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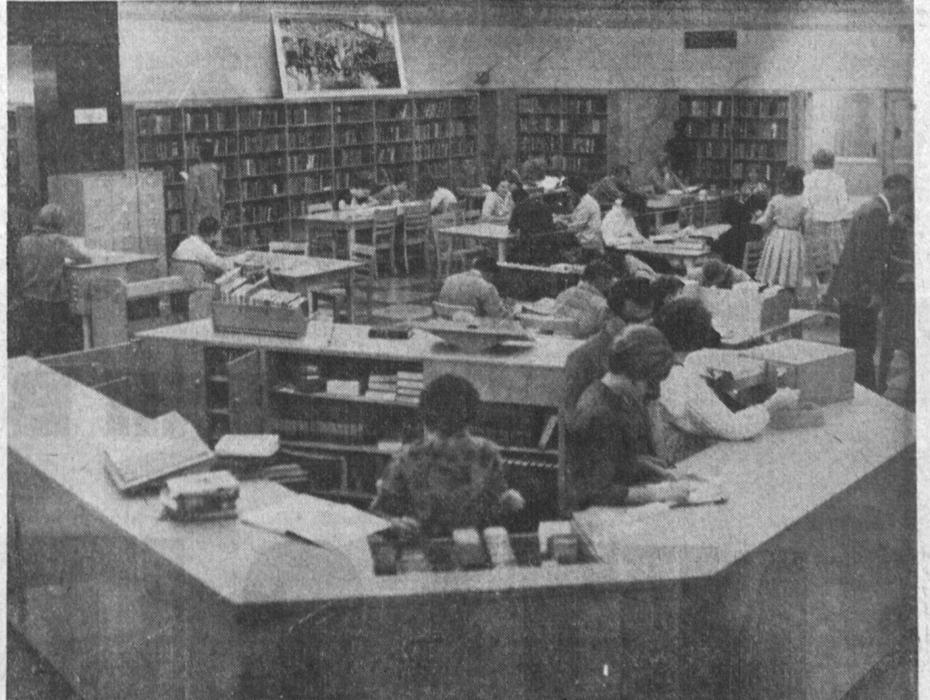
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FREQUENTING LIBRARY at South High School has become popular pastime since new approach to teaching was put into effect. Emphasis on novel-reading in classroom has resulted in increasing reading for pleasure by students. —PRESS photo

New Approach

By RONNIE SAUNDERS Women's Editor

(Editor's note: A recent survey which asked the question "What Do Parents Want to Know About Schools?" came out with the fact that what goes on in the classroom is of concern to more parents than what happens on the football field. To provide the people of Torrance with a picture of what secondary students in this city are being taught, the Torrance Press is presenting a series of articles dealing with the various departments at South High School. First article in the series, which appeared last Sunday, dealt with the homemaking department. Today's article, second in the series, deals with the English department.)

In the summer of 1961 three women and eight men met daily for six weeks at the campus of South High School in Torrance to discuss a new approach to teaching English. What they wanted to do was enrich the curriculum beyond the minimum requirements set forth by state law.

Just how far they succeeded in winning student approval of the new program can best be shown by the fact that although English is only required to be studied three years, 379 of the 454 members of the senior class have elected to continue the course for their final year of high school.

The plans that were set forth by those 11 faculty members a year and a half ago were based on results of pilot programs conducted in English classes at South High for the past

three years. In their attempt to get away from the language arts approach to English, teachers and administrators at South High School have placed emphasis on a program geared towards developing skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. All four skills are taught at each grade level.

ROTATE BOOKS
The way books are used plays an important part in the way English is taught at South High School. Whereas one text book is used for each grade in traditional systems, the South High program utilizes four books at each level. By dividing the year's study into quarters and rotating books among the classes, each book is used by four groups of students. The result is an enriched program at minimum cost.

REVAMP PROGRAM
One of the key figures behind the move to revamp methods of teaching English at South High School was Mr. Haig Marshlian, assistant principal in charge of instruction. Formerly associated with North High School, Marshlian received his B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Southern California where he is currently enrolled in the doctoral program.

An authority on curriculum, Marshlian is chairman of the Association of Assistant Principals of Instruction of the Torrance Unified School District, a group of local educators which meets monthly to exchange ideas of new ways of teaching. He conducts workshops for UCLA each summer and is currently teaching a UCLA extension course in secondary curriculum and methods.

"Our primary emphasis at

South High is on English," stated Marshlian "because this is fundamental to all learning. Without English skills, a student limits his ability in all other areas."

It is his philosophy that curriculum development should never end. Programs at South High are constantly evaluated and constantly revised to meet current needs.

English teachers at the school meet regularly with Mr. Marshlian and Mrs. June Bullock, curriculum coordinator, to find new and better ways of doing things. Final examinations are also developed as a group effort by teachers in the department at workshops.

PIONEER NEW METHOD
During the experimental period preceding the setting down on paper of the revised curriculum guide in 1961, teachers at South High consulted regularly with Dr. Walter Loban of the University of California at Berkeley and Dr. Janet Sawyer, linguist, of Long Beach State College.

As a result of the meetings with Dr. Sawyer, South High School was introduced to the "linguistic approach" to grammar, a system of teaching in which basic patterns of our language are taught rather than isolated parts of speech. Spearheading the drive to pioneer the linguistic approach at South High School was Mrs. Barbara Hawkins, chairman of the English Department.

Another first at South High has been the creative writing class taught by Mrs. Hawkins. It is the only class of its kind in the school district. Students read and evaluate such magazines as Saturday Review of Literature, Atlantic Monthly, and Harpers, and write poetry, one-act plays and short stories.

PUBLISH WRITINGS
Outstanding student writings appear in a literary annual magazine, Analecta. Magazine sponsor is Mrs. Hawkins. Creative writing students are beginning to achieve distinction outside of school.

Two former students, Jim Palumbo and Richard Vogl, who are both currently majoring in English at Long Beach State College, have had material published in national magazines.

Palumbo received a commendation award for entries in the Scholastic Magazine 1961-62 poetry contest. He was one of 60,000 entrants. Vogl has had a short story published in a national teenage magazine.

Another source of pride to South High's English department is the test given to incoming freshmen. Results have proven better at predicting a student's chances for success in high school English than those of a nationally standardized test. Purpose of the test is to aid the teacher in gearing each student's English program towards his individual needs.

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