

SOUTHERN COLONIES. The Southern Colonies soon were made up of large tobacco plantations. There was an immediate need for cheap labor to work on the plantations; in 1619, only twelve years after Jamestown was settled, the colony imported the first slaves from Africa. Other sources of labor for the Southern Colonies included Europeans from a variety of backgrounds who had purchased passage to the New World by agreeing to serve a lengthy period of indentured servitude on arrival in the colonies. There soon came to be two very distinct classes of people in the South—a few wealthy landowners and a large mass of laborers, most of whom were slaves.

The educational provisions that evolved from this set of conditions were precisely what one would expect. Few were interested in providing education for the slaves with the exception of missionary groups such as the English Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Such missionary groups tried to provide some education for slaves, primarily so that they could read the Bible. The wealthy landowners hired tutors to teach their children at home. Distances between homes and slow transportation precluded the establishment of centralized schools. When upper-class children grew old enough to attend college, they were usually sent to well-established universities in Europe.

MIDDLE COLONIES. The people who settled the Middle Colonies came from various national (Dutch, Swedish, etc.) and religious (Puritan, Mennonite, Catholic) backgrounds. This is why the Middle Colonies have often been called the melting pot of the nation. This diversity of backgrounds made it impossible for the inhabitants of the Middle Colonies to agree on a common public school system. Consequently, the respective groups established their own religious schools. Some children received their education through an apprenticeship while learning a trade from a master already in that line of work. Some people even learned the art of teaching school by serving lengthy apprenticeships with experienced teachers.

NORTHERN COLONIES. The Northern Colonies were settled mainly by the Puritans, a religious group from Europe. In 1630, approximately 1,000 Puritans settled near Boston. Unlike people in the Southern Colonies, people in New England lived close to one another. Towns sprang up and soon became centers of political and social life. Shipping ports were established, and an industrial economy developed that demanded numerous skilled and semiskilled workers—a condition that eventually created a growing middle class and common schools.

EARLY SCHOOL LAWS. These conditions of common religious views, town life, and a large middle class made it possible for the people to agree on common public schools and led to very early educational activity in the Northern Colonies. In 1642, the General Court of Massachusetts enacted a law that stated:

This Co' [Court], taking into consideration the great neglect of many parents & masters in training up their children in learning do hereupon order and decree, that in every towne y chosen men take account from time to time of all parents and masters, and of their children, concerning their ability to read & understand the principles of religion & the capitall lawes of this country. (From *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England: 1642–1649* by Nathaniel Bradstreet Shurtleff. Published by W. White, © 1853.)

This law did nothing more than encourage citizens to look after the education of children. However, five years later in 1647, another law was enacted in Massachusetts that required towns to provide education for their youth. This law, which was often referred to as the **Old Deluder Satan Act** because of its religious motive, stated:

It being one chiefe proiect of yould deluder, Satan, to keepe men from the knowledge of y Scriptures It is therefore orded [ordered], ye evy [every] towneship in this jurisdiction, aft y Lord hath increased y number to 50 household, shall then forthw appoint one w [with] in their towne to teach all such children as shall resort to him to write & reade & it is furth ordered y where any towne shall increase to y numb [number] of 100 families or household, they shall set up a grammar schoole, y m [aim] thereof being able to instruct youth so farr as they shall be fited for y university [Harvard]. (From *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England: 1642–1649* by Nathaniel Bradstreet Shurtleff. Published by W. White, © 1853.)

These Massachusetts school laws of 1642 and 1647 served as models for similar laws that were soon created in other colonies.

RELIGION IN THE CLASSROOM. Colonial schools almost always were religious in nature. In fact, the Bible was often the only book used, and religious prayers were routinely said in the

Old Deluder Satan Act An early colonial education law (1647) that required colonial towns of at least fifty households to provide education for youth.

PERSPECTIVES on DIVERSITY

Religious Perspectives in the Classroom

Kevin, a secondary school student, had been worrying for a week about the next unit in his biology class. It was supposed to introduce the concept of evolution, which he had learned from his family and at church, was not the way the world developed. He liked science but believed that science was wrong on this one. Ever since he was a baby, he had been learning about creationism and how God created the world. His minister recently had told the congregation about the theory of intelligent design that countered the explanations of evolution. Kevin knew that Mr. Jenkins, his biology teacher, didn't attend Kevin's church. He didn't know his religious beliefs, but if Mr. Jenkins was going to teach evolution, he must not be very religious. He wondered what he should do when Mr. Jenkins begins the discussion of evolution next week.

After Mr. Jenkins introduced the section on evolution on Monday, he called on Kevin, who had raised his hand. Kevin confidently stood and said, "Mr. Jenkins, are we also going to talk about intelligent design as part of this lesson?"

Somewhat surprised, Mr. Jenkins responded, "Son, intelligent design is not science. It is a nonscientific theory and does not help

explain the development of species in our world. It has no place in my biology class."

Embarrassed, Kevin slid back into his seat. But he was going to talk with his parents and minister about Mr. Jenkins's brusque response to his question. He thought, "It isn't fair that other explanations of the world are totally dismissed. Other students in the class should know that research supports intelligent design as well."

WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

1. Why do you think Kevin is so adamant that other perspectives on the development of the world should be explored in his biology class? Why might Mr. Jenkins think otherwise?
2. How would you have responded to Kevin's request to include intelligent design in this biology unit? Why?
3. What do you think might have been taught about this topic in a science class during the Colonial period?

Colonial classroom. The concept of "separation of church and state" did not exist at that time like it does now in our public schools. The accompanying "Perspectives on Diversity" feature, which has historical roots, relates a possible dilemma for contemporary teachers.

TYPES OF COLONIAL SCHOOLS. Several different kinds of elementary schools sprang up in the colonies, such as the **dame school**, which was conducted by a housewife in her home; the *writing school*, which taught the child to write; a variety of *church schools*; and charity, or *pauper schools*, taught by missionary groups.

In 1635, the *Latin Grammar School* was established in Boston—the first permanent school of this type in what is now the United States. The grammar school was a secondary school. Its function was college preparatory, and the idea spread quickly to other towns. Charlestown opened its first grammar school one year later, in 1636, by contracting William Witherell "to keep a school for a twelve month." Within sixteen years after the Massachusetts Bay Colony had been founded, seven or eight towns had Latin grammar schools in operation. Transplanted from Europe, where similar schools had existed for a long time, these schools were aimed at preparing boys for college and "for the service of God, in church and commonwealth."

EARLY AMERICAN COLLEGES. Harvard, the first colonial college, was established in 1636 for preparing ministers. Other early American colleges included William and Mary (1693), Yale (1701), Princeton (1746), King's College (1754), College of Philadelphia (1755), Brown (1764), Dartmouth (1769), and Queen's College (1770). The curriculum in these early colleges was traditional with heavy emphasis on theology and the classics. An example of the extent to which the religious motive dominated colonial colleges can be found in one of the 1642 rules governing Harvard College, which stated: "Let every Student be plainly instructed, and earnestly pressed to consider well, the main end of his life and studies is, to know God and Jesus Christ."

MONITORIAL SCHOOLS. In 1805, New York City established the first *monitorial school* in the United States. The monitorial school, which originated in England, represented an attempt to provide economical mass elementary education for large numbers of children. Typically, one

Dame school

A low-level primary school in the colonial and other early periods, usually conducted by an untrained woman (dame) in her own home.

teacher would teach hundreds of pupils at one time, using the better students as helpers. By 1840, however, nearly all monitorial schools had been closed; it was felt that the children had not learned enough to justify continuance of this type of school.

HORACE MANN. Between 1820 and 1860, an educational awakening took place in the United States. This movement was strongly influenced by Horace Mann (1796–1859). As secretary of the state board of education, Mann helped to establish **common elementary schools** in Massachusetts. These common schools were designed to provide a basic elementary education for all children. Among Mann’s many impressive educational achievements was the publication of one of the very early professional journals in this country, *The Common School Journal*. Through this journal, Mann kept educational issues before the public.

In 1852, Massachusetts passed a compulsory elementary school attendance law, the first of its kind in the country, requiring all children to attend school. By 1900, thirty-two other states had passed similar **compulsory education** laws.

Financing public education has always been a challenge in America. As early as 1795, Connecticut legislators decided to sell public land and create a permanent school fund to help finance public schools. As more and more children attended school, other states soon also took action to establish school funding plans.

HENRY BARNARD. The first U.S. commissioner of education was a prominent educator named Henry Barnard (1811–1900). He was a longtime supporter of providing common elementary schools for all children and wrote enthusiastically about the value of education in the *Connecticut Common School Journal* and in the *American Journal of Education*, which he founded. He had also served as the Rhode Island commissioner of public schools and as the chancellor of the University of Wisconsin before holding the prestigious position of commissioner of education for the entire United States. Barnard also strongly supported kindergarten programs for very young children as well as high school programs for older students.

REFLECTIONS ON EARLY U.S. ELEMENTARY EDUCATION. If we look back at the historical development of U.S. elementary education, we can make the following generalizations:

1. Until the late 1800s, the motive, curriculum, and administration of elementary education were primarily religious. The point at which elementary education began to be more secular than religious was the point at which states began to pass compulsory school attendance laws.
2. Discipline was traditionally harsh in elementary schools. The classical picture of a colonial schoolmaster equipped with a frown, dunce cap, stick, whip, and a variety of abusive phrases is more accurate than one might expect. It is no wonder that children historically viewed school as an unpleasant place. Pestalozzi had much to do with bringing about a gradual change in discipline when he advocated that love, not severe punishment, should be used to motivate students.
3. Elementary education was traditionally formal and impersonal. The ideas of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Herbart, and Froebel helped to change this condition gradually and make elementary education more student centered.
4. Early elementary schools were traditionally taught by poorly prepared teachers.
5. Although the aims and methodology varied considerably from time to time, the basic content of colonial elementary education was reading, writing, and arithmetic (commonly referred to as the “3-Rs.”)

The Need for Secondary Schools

Contemporary U.S. high schools have a long and proud tradition. They have evolved from a series of earlier forms of secondary schools that were created to serve the needs of society at various points in the nation’s history.

AMERICAN ACADEMY. By the middle of the eighteenth century, there was a need for more and better trained skilled workers. Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), recognizing this need, proposed a new kind of secondary school in Pennsylvania. This proposal brought about the establishment, in Philadelphia in 1751, of the first truly American educational institution—the *American Academy*. Franklin established this school because he thought the existing Latin grammar schools were not

Common elementary school Schools that originated in the mid-nineteenth century designed to produce a basic elementary education for all children.

Compulsory education School attendance that is required by law on the theory that it is of benefit to the state or commonwealth to educate all people.

providing the practical secondary education that youth needed. The philosophy, curriculum, and methodology of Franklin's academy were all geared to prepare young people for employment. Eventually, similar academies were established throughout America, and these institutions eventually replaced the Latin grammar school as the predominant secondary educational institution. They were usually private schools, and gradually many of them admitted girls as well as boys. Later on, some academies even trained elementary school teachers.

HIGH SCHOOL. In 1821, the *English Classical School* (which three years later changed its name to *English High School*) opened in Boston, and another distinctively American educational institution was launched. This first high school, under the direction of George B. Emerson, consisted of a three-year course in English, mathematics, science, and history. The school later added to its curriculum the philosophy of history, chemistry, intellectual philosophy, linear drawing, logic, trigonometry, French, and the U.S. Constitution. The school enrolled about one hundred boys during its first year.

The high school was established because of a belief that the existing grammar schools were inadequate for the day and because most people could not afford to send their children to the private academies. The high school soon replaced both the Latin grammar school and the private academy, and it has been with us ever since.

JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL. About 1910, the first *junior high schools*, were established in the United States, which typically consisted of grades 7, 8, and 9. A survey in 1916 showed fifty-four junior high schools in thirty-six states. One year later, a survey indicated that the number had increased to about 270. More recently, some school systems have abandoned the junior high school in favor of what is called the *middle school*, which often consists of grades 6, 7, and 8.

The Evolution of Teaching Materials

As one might expect, the first schools in colonial America were poorly equipped. The only teaching materials, if any, likely to be found then were *hornbooks*, maybe a Bible, perhaps one or two other religious books, *slates* and slate pencils, and later on a small amount of scarce paper and a few *quill pens*.

THE HORNBOOK. The **hornbook** was the most common teaching device in early colonial schools (see Figure 2.1). Hornbooks differed widely but typically consisted of a sheet of heavy paper showing the alphabet that was covered with a thin transparent sheet of cow's horn and tacked to a paddle-shaped piece of wood. A leather thong was often looped through a hole in the paddle so that students could hang the hornbooks around their necks. Hornbooks provided students with their first reading instructions. Records indicate that hornbooks were used in Europe in the Middle Ages and were common there until the mid-1700s.

As paper became more available, the hornbook evolved into a several-page "book" called a *battledore*. The *battledore*, printed on heavy paper, often resembled an envelope. Like the hornbook, it typically contained the alphabet and various religious prayers and/or admonitions.

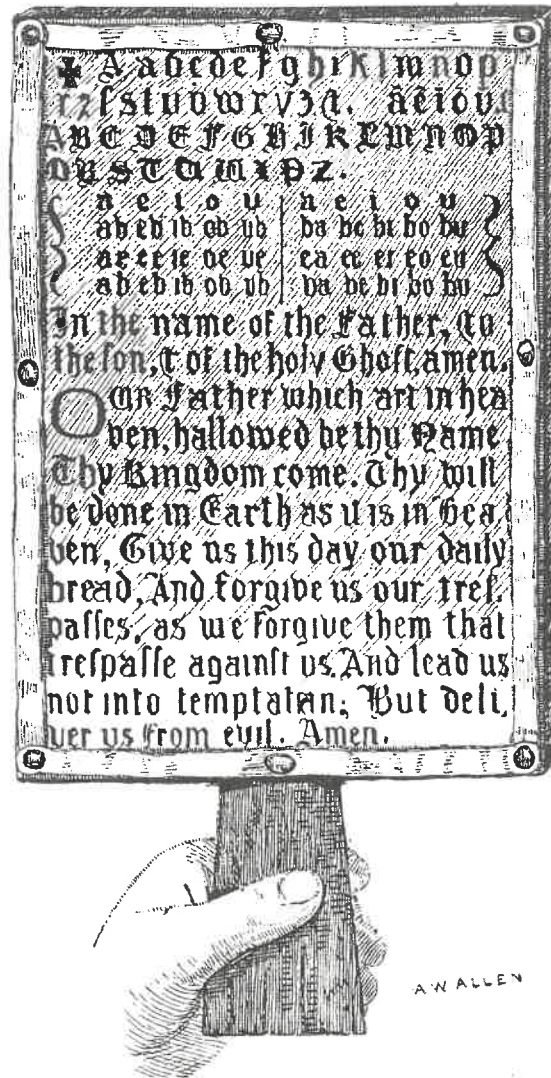
THE NEW ENGLAND PRIMER. Very few textbooks were available for use in colonial Latin grammar schools, academies, and colleges, although various religious books, including the Bible, were often used. An increasing number of books dealing with other subjects, history, geography, arithmetic, Latin, Greek, and certain classics, became available for use in colonial secondary schools and colleges during the eighteenth century.

The first real textbook to be used in colonial elementary schools was the *New England Primer*. Records show that the first copies of this book were printed in England in the 1600s. Copies of the *New England Primer* were also printed as early as 1690 in the American colonies. An advertisement for the book appeared in the *News from the Stars Almanac*, published in 1690 in Boston. The oldest extant copy of the *New England Primer* is a 1727 edition, now in the Lenox Collection of the New York Public Library.

The *New England Primer* was a small book, usually about 2 by 4 inches, that had a cover made with thin sheets of wood covered with paper or leather. It contained fifty to one hundred

Hornbook A single page typically containing the alphabet, syllables, a prayer, or other simple words, tacked to a wooden paddle and covered with cow's horn; used in colonial times as a beginner's first book or preprimer.

FIGURE 2.1 The Hornbook Was a Common Teaching Device in Colonial American Schools



HORN-BOOK IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

Mary Evans Picture Library/Alamy Stock Photo

pages, depending on how many extra sections were added to each edition. The first pages displayed the alphabet, vowels, and capital letters. Next came lists of words arranged from two to six syllables, followed by verses and tiny woodcut pictures for each letter in the alphabet. Figure 2.2 shows a sampling of these pictures and verses. The contents of the *New England Primer* reflect the heavily religious motive in colonial education.

BLUE-BACKED SPELLER. The primer was virtually the only reading book used in colonial schools until about 1800, when Noah Webster published *The American Spelling Book*. This book became known as the *Blue-Backed Speller* because of its blue cover. It eventually replaced the *New England Primer* as the most common elementary textbook.

The *Blue-Backed Speller* was approximately 4 by 6 inches; its cover was also typically made of thin sheets of wood usually covered with light blue paper. The first part of the book contained rules and instructions for using the book; next came the alphabet, syllables, and consonants. The bulk of the book was taken up with lists of words arranged according to syllables and sounds. It also contained rules for reading and speaking, moral advice, and various stories.

FIGURE 2.2 Page from the *New England Primer* How does this page from the *New England Primer* reveal the religious motive in colonial American education?



North Wind Picture Archives/Alamy Stock Photo

TEACHING MATERIALS IN AN EARLY SCHOOL. By 1800, nearly two hundred years after the colonies had been established, school buildings and teaching materials were still very crude and meager. You can understand something of the physical features and equipment of an 1810 New England school by reading the following description written by a teacher of that school:

The size of the building was 22 × 20 feet. From the floor to the ceiling it was 7 feet. The chimney and entry took up about four feet at one end, leaving the schoolroom itself 18 × 20 feet. Around three sides of the room were connected desks, arranged so that when the pupils were sitting at them their faces were toward the instructor and their backs toward the wall. Attached to the sides of the desks nearest to the instructor were benches for small pupils. The instructor's desk and chair occupied the center. On this desk were stationed a rod, or ferule; sometimes both. These, with books, writings, inkstands, rules, and plummets, with a fire shovel, and a pair of tongs (often broken), were the principal furniture. (From *A Text-book in the History of Education* by Paul Monroe. Published by Macmillan, © 1905.)

SLATES. About 1820, a new instructional device—the *slate*—was introduced in American schools. These school slates were thin, flat pieces of slate stone framed with wood. The pencils used were also made of slate and produced a light but legible line that was easily erased with a rag. The wooden frames of some of the slates were covered with cloth so that noise would be minimized as students placed the slates on the desk. Later on, large pieces of slate made up the blackboards that were added to the front of classrooms.

By about 1900, pencils and paper had largely replaced the slate and slate pencil as the writing implements of students. The invention of relatively economical mass production of paper and pencils in the late 1800s made them affordable for student use and led to their widespread use in schools.

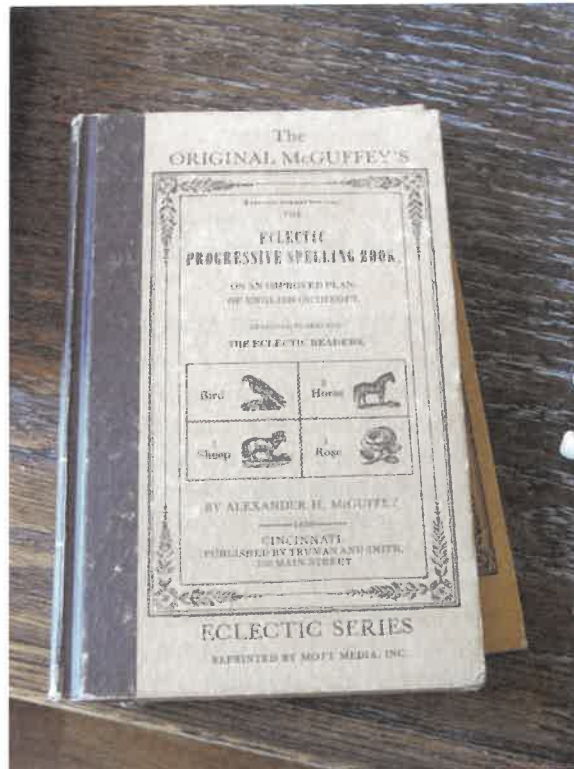
MCGUFFEY'S READERS. In the same way that Noah Webster's *Blue-Backed Speller* replaced the *New England Primer*, William Holmes McGuffey's *Reader* eventually replaced the *Blue-Backed Speller*. These readers were carefully geared to each grade and were meant to instill in children a respect for hard work, thrift, self-help, and honesty (see figure 2.3). The McGuffey *Readers* became very popular and eventually sold about 60 million copies. McGuffey's *Readers* dominated the elementary school book market until approximately 1900, when they were gradually replaced by various newer and improved readers written by David Tower, James Fassett, William Elson, and others.

One cannot help but be awed by the dramatic changes that have taken place in U.S. education today from its humble beginning centuries ago.

Using Technology to Help Understand History

A case could probably be made for the claim that teachers have always used some form of technology to help students learn. This would require a broad definition of the term "technology" to

FIGURE 2.3 Cover of a McGuffey's Reader



Robert Martin/Alamy Stock Photo

include any form of written, visual, or audio materials, such as the printed word, anything the learner could see, hornbooks, slates, and so on. While this might make for interesting historical debate, it is probably not very important to you at this point.

However, it is very important that you realize there is a wealth of wonderful technology now available to help you learn about history in general and the history of education more specifically. For instance, doing a word search on just about any important person who impacted the history of education will yield a wealth of information about that person. The same is true if you do a word search on just about any historical topic or object that may be of interest to you. For instance, searching on any of the teaching materials just mentioned (such as, for example “hornbooks”) will provide you with not only written information but also pictures of hornbooks. Searching for “education museums” will also provide you with a great deal of interesting educational history information from various sites.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 2.2

1. Try to learn more about the historical development of education in the particular grade or subjects you are thinking of teaching. The Web should be helpful.
2. Record in your journal any especially pertinent things you learn.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 2.5

Complete Check Your Understanding 2.5 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

MEAGER EARLY EDUCATION FOR DIVERSE POPULATIONS

It is sad but true that students of color, girls, and students with disabilities have been historically badly underserved by our educational system and, until relatively recently, have often not even been allowed to attend school.

Education of African Americans

Unfortunately, concerted efforts have been made only recently in this country to provide an education for African Americans. In the following subsections, we briefly explore why this was the case and discuss some of the early African American educators who struggled to correct this injustice.¹

EARLY CHURCH EFFORTS TO EDUCATE AFRICAN AMERICANS. Probably the first organized attempts to educate African Americans in colonial America were by French and Spanish missionaries. These early missionary efforts set an example that influenced the education of African Americans and their children. Educating slaves posed an interesting moral problem for the church. The English colonists had to find a way to overcome the idea that converting enslaved people to Christianity might logically lead to their freedom. The problem they faced was how to eliminate an unwritten law that a Christian should not be a slave. The church's governing bodies and the bishop of London settled the matter by decreeing that conversion to Christianity did not lead to formal emancipation.

The organized church nevertheless provided the setting where a few African Americans were allowed to develop skills in reading, leadership, and educating their brethren. Often African Americans and whites attended church together.

Eventually, some preachers who were former slaves demonstrated exceptional skill in "spreading the gospel." The Baptists in particular, by encouraging a form of self-government, allowed African Americans to become active in the church. This move fostered the growth of African American congregations; thus, Baptist congregations gave enslaved as well as free African Americans an opportunity for education and development that was not provided by many other denominations.

EARLY SCHOOLS FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN. One of the first northern schools established for African Americans appears to have been that of Elias Neau in New York City in 1704. Neau was an agent of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

In 1807, several free African Americans, including George Bell, Nicholas Franklin, and Moses Liverpool, built the first schoolhouse for African Americans in the District of Columbia. Not until 1824, however, was there an African American teacher in that district—John Adams. In 1851, Washington citizens attempted to discourage Myrtilla Miner from establishing an academy for African American girls. However, after much turmoil and harassment, the white schoolmistress from New York did establish her academy; it is still functioning today as the School of Education at the University of the District of Columbia.

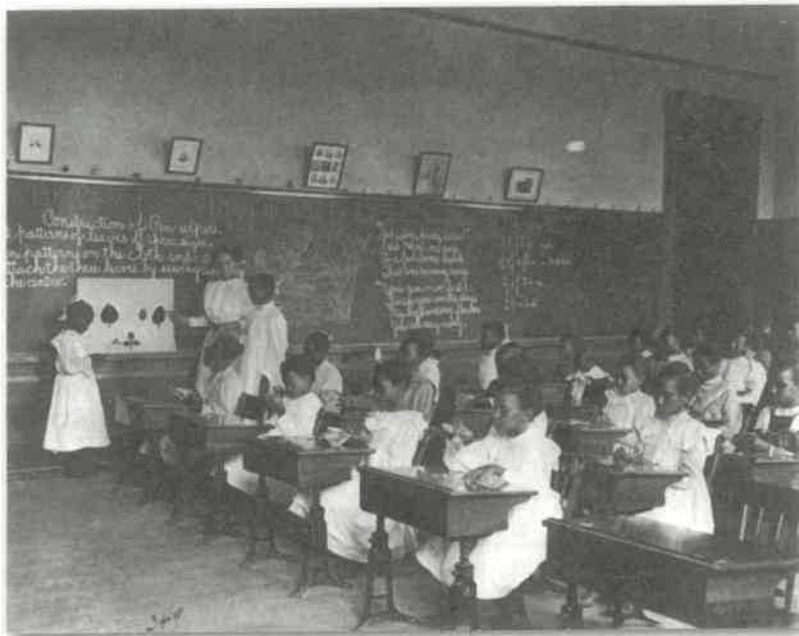
Boston, the seat of northern liberalism, established a separate school for African American children in 1798. Elisha Sylvester, a white man, was in charge. The school was founded in the home of Primus Hall, a "Negro in good standing." Two years later, sixty-six free African Americans petitioned the school committee for a separate school and were refused. Undaunted, the patrons of Hall's house employed two instructors from Harvard; thirty-five years later, the school was allowed to move to a separate building. The city of Boston opened its first primary school for the education of African American children in 1820—one more small milestone in the history of African American education.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS. Born in slavery in Maryland in 1817, Frederick Douglass (circa 1817–1895) ran away and began talking to abolitionist groups about his experiences in slavery. He attributed his fluent speech to listening to his master talk. Douglass firmly believed that if he devoted all his efforts to improving vocational education, he could greatly improve the plight of African Americans. He thought that previous attempts by educators to combine liberal and

¹ We wish to thank Dr. Jack Davis for his contribution to this section.

vocational education had failed, so he emphasized vocational education solely.

JOHN CHAVIS. African Americans' individual successes in acquiring education, as well as their group efforts to establish schools, were greatly enhanced by sympathetic and humanitarian white friends. One African American who was helped by whites was John Chavis (1763–1838), a free man born in Oxford, North Carolina. Chavis became a successful teacher of aristocratic whites, and his white neighbors sent him to Princeton “to see if a Negro would take a college education.” His rapid advancement under Dr. Witherspoon soon indicated that the venture was a success. He returned to Virginia and later went to North Carolina, where he preached among his own people. The success of John Chavis, even under experimental conditions, represented another small step forward in the education of African Americans.



Library of Congress

Early efforts to provide formal education for African American children were few. This African American Children's school was one example.

PRUDENCE CRANDALL. A young Quaker, Prudence Crandall (1803–1890), established an early boarding school in Canterbury, Connecticut. The problems she ran into dramatize some of the Northern animosity to educating African Americans. Trouble arose when Sarah Harris, a “colored girl,” asked to be admitted to the institution. After much deliberation, Miss Crandall finally consented, but white parents objected to the African American girl’s attending the school and withdrew their children. To keep the school open, Miss Crandall recruited African American children. The pupils were threatened with violence; local stores would not trade with her; and the school building was vandalized. The citizens of Canterbury petitioned the state legislature to enact a law that would make it illegal to educate African Americans from out of state. Miss Crandall was jailed and tried before the state supreme court in July 1834. The court never gave a final decision because defects were found in the information prepared by the attorney for the state; the indictment was eventually dropped. Miss Crandall continued to work for the abolition of slavery, for women’s rights, and for African American education. Prudence Crandall became well known, and she deserves considerable credit for the advances made by minorities and women in the United States.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON. Booker T. Washington (1856–1915) was one of the early African American educators who contributed immensely to the development of education in the United States. He realized that African American children desperately needed an education to compete in society, and he founded the Tuskegee Institute in 1880. This Alabama institution provided basic and industrial education in its early years and gradually expanded to provide a wider ranging college curriculum. It stands today as a proud monument to Booker T. Washington’s vision and determination concerning the education of African American youth.

EARLY AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGES. Unfortunately, despite these few efforts cited here, African Americans received pathetically little formal education even after the Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863. At that time, the literacy rate among African Americans was estimated at 5 percent. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, some communities did set up separate schools for African Americans; however, only a very small percentage ever had a chance to attend the schools. A few colleges such as Oberlin, Bowdoin, Franklin, Rutland, and Harvard admitted African American students, but, again, very few had the opportunity to attend college then. There were even a few African American colleges such as Lincoln University in Pennsylvania (1854) and Wilberforce University in Ohio (1856); however, these efforts touched the lives of a very small percentage of the African Americans at that time.

Although there was no great rush to educate African Americans, the abolition of slavery in 1865 signaled the beginning of a slow but steady effort to improve their education. By 1890, African American literacy had risen to 40 percent; by 1910, it was estimated that 70 percent of African Americans had learned to read and write. These statistics showing the rapid increase in African American literacy are impressive; however, they are compromised by a report of the U.S. commissioner of education showing that by 1900, fewer than 70 of every 1,000 public high schools in the South were admitting African Americans. Even worse, while educational opportunities for African Americans were meager, for other minority groups such as Native Americans and Hispanic Americans, they were practically nonexistent.

Education of Asian Americans

The Second World War brought about discrimination against Japanese Americans when the U.S. government placed more than 100,000 Japanese American citizens in internment camps and in some cases confiscated their property. Not until 1990 did the government officially apologize and pay restitution for having done so. In hindsight, many believe that this treatment of U.S. citizens of Japanese background constituted a form of discrimination.

In the decades following the Korean and Vietnam wars, the number of Asian immigrants to the United States has increased dramatically. Large numbers of Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, and Thais have been included in this relatively recent migration. Although many of these Asian immigrants have experienced considerable success, the majority have struggled to receive an education and find suitable jobs. Many feel that they have been discriminated against and have not received equal educational and employment opportunities. Yet many of the highest achieving high school students are Asian Americans, proof of the fact that their families typically place a high value on education.

Education of Hispanic Americans

The number of Hispanic American students in U.S. schools has increased dramatically in recent years. But the historical background of this increase can actually be traced to the very first formal schools in North America. The earliest formal schools on this continent were started and conducted in the sixteenth century by Spanish missionaries in Mexico and the southwestern part of what is now the United States. Some historians even assert that the Spanish had established several “colleges” in North America before Harvard was founded in 1636. This assertion is probably true if one defines a mission school as a college because some of them prepared boys for the ministry. As with the other early schools in the Americas, the missionaries established these early Spanish schools primarily for religious purposes—to help people read the Bible and thus gain salvation. Students at early mission schools in what is now Mexico and in Florida, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Cuba, and elsewhere were taught by Catholic priests in the Spanish language. After the United States won its independence and grew to include what we now think of as the Southwest, these early Spanish schools gradually became part of the larger English-speaking U.S. school system.

Unfortunately, Hispanic American education did not develop as quickly or as well as that of the majority population. This discrepancy is due at least in part to the facts that many Hispanic Americans are in the lower income brackets, that many immigrated to the United States without well-developed English language skills, and that many suffered discrimination. Like other minority groups in the United States, Hispanic Americans have not historically been afforded equal educational opportunities.

Education of Women

Historically, women have not been afforded equal educational opportunities in the United States. Furthermore, many authorities claim that U.S. schools have traditionally been sexist institutions. Although there is much evidence to support both of these assertions, it is also true that an impressive number of women have made significant contributions to educational progress.

Colonial schools did not provide education for girls in any significant way. In some instances, girls were taught to read, but females could not attend early Latin grammar schools, academies, or colleges. We will look briefly at a few of the many outstanding female educators who helped to develop our country’s educational system in spite of their own limited educational opportunities.

EMMA WILLARD. Whereas well-to-do parents hired private tutors or sent their daughters away to a girls' seminary, girls from poor families were taught to read and write only at home (provided someone in the family had these skills). Emma Willard (1787–1870) was a pioneer and champion of education for females during a time when there were relatively few educational opportunities for them. She opened one of the first female seminaries in 1821 in Troy, New York, and this school offered an educational program equal to that of a boys' school. In a speech designed to raise funds for her school, she proposed the following benefits of seminaries for girls:

1. Females, by having their understandings cultivated, their reasoning power developed and strengthened, may be expected to act more from the dictates of reason and less from those of fashion and caprice.
2. With minds thus strengthened, they would be taught systems of morality, enforced by the sanctions of religion; and they might be expected to acquire juster and more enlarged views of their duty, and stronger and higher motives to its performance.
3. This plan of education offers all that can be done to preserve female youth from contempt of useful labor. The pupils would become accustomed to it, in conjunction with the high objects of literature and the elegant pursuits of the fine arts; and it is to be hoped that both from habit and association they might in future life regard it as respectable.
4. The pupils might be expected to acquire a taste for moral and intellectual pleasures which would buoy them above a passion for show and parade, and which would make them seek to gratify the natural love of superiority by endeavoring to excel others in intrinsic merit rather than in the extrinsic frivolities of dress, furniture, and equipage.
5. By being enlightened in moral philosophy, and in that which teaches the operations of the mind, females would be enabled to perceive the nature and extent of that influence which they possess over their children, and the obligation which this lays them under to watch the formation of their characters with unceasing vigilance, to become their instructors, to devise plans for their improvement, to weed out the vices of their minds, and to implant and foster the virtues. And surely there is that in the maternal bosom which, when its pleadings shall be aided by education, will overcome the seductions of wealth and fashion, and will lead the mother to seek her happiness in communing with her children, and promoting their welfare. (From *Woman and the Higher Education* by Anna C Brackett; Blanche Wilder Bellamy; Alice C Morse; Emma Willard; Emma C Embury. Published by Harper & Brothers, © 1893.)

Many other female institutions were eventually established and became prominent during the mid- and late 1800s, including Mary Lyon's Mount Holyoke Female Seminary; Jane Ingersoll's seminary in Cortland, New York; and Julia and Elias Mark's Southern Carolina Collegiate Institute at Barhamville, to name just a few. Unfortunately, not until well into the twentieth century were women generally afforded access to higher education.

MARIA MONTESSORI. Maria Montessori (1870–1952), born in Italy, first became a successful physician and later a prominent educational philosopher. She developed her own theory and methods of educating young children. Her methods utilized child-size school furniture and specially designed learning materials. She emphasized independent work by children under the guidance of a trained teacher. Private Montessori schools still thrive in the United States today.

ELLA FLAGG YOUNG. Yet another example of an outstanding early female educator is Ella Flagg Young (ca. 1845–1918). Overcoming immense obstacles, she earned a doctorate at the age of fifty under John Dewey, was appointed head of the Cook County Normal School in Illinois, and became superintendent of the gigantic Chicago public school system in 1909—all achievements that were unheard of for a female at that time. She was also elected the first female president of the male-dominated National Education Association.

MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE. Mary McLeod Bethune (1875–1955) was one of seventeen children born to African American parents in Mayesville, South Carolina, and the first family member not born in slavery. She received her first formal schooling at age nine in a free school for African American children. It is reported that she would come home from school and teach her brothers and sisters what she had learned each day. She came to believe that education was the key to helping African American children move into the mainstream of American life, and

she devoted her life to improving educational opportunities for young African American women. She eventually started the Daytona Normal and Industrial School for Negro Young Women and later Bethune-Cookman College, where she served as president until 1942. She also believed that education helps everyone to respect the dignity of all people, regardless of color or creed, and that it is needed equally by Caucasian Americans, African Americans, and all other Americans. Bethune went on to serve as founder and head of the National Council of Negro Women; director of the Division of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's special adviser on minority affairs; and special consultant for drafting the charter of the United Nations. Bethune was an effective, energetic human rights activist throughout her life and also a dedicated and professional career educator.

THE NINETEENTH AMENDMENT. Various groups first took interest in advancing the cause of females in the United States in the mid-1800s. The women's rights convention held at that time passed twelve resolutions that attempted to spur interest in providing females more equal participation and rights in U.S. society. The Civil War also furthered interest in the rights of women throughout the country, very likely, in part as a spin-off of the abolition of slavery. It is interesting to note that not all the people who were in favor of doing away with slavery supported improved rights for women. For instance, not until 1920, when the Nineteenth Amendment passed, did women have the right to vote.

Unfortunately, the right to vote did not necessarily do much to improve the status of women; females continued to be denied equal educational and employment opportunities. The civil rights movement after World War II served as another impetus to the women's movement and gave rise to an additional round of improvements for females in U.S. society. Some authorities would trace the emergence of the current feminist movement to the 1960s, when a variety of activist groups coalesced to work against discrimination of all kinds in U.S. society. Some groups and individuals feel that adequate educational provisions and opportunities for females, minorities, and those with disabilities are still lacking in our school systems today at all levels.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 2.6

Complete Check Your Understanding 2.6 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section

PRIVATE EDUCATION IN AMERICA

Private education has been extremely important in the development of the United States. In fact, private schools carried on nearly all of the education in colonial times. The first colonial colleges such as Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, and Princeton were all private institutions. Many of the other early colonial schools, which can be thought of as **religion-affiliated schools**, were operated by churches, missionary societies, and private individuals.

The Right of Private Schools to Exist

In 1816, the state of New Hampshire attempted to take over Dartmouth College, which was a private institution. A lawsuit growing out of this effort ultimately resulted in the U.S. Supreme Court's first decision involving the legal rights of a private school. The Supreme Court decided that a private school's charter must be viewed as a contract and cannot be broken arbitrarily by a state. In other words, the Court decided that a private school could not be forced against its will to become a public school.

Subsequent court decisions have reconfirmed the rights of private education in a variety of ways. Generally speaking, for instance, courts have reconfirmed that private schools have a right to exist and in some cases even to share public funds, as long as these funds are not used for religious purposes. Examples of such actions include the use of state funds to purchase secular textbooks and to provide transportation for students to and from private schools.

THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF PRIVATE EDUCATION IN AMERICA. Not until after the Revolution, when there was a strong sense of nationalism, did certain educators advocate a strong

Religious-affiliated school A private school over which, in most cases, a parent church group exercises some control or in which the church provides a subsidy.

public school system for the new nation. However, such recommendations were not acted on for many years. In the meantime, some Protestant churches continued to expand their schools during the colonial period. For instance, the Congregational, Quaker, Episcopal, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and Reformed churches all, at various times and in varying degrees, established and operated schools for their youth. It was the Roman Catholics and Lutherans, however, who eventually developed elaborate **parochial school** systems operated by their respective denominations.

Parochial Schools

As early as 1820 there were 240 Lutheran parochial schools in Pennsylvania. Although the number of Lutheran schools in that particular state eventually dwindled, Henry Muhlenberg and other Lutheran leaders continued to establish parochial schools until the public school system became well established. The Missouri Synod Lutheran Church has continued to maintain a well-developed parochial school system. Currently in the United States, there are approximately 1,700 Lutheran elementary and secondary schools, which enroll about 200,000 students, and most of these schools are operated by the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church.

The Roman Catholic parochial school system grew rapidly after its beginnings in the 1800s. Enrollment in Catholic schools mushroomed between 1900 and 1960 from about 855,000 to more than 5 million students. The Roman Catholic parochial school system in the United States is now the largest private school system in the world.

A number of other religious groups have developed and operated their own parochial schools from time to time, and some of them still do today. Examples of such religious groups include the Mormons, Mennonites, Quakers, and Wisconsin Synod Lutheran Churches, to name just a few.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 2.7

Complete Check Your Understanding 2.7 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

LEARNING FROM EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

Some educators do not yet realize that having an understanding of historical educational research can help them be a more effective educator. Knowing about our educational past can help you take advantage of past educational successes and avoid repeating some past educational failures.

One quick example of this might be to always remember what John Dewey stated in his famous 1938 book, *Experience and Education*, that the belief that genuine education comes through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. When you face a problem or need to make a decision concerning your teaching, you should take into consideration what educational research, past and present, might help you make wise decisions that will improve your work with students. An understanding of our educational past will also help you better realize how very, very important the work of educators has been, and continues to be, in our society and throughout the world.

Keeping Up on Historical and Current Research

By this time, you realize that there is a great deal of information that you will need to be an effective teacher. This presents another dilemma for already busy educators like the one you will be. The accompanying “Teaching in Challenging Times” feature deals with one aspect of this challenge.

This chapter illustrates that there have been many different perspectives on education throughout the ages and that a number of big historical ideas have grown out of the more detailed history of education discussed in the chapter. These include the ideas that adults in early societies provided the practical education that they felt necessary for their children to succeed in their society; that more formal schools likely came into existence only as people developed written languages; that all societies around the world have developed their own forms of education down through the ages, designed to fulfill their unique needs; and that human progress has and still does, in large part, depended on education.

Parochial school

An educational institution operated and controlled by a religious domination.

TEACHING IN CHALLENGING TIMES

How Can the Busy Teacher Keep Up with Historical and Contemporary Research?

Ask any teacher what her or his major problems are and “not having enough time” will likely be near the top of the list. So it is perhaps not surprising that many teachers find it difficult to keep up with current research that may help them do a better job. And yet one of the important hallmarks of a professional is finding, evaluating, and implementing the results of valid and reliable research. For instance, when a person goes to a medical doctor, he or she expects that physician to be using knowledge based on the most recent medical research. By the same token, parents have a right to expect, when they send their children to school, that teachers will be using the most recent educational research in their educational practice. Thus, the professional dilemma is this: How do busy teachers locate, read, evaluate, and implement the best research results into their teaching? This task is made even more difficult by the fact that although a great volume of education research is constantly being conducted, a fair amount of it is not necessarily valid or reliable.

Teachers who are determined to put good research results into practice must first be able to read, understand, and evaluate educational research. To learn how to do this, you may need to take some basic research courses at a nearby college or university. You may also need to read research reports found in a variety of professional journals

in your specialty fields. This may mean subscribing to such journals or getting your school to make them available. You may also wish to attend a variety of professional meetings where research is presented and discussed. And after you locate good research findings, you will need to do careful planning when you implement these research results in your classroom.

Unfortunately, there is no simple solution to this professional dilemma. We know that because we, too, struggle with this problem. However, we are convinced that the first step to solving this dilemma is becoming determined to offer your clients (your students and their parents) the very best education possible. We also are convinced that to do so requires knowledge of the best and most recent educational research.

WHAT ARE MY CHALLENGES?

1. What are your feelings about this professional dilemma at this point in your career development?
2. What might you be able to do at this time to help you prepare to deal with this dilemma?
3. To what degree do you feel your current teachers are keeping up with, and using, research in their teaching?

Perspectives on education in a challenging and changing world is a major theme throughout the book. Differing perspectives and change also apply to educational history. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, historians approach the understanding of history from differing perspectives and will certainly continue to do so in the future. The world of education will also certainly continue to change in the future, and this change will likely take place even more rapidly in the future. And understanding history is also a challenge, so each of our individual attempts to understand educational history will undoubtedly vary from person to person and will undoubtedly evolve over time.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 2.3

1. Record in your journal some of the most important things you learned from this chapter.
2. Which, if any, of the items you listed will likely have practical value for you as a future educator? In what ways will it be helpful?



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 2.8

Complete Check Your Understanding 2.8 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

SUMMARY

THE EVOLUTION OF SCHOOLING (TO 476 CE)

- Any study of the beginnings of formal education should start with the fact that parents have always attempted to provide, in one way or another, the informal education their children needed to survive in their society.
- Formal schools very likely did not come into existence until 4,000 or 5,000 years ago as humans developed written languages.
- Current evidence suggests that one of the first well-organized educational systems was that evolved by the Greeks during what is commonly called the Age of Pericles.
- Greek knowledge and schools eventually blended into Roman schools and libraries.
- Examples of important educators from this early period included Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Quintilian.

EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE AGES (476–1300)

- The period from 400 until 1000 is often called the Dark Ages because of the lack of educational activity in much of the Western world.
- Alcuin was an example of one of the few educators to make important contributions during the Dark Ages.
- During the latter part of the Middle Ages, there was a revived interest in learning as exemplified by the work of Thomas Aquinas and the establishment of medieval universities.

EDUCATION IN TRANSITION (1300–1700)

- This period of educational history is commonly marked by two historical movements: the Renaissance and the Reformation.
- The Renaissance represented a rebellion on the part of the common people against their economic, educational, and religious suppression under the church, royalty, and landed gentry.
- These common people gradually demanded a better life and developed a spirit of inquiry, which created an interest in education and schooling.
- The fourteenth through eighteenth centuries saw the sometimes erratic, but nevertheless fairly continuous, progression of educational development and advancement throughout much of the world.
- The Protestant Reformation, led by Martin Luther, and the work of Ignatius of Loyola did much to improve education during this time.

EDUCATIONAL AWAKENING (1700)

- In the Western world, this period is often divided into the Age of Reason, which emphasized people's rational and scientific abilities, and the emergence of common man, which sought to create a better education and life for all people.
- Examples of people who contributed to educational advancement in various ways during this period were Descartes, Voltaire, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Herbart, and Froebel.

EVOLVING PERSPECTIVES OF EDUCATION IN OUR RAPIDLY DEVELOPING NATION

- Our earliest colonists brought their educational ideas and expectations with them from Europe and, soon after arriving in the New World, set about creating schools that fulfilled their needs.
- These efforts varied widely, from private tutorial education for plantation owners' children in the South, to religious schools in the Middle Colonies, to public schools in the North.
- Most education was driven by religious motives, and much of the formal education beyond that needed to read the Bible was provided only for boys from the more well-to-do families.
- Elementary and secondary education for all children developed slowly.
- Schools and teaching materials were humble and meager in colonial America.
- Early colonial schools were poorly equipped.
- The hornbook was the most commonly used teaching device in colonial schools.
- Other somewhat later colonial textbooks included the *New England Primer* and the *Blue-Backed Speller*.
- The slate was an early device that students could write on.

MEAGER EARLY EDUCATION FOR DIVERSE POPULATIONS

- Early efforts to provide education for the poor, people of color, and women were very meager or nonexistent.
- Examples of early pioneers of African American education include Frederick Douglass, John Chavis, Prudence Crandall, and Booker T. Washington.
- Examples of female educational pioneers include Emma Willard, Maria Montessori, Ella Flagg Young, and Mary McLeod Bethune.

PRIVATE EDUCATION IN AMERICA

- The earliest education was provided by private schools, which have remained a very important part of our educational system.
- Parochial schools, conducted by religious groups, still prevail and make important contributions to education today.

LEARNING FROM EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

- This chapter illustrates that an understanding and appreciation of the history of education can help teachers be more effective.
- The “Teaching in Challenging Times” feature challenges you to find a way to keep up on historical and contemporary educational research during your educational career.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. What were the major contributions of several ancient societies to the development of education?
2. What factors contributed to the decline of education during the Dark Ages?
3. What were the strengths and weaknesses of Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s ideas about children and education?
4. Discuss the evolution of elementary schools.
5. What historical conditions led to that uniquely U.S. institution, the comprehensive high school?
6. What are the highlights of the history of education of minorities and of women in the United States?
7. Discuss the roles that private schools have played in U.S. education.

SCHOOL-BASED OBSERVATIONS

1. More than two hundred years ago, Jean-Jacques Rousseau advocated that children be taught with love, patience, understanding, and kindness. As you work in the school, experiment with this basic approach to see whether it is effective for you. You might also wish to observe experienced teachers to see to what extent they teach children with love, patience, understanding, and kindness. We suggest that you experiment with other constructive ideas in this chapter as you observe and participate in the classroom.
2. As you work in schools, observe how they have changed relative to schools of the past. How are schools today similar to those of the past? How much and in what ways are students today similar to their historical counterparts? In what ways are they different?
3. While you are in the schools, visit with experienced teachers and administrators to discuss the ways that schools have changed over the years. Also ask how students, teaching methods, and parents have changed.

PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

1. Make a list of the historical educational ideas mentioned in this chapter that are still valid and useful for educators today.
2. Summarize the evolution of the goals of public schools in colonial America and the United States. Develop a chart that creatively portrays this evolution.
3. Write an essay on the importance of education in the historical development of the United States.

WEB SOLUTIONS

Your instructor believes that understanding the past will help inform your future as a teacher. She asks you to write a paper about how the history of education will help you develop your own perspective on education. To learn more about resources that were used and the environment in which they were used, word search the topics/people/events/etc. you need.

The *Blackwell History of Education Museum and Research Collection* is one of the largest collections of its kind in the world. Much of the collection is listed on this website. The Blackwell

Museum has developed a variety of instructional materials (also listed on its website) designed to help you learn more about the antecedents of early American and U.S. education.

The *History of Education* journal of the History of Education Society, located in England, is a useful general source of educational history.

The *Country School Association* is a wonderful site for information on early one-room country schools.



Source: North Wind Picture Archives/The Image Works

3

Historical Perspectives of Education

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading and studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. List and detail several of the most important changes that have been made in the U.S. educational system during the past half century. (InTASC 1–10)
2. Explain the major changes in the evolution of the teaching profession. (InTASC 9 and 10: Professional Responsibility)
3. Discuss the development of the major aims of American education. (InTASC 1–10)
4. Explain the evolution of teacher training in colonial America and the United States. (InTASC 9 and 10: Professional Responsibility)
5. Name some of the important major historical trends in American education. (InTASC 1–10)
6. Decide, explain, and defend the degree to which you believe it is possible to know, understand, and profit from the history of education. (InTASC 1–10)

EDUCATION in the NEWS

HISTORY OF THE FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION

The original U.S. Department of Education was created in 1867 to collect information on schools and teaching that would help the states establish effective school systems. While the agency's name and location within the Executive Branch have changed during the past 145 or so years, this early emphasis on getting information on what works in education to teachers and education policy makers continues to the present day.

The passage of the Second Morrill Act in 1890 gave the then-named Office of Education responsibility for administering support for the original system of land-grant colleges and universities. Vocational education became the next major area of federal aid to schools with the 1917 Smith-Hughes Act and the 1946 George-Barden Act focusing on agricultural, industrial, and home economics training for high school students.

World War II led to a significant expansion of federal support for education. The Lanham Act in 1941 and the Impact Aid laws of 1950 eased the burden on communities affected by the presence of military and other federal installations by making payments to school

districts. And in 1944, the "GI Bill" authorized postsecondary education assistance that would ultimately send nearly 8 million World War II veterans to college.

The Cold War stimulated the first example of comprehensive federal education legislation when in 1958 Congress passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in response to the Soviet launch of the *Sputnik* satellite. To help ensure that highly trained individuals would be available to help America compete with the Soviet Union in scientific and technical fields, the NDEA included support for loans to college students; the improvement of science, mathematics, and foreign language instruction in elementary and secondary schools; graduate fellowships; foreign language studies; and vocational-technical training.

The antipoverty and civil rights laws of the 1960s and 1970s brought about the dramatic emergence of the Department of Education's equal-access mission. The passage of laws such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which

prohibited discrimination based on race, sex, and disability, respectively, made civil rights enforcement a fundamental and long-lasting focus of the Department of Education. In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act launched a comprehensive set of programs, including the Title I program of federal aid to disadvantaged children, to address the problems of poor urban and rural areas. In that same year, the Higher Education Act authorized assistance for postsecondary education, including financial aid programs for needy college students.

In 1980, Congress established the Department of Education as a cabinet-level agency. Today, the Department of Education operates programs that touch on every area and level of education. The department's elementary and secondary programs annually serve more than roughly 14,000 school districts and some 56 million students

attending more than about 97,000 public schools and roughly 28,000 private schools. Department programs also provide grant, loan, and work-study assistance to nearly 11 million postsecondary students.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What is your reaction to, and evaluation of, the evolution of the role of our federal government in education?
2. What do you believe were some of the reasons our federal government became involved in education matters?
3. How would you evaluate the current federal government's involvement in education?

Source: Adapted from *The Federal Role in Education*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved January 30, 2009, from www.ed.gov/about/overview/fed/role.html.

MORE STUDENTS AND BIGGER SCHOOLS

Many dramatic changes have occurred in education in the United States during the past half century. Examples of these rapid and often controversial changes that represent various perspectives will be briefly discussed in this chapter. The big historical ideas presented in this chapter are:

1. The phenomenal change and growth in both the size and complexity of U.S. educational establishments
2. The tremendous new demands and expectations being placed on our schools and teachers by the current information age
3. The major, as-yet-unsolved challenge to our society and to our schools to provide excellent equal educational opportunities to all students
4. An understanding that the history of education is of very practical value in helping contemporary educators improve education

Enrollment Growth

Perhaps the single most dramatic change that has occurred in education during the past half-century is the sheer expansion in size of the educational enterprise. The total number of public school students in the United States has about doubled during this time. Although part of this rapid growth in school enrollment was attributable to overall population growth, a good part was due to the fact that greater percentages of people were going to school. Furthermore, people were staying in school much longer, as shown by the almost doubled enrollment in higher education.

Need for More Schools

As school enrollment dramatically increased, the need for new classrooms and buildings to house these students also increased. This need for new schools was generally concentrated in cities and suburbs. In fact, because of increased busing, school district consolidation, and shifting populations, some smaller rural schools were no longer needed whereas more densely populated areas saw a drastic shortage of classrooms. Many schools had to resort to temporary mobile classrooms. Other strategies for coping with classroom shortages included larger classes; split scheduling that started some classes very early in the day and others very late; and classes held in a variety of makeshift areas such as gymnasiums, hallways, and storage closets. Many schools also rented additional space in nearby buildings. Fortunately, over time, taxpayers were generally willing

to approve the necessary bond referendum to provide the needed additional schools during this period of rapid growth in student enrollment.

Need for More Teachers

Naturally, this surge in student enrollment required many additional teachers, and at times colleges simply could not produce enough. To alleviate this situation, states lowered teacher certification requirements—sometimes to the point at which no professional education training was required at all. Over time, however, the nation managed to meet the demand for more and better trained teachers.

As one would expect, dealing with the increased numbers of students and teachers required a great deal more money. In addition to more school buildings, more buses had to be purchased, more books and other instructional materials had to be obtained, more school personnel had to be hired—more of everything was required to provide education to the burgeoning school population.

School District Consolidation

The consolidation of school districts is another notable administrative trend during the past seventy-five years. The number of separate school districts was reduced from 117,000 in 1940 to roughly about 14,000 today. There was a corresponding decline in the number of one-teacher schools over this same period.

Growth of Busing

Both the number and the percentage of students who are bused to school have increased considerably during the past seventy-five years, as have the total cost and per-pupil cost of busing. In addition to the general busing of students necessitated by school district consolidation, integration efforts have often involved busing students away from their neighborhood schools. Busing students to school is still a big operation for the U.S. educational enterprise. It is estimated that about 60 percent of all students are bused to school by about 450,000 school buses.

Bigger School Budgets

Educational growth has driven the nation's public education costs to record heights. This rapid historical increase is illustrated by noting that the approximate cost of public education was \$2 billion in 1940, \$5 billion in 1950, \$15 billion in 1960, \$40 billion in 1970, \$97 billion in 1980, and \$208 billion in 1990. Even if the figures are corrected for inflation, public education has become considerably more expensive: The percentage of the gross domestic product spent on education had risen from 3.5 percent in 1940 to 7 percent by 1980 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1982, p. 23). More recent statistics on the cost of education are available on the Web.

Rapid Curricular Growth and Changes

As society has become more complex and as enrollments have increased and schools have grown larger, more diverse curricula and programs have been developed in U.S. schools. This rapid growth of programs places a great deal of work and pressure on teachers, school administrators, and school boards.

Curricular growth, like most change, was the result of an accumulation of many smaller events. One such event was the publication in 1942 of the report of the Progressive Education Association's Eight-Year Study (1932–1940) of thirty high schools. The study showed that



Source: Library of Congress

This is one of thousands of one-room schools, constructed with whatever material was available, established to educate rural children during the westward movement in America.

students attending “progressive” schools achieved as well as students at traditional schools. This report helped to create a climate that was more hospitable to experimentation with school curricula and teaching methodologies. The publication of a series of statements on the goals of U.S. education (the “Purposes of Education in American Democracy” (Educational Policies Commission (EPC), 1938), the “Education for All American Youth” (EPC, 1944), and the “Imperative Needs of Youth” (EPC, 1952)) helped broaden our schools’ curricular offerings.

In 1958, shortly after the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik*, the world’s first artificial satellite, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA). This act provided a massive infusion of federal dollars to improve schools’ science, mathematics, engineering, and foreign language programs. Eventually, innovative curricula such as SMSG mathematics, BSCS biology, and PSCS physics grew out of these programs. Other school programs, such as guidance, were later funded through the NDEA. Note that in the case of the NDEA, the federal government called on the schools to help solve what was perceived to be a national defense problem. Regardless of the motive, the NDEA represented another milestone that contributed significantly to the growth of the U.S. educational enterprise.

If one were to compare today’s school curriculum with that of any school seventy-five years ago, one would find impressive changes. The 1940 curriculum was narrow and designed primarily for college-bound students whereas today’s curriculum is broader and designed for students of all abilities. This growth in the school curriculum has come about through the dedicated work of many educators and represents one of the truly significant accomplishments in U.S. education.

Growth of Special Education Programs

Perhaps curriculum growth is best illustrated in the area of special education. Public schools historically did not provide special education programs for children with disabilities; rather, they simply accommodated such children as best they could, usually by placing them in regular classrooms. Teachers had little or no training to help them understand and assist the child with special needs. In fact, a half-century ago, relatively little was known about common disabilities.

Not until the federal government passed a series of laws during the later twentieth century—including Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act—did schools begin to develop well-designed programs for students with disabilities. These new special education programs required teachers who had been trained to work with students with visual or hearing impairments, students with behavior disorders, and students with a range of other exceptionalities. States and colleges then developed a wide variety of teacher-training programs for special educators.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 3.1

1. Interview a retired teacher about the educational changes she or he has observed over a lifetime and about the use of technology in schools.
2. Ask what advice this retired educator has for beginning teachers today and record the answers.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 3.1

Complete Check Your Understanding 3.1 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

MORE CHANGES, CHALLENGES, AND PERSPECTIVES

In the following pages, we will briefly explore the increasing complexities of educational systems in the United States and then look at some of the recent developments that have contributed to the professionalization of the field of education.

Increasing Federal Involvement

As shown in the “Education in the News” feature at the beginning of this chapter, our federal government has played an increasingly important role in education over the years. Policy makers at