

### A REPORT ON THE PROGRAM

In September, 1979, Texas Wesleyan College began a Program for the Advancement of Analytical Thinking for Children. Analytical Thinking is a program which attempts to use the tools of philosophy and logic in order to improve children's thinking skills. The Program is based on Matthew Lipman's Philosophy for Children.

The goals of our Program are:

- (1) to improve children's thinking skills.
- (2) to get them and keep them interested in things academic.
- (3) to improve their performance in traditional academic subjects like reading and mathematics.

During the first year of the program, 1979-1980, I worked directly with two fourth grade teachers and their classes. For the first few months I taught the classes, and the teachers, Judy Stalling of Meadowbrook Elementary and Betty Stanley of Sellars Elementary, observed. As the teachers became more comfortable with the program, they began to take a more active role in the discussion. By mid-year they were both running the classes on their own. They continued doing that until the end of the year.

Both teachers and the principals of each school, Don Couch of Sellars and Gene Morgan of Meadowbrook, were pleased with the program and requested continuance and expansion of the program.

Also during 1979-80, we:

- (1) ran two sections of a six-credit, full-year graduate course in Analytical Thinking. Thirty-two teachers completed the course.

- (2) began using Lipman's Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery with one more group of fourth graders and with two groups of fifth graders. (January through May 1980)
- (3) developed material for kindergarten through 3rd grade. The three stories, Rebecca, Adam and Jeremy, were used with two kindergarten groups and two groups of first graders. (January through May 1980)
- (4) ran a four-week intensive workshop for twelve elementary and secondary school teachers in June and July of 1980. The teachers were trained in Analytical Thinking with special emphasis placed on Lipman's Lisa and ethical inquiry. During the middle two weeks, a group of thirty-five gifted students from various parts of the southwest lived on campus and studied Lisa with the teachers. (The workshop was run in conjunction with the Gifted Students Institute.)

The success that we have achieved in 1979-80 has led us to expand the program.

- (1) Twenty-three teachers who were trained last year are now implementing the program in their classrooms. Those teachers include representatives from Meadowbrook, Sellars and East Handley Elementary Schools. The program is also being implemented at White Lake Elementary School, a private school in Fort Worth.
- (2) Forty-one teachers are now enrolled in the Analytical Thinking graduate course.
- (3) An area of concentration in philosophy of education, which is intended, in part, to give teachers an expertise in analytical thinking, has been established by the School of Education.

### Testing

During the first year of the program, there were no formal tests of the program. The program was evaluated on the basis of reports from teachers, administrators, parents, and children.

In November of 1980, formal tests (the Q-4 test on critical thinking) were given to two groups of fourth graders. We will publish the results of the pre- and post-tests in future issues of the newsletter.

Ronald Reed