

## SCHOOL TIME IN CAMP

### Experiment in Camping Education

in Life Camps - 1947

#### Film Scenario

School busses are a familiar sight in almost any American city. But for sixty-two New York City school children these busses represented the beginning of a new adventure in education. For three weeks in June, during their school year, these children extended their education by direct contact with the outdoors.

Educators such as New York's Superintendent of Schools, Dr. William Jansen, are now experimenting with camping experience as an integral part of school life. The New York City Board of Education in cooperation with LIFE CAMPS sent two classes of children into the hills and fields of northern New Jersey. For these educators it is a well-known fact that too many American children grow up in the crowded, milling streets of large cities and never know the thrill of real outdoor life. But by giving children knowledge of the world outside their classrooms everyday lessons become more alive and more intensely practical. Problems mastered outdoors through direct experience with nature remain vividly impressed on their minds. Teachers found students who had shared in this experiment more alert and more interested than before in their regular school work. And for the children themselves it was an experience that grew richer and fuller each time it was related.

GIRL: You should have been with us in June. Jeepers, it was grand. We went on long hikes and swam and sang. We cooked our own meals and made our own beds and slept outdoors. We didn't really know what to expect when we arrived at camp, but it sure was nice getting there. We went there in busses and it took us over two hours to get there. First, we went right out to our small camp where we washed up. We were real dirty from the ride. We washed in basins right in the open. But if you catch on quick, you can get just as clean as if you were in your own house.

Then we had to get our beds ready. Some of us had a little trouble making them at first and we helped each other. Right from the start we had our jobs to do. We were divided into small groups with our own counselors, but I liked best the job of marketing. We figured out how much food we needed for the day and how much it would cost. The counselor explained to us about balanced diets and what to eat. Then we would go to the store where we would put our own food.

BOY: On our very first hike we spotted a fat old turtle in the grass. I guess it must have been the first time I had ever seen a real live turtle outside an aquarium. Our counselor told us that turtles were really harmless, but I guess I was a little afraid when he stuck his head out of the shell. He didn't bite though and we took him with us to show the others.

We fished too. We were shown how to take some string and tie on a hook and bait and then catch fish. Some of the other fellows came by with fish they caught, but I didn't do too bad. Best of all was when we cleaned and cooked our own fish. I never figured there was so much work to do on a little old fish. But I guess that's the way you have to do it.