be good planted this way, wait until the soil gets warm to assure germination.

If your supply is broken up and planted at two-week intervals, you can expect a longer flowering season. Plan on 60 to 90 days before flowering.

THERE IS ANOTHER rose which is asking for attention this season. It is "John S. Armstrong" named for the 55-year-old founder of the rose nursery by that name. It is a dark, velvet-red in appearance. The rose represents 20 years of research. As it is a grandiflora rose, it will be around five and a half feet in height, calling for a back seat in position if combined with other roses.

The color red has always been a plus in developing into a prize specimen as it must not take on a bluish cast when it begins to fade.

When you are buying roses be sure and loosen the wrapper and look at the spots. Are they looking healthy? Another point to remember is that too much pruning is not good for a rose. It weakens the main trunk of a rose. This fact doesn't sound feasible, but research has given us laymen the answer.

There is a new hybrid viola you will want to see: Viola Toyland. Even though it is a viola, it has much of the coloring of pansies. It will flower right through the

(See SHRUBS, 4-B)

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100 YEARS AGO

More Than 40 Killed As War Hits Missouri

By LON K. SAVAGE Special Writer

A civil war within the Civil War erupted in Missouri 100 years ago this week. Before the week's events were done, the state was split, dozens had been killed and tumult reigned.

The violence had a strange introduction: when a veiled old lady carrying a basket of oranges rode in a servant-driven buggy to Camp Jackson in St. Louis' western outskirts.

The actress at the camp took her for a soldier's mother and waved the buggy through. They would learn that the "Mad" Captain Nathaniel Lyon, commander of the St. Louis Arsenal,

surrounded the installation, and Lyon demanded surrender. General D. H. Frost had no choice but to accept.

As Lyon's troops rounded up their prisoners, a fight broke out between the federal soldiers and a crowd of civilians who had followed the soldiers to the camp. Suddenly the soldiers were rearing, guns were firing and bayonets were being stuck in the chest.

When the riot was over, 30 persons, including women and children, lay dead or dying.

NEWS OF THE riot swept across Missouri. At Jefferson City, legislators—with many lawmakers carrying guns in their laps—sat that night passing law after law to recall the federal troops and to prepare for war.

Next day, Jefferson City residents, fearing invasion, fled their homes as they did, riots continued in St. Louis and more than a dozen persons—both civilians and soldiers—were killed. That, in turn, set off an exodus from St. Louis the following day.

This began a war in Missouri that would not end before thousands had been killed.

Neither side was particularly glib about the proclamation you could dilute it recognition of the South's existence as a belligerent; David never forgave his reluctance to his government as "certain states styling themselves as the Confederate States of America."

Next week: The first naval engagement.

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