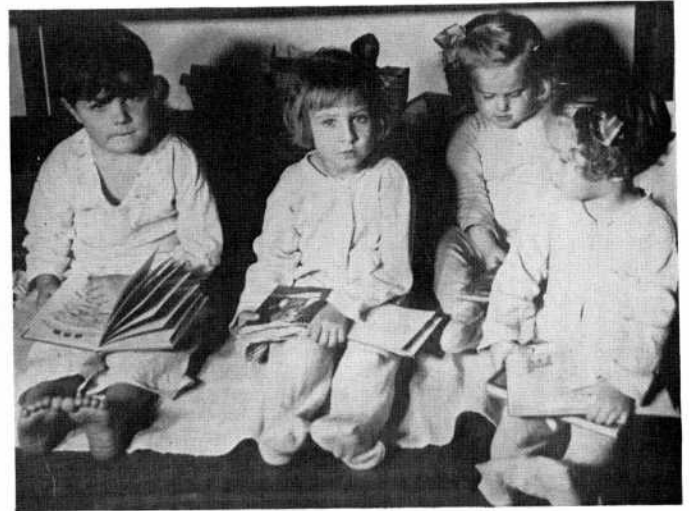


This article was written by Kathleen Abbott Jarrell, Durant, who as a University student and the mother of a University student, is in a particularly advantageous position to evaluate University projects. Mrs. Jarrell who has done considerable writing for magazines decided to enroll for writing courses at the University this year when she moved to Norman so that her oldest daughter might attend the University. On this page are pictures of the youngsters at the pre-school which is located on the campus. One picture shows them working in clay, the other at story hour just before nap-time. On the opposite page is Miss Hedwig Schaefer, '18as, assistant professor of home economics, who is director of the interesting project. Mrs. Egbert Clements is shown in one picture with the youngsters. She is in active charge of the school.



## More Spinach, Please

**T**WENTY-two Little Dears and not a single "don't—that's the University of Oklahoma Nursery School!

Do not feel too badly if you did not know that such a thing existed. Surprisingly few people do, and those who do are mostly specialists in the field of education or the proud parents of a child fortunate enough to be enrolled. And they are proud parents. Proud and progressive and intelligent and not at all cock sure, for they have learned that the scientifically conducted nursery school has more to teach parents than the pupils themselves. In truth, the better the nursery school the less it tries to "teach" the children anything at all. It simply provides, as nearly as possible, a situation in which children may learn by their own efforts instead, and with a minimum of adult interference.

The school is housed in the yellow bungalow at Jenkins avenue and Felgar street just across from the utilities department, and it is not only a nursery school with an enrolment of twenty-two children between the ages of two and four, but it is a laboratory for all phases of home economics teaching child care, nutrition, home

relationships, clothing, etc. as well. It also provides the means for thirteen college students, twelve girls and one boy, to work their ways through school, for all house-keeping is done by national youth administration girls, with a boy in charge of equipment and toy construction. And, as if that were not enough, it serves as the training field where nursery school education students do their observation and practice teaching.

Any one interested in just how—and how well—this four-fold job is being done should spend a few hours in the observation room. From this scientifically arranged vantage point an observer may see and hear everything that goes on without being seen himself and without disturbing the routine or behavior patterns.

According to Miss Hedwig Schaefer, '18as, who is the general supervisor of the school, mothers and fathers use this room with surprising frequency, finding it advantageous to thus observe their children in relationship to the rest of the group. The thing which amazes these parents most is how really splendid their children are—how beautifully they cooperate, how

confidently they take care of themselves, how cheerfully they do the tasks expected of them, how happily they amuse themselves, and most of all how calmly and completely they eat the food set before them—carrots, liver, spinach, beans—whatever it may be, and always milk! Then just for good measure, how matter-of-factly they "carry out" the dishes they have used and begin, of their own accord, getting ready for the afternoon nap.

The University school is of the cooperative rather than the research type, each mother serving her term when it comes as assistant to Mrs. Helen Clement who is in permanent charge.

The children arrive at nine o'clock and are inspected by a trained nurse (who happens also to be one of the mothers) as to condition of skin, throat, and general health and appearance, and are checked as to morning home routine. Until ten o'clock they are free to play—outside if the weather permits, where swings, a slide, a sand box, a wagon, boards for bridge building, steps, and a number of large hollow blocks are provided. At ten comes a drink of water and a visit to the bathroom for more personal needs. There are movable steps in the bathroom by the use of which even the smallest child is made quite independent of adult assistance. Each child's towel and washrag hangs upon a separate hook and is identified by a picture necessitated of course, by the somewhat awkward state of infant illiteracy which seems to prevail.

At ten fifteen comes music, and how the children love it! Simple melodies, simple rhythms, simple words, growing so naturally out of the everyday experiences of the child that they seem almost to sing themselves. Then comes story time, the children seated in chairs if it is cold or damp, upon rugs if it is not.

Next is a fifteen minute period of relaxation, each child stretched full length upon his own little cot with a light blan-





ket spread over him. Aware of the difficulties with which most parents achieve a similar period of rest for one child, the success of such a project where twenty-two normal, healthy, squirmy, youngsters are concerned seems almost a miracle. Group ethics, however, seems to turn the trick—and with very little to do.

After relaxation the older children fold their blankets and cots and stow them away, then lend a hand to the younger ones who are not yet so efficient—and another free period has arrived.

And by free period is meant FREE.

Nothing, unless it be anti-social or dangerous, is banned. Noise is never shushed, tumbled disorder never frowned upon, motives and plans never questioned, needs never anticipated, problems never solved unless help is sought by the child—then he is given only the assistance he asks for, never the entire solution.

The toys with which the children play are of the most simple and inexpensive type imaginable. Empty spools gaily enameled, a blocloc train, building blocks—not the commercial kind, but odds and ends of light lumber in many different sizes and shapes—squares, rectangles, cylinders, triangles, pyramids, flat slabs. There are easels, too, for the budding artist, with troughs for holding water and brushes and paints, not to mention dolls (home made) and doll furniture and story books and modeling clay. Even the piano is not denied to the child with a yearn for sound and rhythm in his soul.

The playthings are kept upon low shelves, easily within the reach of even the smallest child—and each is free to help himself to whatever he will. Perhaps it is because there are enough for everyone that the children do not all decide upon the same thing at the same time, but one has the feeling that it is some principle in nursery school technique more important and profound than that!

Some of the children play in groups,

some alone. No one seems to notice what any one else does so long as he does not encroach upon the rights of others. The free period is followed by the business of putting everything back into place and the washing of hands for lunch.

At lunch the children are grouped at tables to fit their size and age. The four year olds use both fork and spoon—and surprisingly well—and are allowed to pour their own milk. An adult sits at each table and is served exactly as the rest, even to the extent of having but a spoon to eat with if seated among the younger children. And why not? Children have been inconvenienced at grown up tables since civilization began.

Servings are small, but a child may reserve himself at the tea cart as many times as he wishes just so long as his plate is cleared when he finishes. A child is never hurried, but if he dallies with his food and is unfinished when the lunch period is over, the irregularity is quietly brought to his attention by some such remark as, "Lunch time is over now. Too bad you didn't get through in time to eat your dessert!"

The children are encouraged to serve themselves from the tea cart in order to "get the wiggle out of them" so that they will not cut short their meal because of restiveness. The diet, of course, is scientifically planned, and is under the supervision of Miss Laura Miller.

After lunch comes another opportunity for achievement, that of undressing, putting on sleepers, and otherwise preparing for the afternoon nap. And undressing oneself at two and a half IS an achievement. One requiring as much concentration, coordination, and patience as a "birdie" or ball room dancing when one is big and wise—and as deserving of the respect and awe of one's fellowmen!

The novice is apt to come away from a day spent in observation at the University of Oklahoma nursery school with a decidedly changed perspective in so far as children are concerned. Here is a child's world with a child's problems recognized and accepted with sincerity and dignity. Here is a world in which a child may truly try his strength and test his skill without bringing down a cyclone of either praise or blame upon his head. Here is a world in which a child knows what to expect and upon which he may depend.

The school is only one year old. Those in charge make no cure-all claims or sweeping prophecies—they are too busy making a wholesome, stimulating, happy, HERE and NOW for the twenty-two lucky youngsters in their charge.

Children of the Nursery School and their birthdays follow:

George Wiley, February 25, 1934; Jennie Hawkins, January 23, 1934; Bert Flood, August 30, 1933; Carol Jenson, August 14, 1933; Alec Titkoff, May 25, 1933; Deonne Drake, April 19, 1933; Mary Dixon, March 6, 1933; Johnnie Keith,

January 23, 1933; Virginia Sloan, January 25, 1933; Mary Ellen Casey, October 31, 1932.

Beverly Heck, July 22, 1932; Charlene Caldwell, July 28, 1932; Jimmie Marrs, April 18, 1932; Paul Keen, March 28, 1932; John Ellis, March 28, 1932; Donna Ruth Frank, March 24, 1932; Sally Sears, January 14, 1932; Judith Halperin, September 1, 1931; Bennie Shultz, June 9, 1931; Frank Girard Tappan, January 16, 1931; Mark Melton, November 2, 1930.

## Professorial Quips

(SOONERLAND TOPICS)

WHEN informed of the Supreme Court's decision declaring the AAA unconstitutional by a 6 to 3 vote: "It's not surprising. It's what one expects when six corporation lawyers get together with two Jews and a college professor."—Dr. Cortez Ewing, Government.

After listening to four speakers at a banquet in his honor tell of his long and faithful service to the University and to mankind over a period of 35 years: "I'm glad all of this is taffy—not epi-taffy."—Dr. Roy Gittinger, Dean of Administration.

"After 17 years, I'm finally going to get my soldiers' bonus. Now, they're starting to work on the Townsend plan and I'll be about ready for it in another 17 years."—Dr. A. B. Thomas, History.

"I long to see the day when some Big Six coach, instead of telling how good all the other teams in the conference are, steps up and predicts that his own team is by far the best and will win the championship, hands down. Who, me? I said I'd like to see it, not do it."—John Jacobs, Track Coach.

Beset by newspaper reporters during the recent stir over the cancellation of "Waiting for Lefty" and "Till the Day I Die" because they were branded as "red" and propaganda plays: "We've been trying for several years to get publicity for our Playhouse shows. This is the first time we've ever made the right-hand column page one."—Rupel J. Jones, Playhouse Director.

"Getting football players is like buying so much horse flesh. The highest bidder gets the pick of the string."—Dr. Guy Y. Williams, Chemistry.

"Isn't it true that Dr. Townsend set two hundred dollars a month as the figure for his old age pension plan so that no one could come along and set a higher goal and take all his members away from him?"—H. H. Herbert, Journalism.