

most sessions to capture individual moments during the productions and of the children at work using the equipment. A journal was kept for each session, describing what went on that day. The journal was used to note observations as to the processes that were taking place. The videotape productions are naturally the most significant documents of this project. Although only thirty minutes of tape were shown to evaluators for judging, approximately three hours of production tapes were recorded, and are still available for study.

Finally, there is the written thesis. The thesis was devised to provide general rather than specific information. The first chapter deals with the philosophical approach to the problem and provides a background of similar projects that have been done by other people. The design of the study is covered in the second chapter. It is divided into five basic sections: the selection of the subjects, the pre-test, the workshop sessions, the post-test and the evaluation of the productions. The whys and hows are given in detail. The data obtained from the tests, the journal and the evaluation sheets are then presented and analyzed. The last chapter presents conclusions and recommendations for future studies. The appendices include many helpful materials such as the pre-test and post-test questionnaires; the structured workshop curriculum; the evaluation sheet used by the judging panels; a videotape catalogue of all the productions made by the students; and the weekly journal of the workshop sessions. Copies can be obtained through the University of Maryland, Department of Speech and Dramatic Arts, College Park, Maryland.

Evaluating the Findings

The productions of the final two weeks of each workshop were evaluated for technical quality, visual attractiveness, content and message differences. Three different panels of judges were selected; parents, teachers and broadcast professionals.

The pre- and post-tests showed that most of the children greatly enjoy television and that it takes

up much of their time. There was, however, very little change in their viewing habits over the two month period. On production related questions, both group's knowledge basically increased or remained the same.

The weekly journal provided information that could not be obtained from any other of the data. The researcher viewed the non-structured group as more "creative" and the structured group as better organized. The non-structured children were more individualistic, whereas, the structured children worked better as a group. There were no significant differences between the groups that appear related to sex, race or intelligence differences.

The data from the evaluations of the programs offer evidence that, in general, there were no obvious differences between the productions of the structured versus the non-structured workshops, although the non-structured group programs tended to be rated slightly higher by the panel. There were also very little differences in the ratings by the individual panels of judges, (except for the broadcast related judges, who rated the non-structured group's tapes slightly higher.) It also appears that although each group's programs as a whole were rated almost equally, there were various aspects of the shows in which one group did better than the other. The non-structured group seemed to be better able to keep the audience's interest level and convey their message, while the structured group seemed to be more adept at most of the camera skills. Neither group showed any differences in use of visuals or in acting. The individual panels varied in their ratings of the various elements of the programs, but once again the broadcast related judges were most similar in their ratings to all three groups totalled.

Conclusion

In this writer's opinion, what this study has shown is that the ideal television workshop is one that is based upon the principles of both a structured and non-structured format. Children need some structured impetus. In order for quality to be present in a program, children need some authoritative advice when they are doing things wrong or poorly. Teaching them to be analytical and critical appears to aid them in both producing their own programs and watching others. But for a more interesting and better presented show, it is advised not to force children into doing suggested genres of television. Let them freely decide what they want to do. This combination of structured and non-structured, is sure to produce the best results possible in their final products.

Why Research

There are some real good reasons for education to conduct rigorous research about what kids learn with video instead of merely evaluating their work by "gut" reaction.

Experimental research becomes important in times



Mary Sheridan