The youngsters in school today have an appointment with destiny. They know there is nothing quite "as usual" in any classroom. Can the teacher of the English class help them to meet the challenge of the times? He can—if he decides how best to use the time at his command to stimulate, with all the vigor and honesty he can muster, the understanding and the determination which are basic to winning an American war and an American peace. He must believe that there is no necessity for throwing the educational program of the English class into low gear during the war period.

THE JOB THAT FACES US. There is work ahead. A great many quaint toys, some pieces of literature for which you have such detailed lesson plans, some techniques which wasted time so amusingly, will have to be scrapped, somewhat ruthlessly. Nor will it be possible merely to replace these with one new set of materials and methods approved for the duration. American education does not mean regimented mobilization for democracy in the English class. It does mean that responsibility and obligation to follow through rest on the individual teacher. He will have to read and learn and think through many new problems with a seriousness of purpose and a sustained effort he may never have known before.

There is danger ahead, too. Because some emphasis in the study of English has always, and rightly, been placed on the emotional—the development of appreciations, ideals, attitudes—the teacher may come perilously near to thinking his duty done if he leans heavily on pep talks, patriotic slogans, and flag-waving. Or he may go off half-cocked in finding nothing but ecstasy in the strains and hazards of a country at war. Such ecstasies end with the suddenness and disillusion of all hysteria.

THE ESSENTIAL CHALLENGE. Yet the challenge to make the English class contribute toward the war effort is worth accepting. Nothing of material and method of other days that, tried, shows its value, need be discarded. But the necessary evaluation and revision of the English program, if it is well done, can charge the subject with new excitement and new significance. More than anywhere else, the youngsters in an English class can take the time
necessary to achieve that synthesis of thinking, deliberating, reasoning, listening, and speaking which in other days would have been called philosophizing. We call them now the arts necessary to free men if they would think well about the common problems which confront all citizens of a free society.

Under totalitarianism, the teachers of all classes would receive their aims, their procedures, their materials for every day, days without end, from the State. Here, though, teachers are depended upon to be leaders in an efficient, decent, democratic way. It is in that spirit of cooperative endeavor that all the following suggestions are made. Change them to fit a growing, changing world; change them to fit the youngsters in your classes now. They can be developed into a whole course of study; they make individual, meaningful lessons; even the sequence suggested is not preordained. But try them out and let their meanings go with the youngsters into their American homes.

DEMOCRATIC TEACHER — DEMOCRATIC TEXTBOOK. Sweep from your mind the idea that you, too, could bring these ideas into class if you only had "a book." Yours, English teacher, is a growing book, some of it between stiff covers still, some between paper covers, and some just in newsprint; a good part of it may be listened to, for the power of the spoken word is abroad in the land. The youngsters individually will enjoy dipping into the resources of the library. Its many books illuminate dark corners of the mind; the magazines, especially those expensive ones that do not find their way into the home, are excellent examples of contemporary research, thought, and writing. Newspapers can be textbooks for group study—and who will say that the modern speeches they record, for instance, do not measure up to the old landmarks? The written word can be reinforced by the spoken word: the speeches on the radio catch the very sound of persuasion, the newsreels show the facial expressions that accompany the utterances that are heard around the world. This is a book come alive.

Would you school the youngsters in modern techniques of democratic discussion? Let them listen to the Town Hall Meeting of the Air or any of the other forums or panels. The sense of fair play among the moderator, the speakers, and the audience, the actual courtesies of the meeting, the planning of materials and presentation, are splendid demonstrations. There is a living newspaper on
the radio, too, its facts in the news broadcasts, its opinions in the interpretations and personalities of the commentators. Do you think that imaginative literature can best beget tranquillity of purpose and fortitude that endures to the end? Many radio dramatizations, written especially for today or culled from classics that now have renewed meaning, tell the story of how man has responded in the past to the times that try his soul, tell how he has made himself worthy of being saved for tomorrow. Prepare your listening schedules, chart the magazine articles as they appear, clip the pertinent material from your newspapers. They will form the table of contents for your English textbook along with the best of what has been in your course of study in years past.

UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATING AMERICAN IDEALS. President Roosevelt told the world on December 9, 1941, that "The true goal we seek is far above and beyond the ugly field of battle. When we resort to force, as now we must, we are determined that this force shall be directed toward ultimate good as well as against immediate evil. We Americans are not destroyers—we are builders." An effective introduction to a consideration of the distant goals toward which America looks even as she speeds up production and battles in far lands. Pupils can supply many instances in history, the arts, and the sciences where Americans have shown their ability to build. "The four freedoms" which the President has emphasized are important in this connection. Do we all enjoy all of them now, enjoy them to the full? Of course not. Is there room for boys and girls of high school age to prove that, like earlier Americans, "we are builders"? If peace comes in our time, how do these youngsters think they should work toward insuring to their contemporaries the freedom of worship, freedom of expression, freedom from want, freedom from fear, which are denied so many today? Incidents in history and story give testimony to man's past struggles toward these freedoms. Now is the time to draw courage from repeating them.

Fired with the promise of the future, these boys and girls should not hesitate to consider the practical problems which face the country today with realism as grim as faced any generation in history. The crying need is for unity. Why not organize student panel discussions or Town Hall Meetings on such real questions as: Shall we do away with political parties to secure unity for the duration,
or should we have an opposition party even in wartime? Is it possible for isolationists to have had such a change of heart that they can be genuinely interested in the uniform war effort today? How can we achieve labor unity today? Younger pupils can investigate community efforts: the way in which the groups to which they and their families belong are working toward unity, are adjusting differences in view of more important national purposes. There is many a human interest story in the developing philosophy of a people conscious of the importance of each to the other. From what they see and hear, let the boys and girls cite instances of initiative, of cooperation, of obedience, of loyalty, of self-sacrifice. The spirit of “doing one’s part” is an active manifestation of the ideal of unity.

TOLERANCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF NATIONALITIES AND GROUPS. Yes, we will, we must win the war. How? Must we teach children to hate? Must we encourage the idea of “wiping out” the Japanese, the German, the Italian, or any other people? Isn’t there any more than an academic distinction between the defeat of the totalitarian ideologies that threaten the entire world and the freeing of the other peoples of the world so that we may retain and develop the freedoms that are precious to us as Americans? On the other hand, don’t we do ourselves and our pupils a disservice if we do not teach that to be decent does not mean that we should be so gullible as to think there are none who will attempt to sabotage our efforts? How shall the English class deal with the vital problem of establishing a right kind of tolerance?

A theme lies in these words of Jerome Nathanson: “A democracy is in the people, in the culture, or it is nowhere. If democracy is not within families, schools, churches and temples, clubs and fraternal organizations, if democracy is not in industry, it is nowhere.” The simplest youngster can look around his classroom and find that he may be called upon to exercise a nice tolerance rather than a hateful suspicion toward the representatives of the various nationality groups or racial groups assembled there. Tolerance may be made more concrete if the pupils are called upon to tell the stories of contributions to American life made not by members of their own group, of which they may already be proud, but by those of a group which at first may seem oddly foreign. American art, science, education, business, letters, and political philosophy all pay tribute to foreign gifts. The American classroom is not the place to forget
these contributions. Tolerance grows, too, from asking these young Americans to learn from their parents and grandparents the things the older folks wanted to leave behind in the old country, the struggles they had establishing themselves here. A sense of kinship comes from the realization that all of our backgrounds were very similar, that there is little reason for failing to heed the President's call to "be particularly vigilant against racial discrimination in any of its ugly forms."

There is no use in bringing to the classroom a "grievance meeting" technique in which the pupils tell of real or fancied discriminations made against them or their families. More effective is any positive analysis they can make of prejudiced discriminations they have made, perhaps in the name of their gangs, their clubs, their friends, against an outsider of another creed, another color, another social set. Research in books on biology and anthropology or an interview with a science teacher helps a pupil summarize for his classmates the valid conclusions of science concerning racial differences, if any. Round-table discussions that will draw on attitudes and materials developed in other school studies center on such topics as: What do you think of "enemy" music, "enemy" art, "enemy" language and literature?

DRAWING THE FINE LINE OF DISTINCTION. But remember, there is a real difference between an unwholesome type of hatred and a righteous indignation toward cruelty and injustice. Children should resent the oppression of weaker nations by stronger ones, the suppression of freedom, the persecution for religion and race. How can the English class promote an intelligent hatred of these things?

Newspapers, magazines, books, radio programs, and movies—all will serve to document the story. Younger boys and girls will find all the action and suspense they want in telling to others in the class the cruelties, not all physical, on the home fronts in enemy countries and occupied lands. The more mature students are sufficiently interested in what makes people that way to want to read serious accounts of the philosophies and the psychologies of those who believe man exists only for the State. And all of the youngsters can find a vast reservoir of resentment in the notion that the schooling they have always professed to take so lightly might be taken from them, or so transformed that they would not know it. Let them
read either Gregor Ziemer's *Education for Death* or Erika Mann's *School for Barbarians*. After that, even the most reluctant boy can give a very concrete answer to your question, "What things do you enjoy now, in school, that you would like to see perpetuated for your children?"

Hatred, however, may be like a fire which burns itself out uselessly. To avert that possibility, the English class can turn to a study of Fifth Column activities. Techniques have been observed in occupied countries and in neutral states; their inherent dangers are visible to one who studies the maps of possible invasions in *Life* for February 28. Analysis of this material demands that care in reading and interpreting that the English class fosters. It also makes the class a small center from which may spread that remedy which America has devised, the "Shut up, America!" campaign of attrition against rumor-mongers and those who are careless with military and production information.

**IN A WORLD OF "TIME" AND "PLACE."** Understanding of American ideals, intelligent tolerance of the minority groups who work with us in the preservation of democracy, intelligent vigilance against the sabotage which would bring into dominance the principles we hate—these goals of the English class, once discussed, cannot be sustained in a vacuum. They exist, if they exist, in a world of "here" and "now."

Modern geography and history are vital material in an English classroom today. The students listened to the map-talk of President Roosevelt. Can they document their own discussions by clear, accurate, oral and written map-talks? It is good, psychologically, too, to know where places are; fear comes out of the unknown. A study of the geography of the theatres of military action need not usurp the function of the social studies department. Have you read of global and hemispheric wars? Under which heading would you put the news of Americans fighting in the Far East? Under which the efforts to dispel possibilities of Pan-American misunderstanding? This and other geographical study is an excellent way to teach subordination of detail to general idea. The English class has always encouraged a widening of horizons by the reading of travel books. To choose books which give an insight into present problems of dealing with far-away peoples, to learn the customs of these people as they carry on life today, to find out their present environment,
and their importance in the network of world relationships—these are more eagerly accepted research assignments than reading about Graustarkian scenery and intrigue. And is there any reason why even some of the fiction reading cannot have as its *raison d'être* an understanding of the backgrounds and psychologies out of which the war has grown? W. Somerset Maugham interprets Mālayasia for your older pupils; Kipling has India as his province; Melville pursued Moby Dick in the waters east of Java; Stevenson, Nordhoff and Hall wrote of the South Seas—these remind you how geography and history and English can all help the youngsters to get some understanding and some fun out of playing the game called, “Names ring bells.” The world becomes a smaller, even a friendlier place—and certainly something more tangible to defend.

SANITY—A BALANCED DIET OF READING. Most of the pupils in the English classes do read, all kinds of things. To many of them who were very young in the dark days of the book-burnings of 1933 it comes as a shock to learn that a totalitarian government would prescribe a great deal more of “required” reading than we do, and relegate a still greater amount to the *verboten* list. Quote to them Schuman’s description, in *The Nazi Dictatorship*, of “the strange ceremonies that took place in most German cities”—and they will see the contrast between the attitudes of the dictatorships and of the democratic countries toward freedom of the press and freedom to read according to one’s interests. Moreover, discussion will lead boys and girls to see the immediate value of reading today. Totalitarian philosophies would leave them little time for the “escape” reading they enjoy, and would severely limit the scope of reading for an honest understanding of the world and its problems, or for the development of a greater sympathy and understanding of its people.

KEEPING ABREAST OF THE TIMES. Though he may often wish to seek the solace of escape reading, the youngster in our classes finds himself rather inescapably in a wartime world, confused. Whatever the English teacher can do to clarify that situation will be a direct help to the boys and girls and to the people in their homes.

One of the difficulties lies in the province of vocabulary. New words, new connotations for old words, technical words occur in the broadcast of every news analyst, in every newspaper, even in the
captions under the tabloid pictures. If they do not carry clear mean-nings, there is great danger of the enemy’s taking his chance at using many techniques of manipulation. This the English teacher can prevent. Excellent lists may be culled from a week’s reading of a newspaper. The teacher’s task is to give direction to the study of these words. This does not consist any longer only in making an unabridged dictionary available, for many of the words have more recent uses. The 1941 World Almanac (pages 85 and 86) becomes an adjunct to the dictionary; so do the occasional articles in the Sunday newspaper supplements; the teacher may even demonstrate the making of a dictionary by collecting contemporary illustrations of the uses of the words and developing from them the required generalizations. Pupils will be ready then to show their new learn­ings by incorporating these words in reports on current events on the economic, civilian, and military fronts of the world.

The possession of a vocabulary rich in precise meanings is not the whole problem of understanding the news. Interspersed among the words are charts, graphs, cartoons. Can your pupils get the point? Can they interpret correctly? Can they give a clear explanation of its meaning in their lives? They will enjoy using information and skills developed in the classes in mathematics, drawing, and economics.

The English class is the laboratory for news analysis as well as the place to contemplate the philosophy and psychology behind the current history. The human interest story of any war correspond­ent who stays on his job even through the siege of a city can intro­duce the study of the news gathering agencies. Do the pupils in the English class know which agencies are likely to voice enemy claims, which are official spokesmen for their governments, which are col­ored by one man, which are subjected to American censorship? Do they know the significance of the label: Stefani, Reuters, Aneta, INS, Havas, UP, Domei, AP, Havas, DNB? With newspapers spread before them, have they learned to detect the tag-line of the rumor and the exaggeration? Do they know the techniques of checking today’s rumor against tomorrow’s fact, of turning to official communiques of our own War and Navy Departments for confirma­tion of reports? Have they learned why President Roosevelt warned them against “headline mentality”? As they read the newspaper and listen to the news broadcast, do they know the type of information which the Office of Censorship refused to let them have—and
do they know why? And unless they can readily distinguish between material given out as facts and the opinions which are basic to editorials, columns, and commentaries, these youngsters will be muddled indeed.

Pupils need a coordination of information and of opinion as well as the latest data. They need a lesson in the school library's reference section. The Readers' Guide, its cumulative numbers, the monthly accretions provide access to the magazine articles which are necessary addenda to book information. The Encyclopedias are not so niggardly of information on the far corners of the world as are the old history books. Atlases, with their revelations of geographic contours and distances and relationships can restrain many wild accusations and many pious but impossible wishes. The Almanacs may be cold and relentless, but they show the facts with which and against which our country is fighting. Unless the ups and downs of the daily news reports are viewed against the background of a continuum of information, they are meaningless. It is the job of the English teacher to guide the youth in his appreciation of the worth of these tools and to develop his skill in handling them.

EXPRESSING YOUNG AMERICA'S IDEAS. The English teacher certainly need not worry about the paucity of subject matter for oral and written expression. Inherent in all of the above suggestions are highways and byways for exploration. Let the true democracy of our education show in the way the teacher fits the task to the individual youngster's needs and interests. The following additional ideas are given simply because they seem rather effectively to allow the boy or girl to know he too is a partner in a tremendous undertaking.

The English class can train him to persuade his friends and relatives to cooperate in any one of the drives to make the country fit for its task. Yes, the stimulus for saving paper and rubber and tinfoil, for buying Defense Stamps and Bonds, even for keeping the country healthy, can justifiably go from the English class into the American home. Serious explanatory material is vital too. Can the boy and girl explain to his parents the defense set-up in his neighborhood, in his apartment? It may be necessary to be able to explain how one would identify enemy aircraft; it is timely to be able to tell the draftee from the general, to know the functions of the branches of the service and their identifying insignia. The
pictures in *Life* will give the boy a chance to do careful observation along the lines mentioned here; they will motivate his expression of his ideas. The Army says that next to food the soldier's greatest need is for letters from home. Where but in the English class belongs the task of learning how to write interesting, friendly letters to "the boy who used to live on my street", even if stern business keeps him from answering more than one out of three or four? Some of the boys and girls realize they are living through times they may have a chance to tell their grandchildren about. A wartime diary, personal or historical, may easily grow from a suggestion worked out, at first, in the English class. Finally, youth must look toward the future. Let him make in the English class the blueprint of the world he wants to make; let him look so clearly that what he gets out of that world will be less important than the way he tackles his civil and personal responsibilities.

**TOWARD CONFIDENCE IN THE ULTIMATE JUSTICE.**

When spade work has been initiated, when the hard way of looking the facts straight in the eye has been established as the right way, then the English class has earned the privilege of feeling it "belongs" to a great people. This renewal of confidence, this buoyancy of spirit is both right and necessary. How shall the English class make it tangible and powerful, yet not mawkish? Here is the place for dramatic readings in heroic and epic poetry of the past of all nations—perhaps done in choral reading manner. Here is the place for dramatic presentation of the heroes who fought to advance man's liberty and freedom. Have there been past times which have tried men's souls and found them adequate to the challenge? Let us see something of Valley Forge and Gettysburg, and learn how man, winning in the past, gives the nation courage to win again. Any group of youngsters will like to listen to excerpts from Stephen Vincent Benet's *Book of Americans*; they will enjoy acting out his *Listening to the People*. *The Ballad for Americans* is inspirational in the finest sense. Let the class look at the words which you can get from the musical score. There is the joy of recognition at finding themselves there—and the snatches from the famous documents of American history, and the overtones of folk songs, and the rhythms and idioms of homely speech. Then play the recording as Paul Robeson sings it. The class may applaud, and the English teacher may justifiably say that intelligent tolerance *does* work.
The work does not end here. It goes on into the future, always malleable, always dynamic. On the English teacher as well as on all teachers fall the responsibilities expressed in ancient days by the young men of Athens: “We will never desert our suffering comrades in the ranks; we will fight for our ideals and sacred things of the city, both alone and with many.”

An Integrated Ninth Year
MORRIS MEISTER, High School of Science

An evaluation of this experiment by Professor Irving Lorge of Teachers College, Columbia University, will appear in the May issue of High Points. [Ed.]

We write about this work with some reluctance. So much remains to be done; the problems unsolved are so much more numerous than the achievements. Yet the need to tell others must be met, if only for the purpose of clarification and the help which comes from the reactions of colleagues. More than anything else, the writer offers these prefatory remarks as a testimonial to twelve teachers who have shown rare devotion to a professional task—a task that has taxed their strength and drained their energies for a long while.

BACKGROUND OF THE EXPERIMENT. At one time, more than three years ago, the faculty of the school was composed of six chairmen of departments and a principal. With the vigor and enthusiasm characteristic of all beginnings, each of the chairmen resolved to fashion something good and of lasting educational value. Mistakes of the past were to be avoided. Here, at last, was an opportunity to build solidly and well. The problem of a philosophy acceptable to all did not prove too difficult, nor did the numerous hurdles incidental to building a school: the staff, the equipment and the organization. The first almost insuperable obstacle of consequence was the program of studies. Each chairman saw the philosophy of the school and its objectives in terms of his own subject. Excellently trained in one area of human culture, he laid vigorous claim to a place in the curricular sun. The fact is that no reasonable person could deny the claim. The special purpose of the school justified a science sequence and a mathematics sequence; the English sequence was secure because of tradition; the plea for social