

John Franklin Bobbitt

John Franklin Bobbitt (1876-1952) was an American educationist well known for his advocates for scientific method in curriculum making and social efficiency in curriculum. He played a leading role in establishing curriculum study as a field of specialization. The publication of his book *The Curriculum* in 1918 marked the birth of the field of curriculum.

Bobbitt advocated scientific curriculum making and criticized the vagueness of traditional curriculum making. Heavily drawing on Fredrick Taylor's book *The Principles of Scientific Management* (1911), Bobbitt (1918) demanded that educators adopt scientific techniques of productions developed by industry (p. 24). To fulfill this goal, Bobbitt (1924) formulated five steps of making curriculum scientifically.

Opposed to traditional education as a process of "facts" filling organized within conventional school subjects, Bobbitt (1918) claimed that the duty of new education is to develop wisdom out of living experience and to prepare students with specified knowledge and skills to meet their future all-around roles in the social reality, including vocation, citizenship, recreation, health etc.

Bobbitt recognized that human activities are too vast to be all-inclusive in curriculum, therefor he classified learning activities into two levels: in-directed learning and directed learning (1918, p. 43). Unlike in-directed learning in which individuals acquire knowledge/skills subconsciously, directed-learning asks for deliberate and explicit education.

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References

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Taylor, F. W. (1911). *The principles scientific management*. New York, US and London, England: Harper & Brothers.