

It's Jenny's First Day in School

Mother, Teacher Help Her Explore New Surroundings



Learning How

Jenny Lau held her mother's hand as she approached the room marked K-1. Jenny's long blond hair swished as she turned her head to look inside.

This was her first day at school—and she knew her mother would be in the kindergarten classroom at Sepulveda Elementary School for the shortened session.

At the door a dark-haired lady in a light blue dress bent down and smiled. "I'm Mrs. Dahlen, your teacher. Won't you come in and look around?"

Jenny let go of her mother's hand, grinned, and dashed into the cheerful room, with its tables of puzzles and play dough already set up. Behind, other children

dropped their mothers' hands and began to look around.

Two by two, the people streamed in—a kindergartner and a mother, a kindergartner and a father.

When all the students were inside, the lady in the blue dress stepped to the front of the room. The rug beneath her feet was also blue—dark blue.

"I don't know any of your names, yet, boys and girls," she said. "But if you'll help me I hope to know them soon. I have made a paper train with each of your names, and I'm going to call each of you up here and pin on your name while you sit on this mat."

As Jenny and her fellow classmates left their mothers sitting around the edge of

the room, they found a place on the mat. Names were called, trains pinned on cotton dresses and freshly starched shirts, and instruction sheets handed from teacher to child to mother.

Because it was the first day and only an hour long there was only time for one song before they could work at the tables. But they piped in, thin voices singing along with the smiling teacher.

Then came the moment they'd waited for—the chance to try out the puzzles and crayons and play dough on tables. And Jenny discovered a corner of the room behind the piano set up a playhouse. With quickly made friends she set up housekeeping, cooking and doing dishes on

the gleaming stove and sink.

All too soon a signal on the piano reminded them that it was time to return to the mats. Time for one story and one final song before the first day of school would end. For the artistic few who had already crayoned pictures, there were papers to be handed out.

"Tomorrow we'll come for an hour again, and mother will wait on the patio," the cheerful voice in the blue dress said. "And then Friday we'll stay for a full day."

Jenny looked for her mother. So did the others. They smiled, took hands, and made their way to the door.

"Bye, Mrs. Dahlen."
"Goodbye Jenny."
"See you tomorrow."



Teacher's Helping Hand



Waiting Turn



Stringing Beads



Storytime on First Day



Mothers Visit Classroom