

JACKSON STATE COLLEGE

Jackson, Mississippi

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEWEE AGREEMENT

You have been asked for information to be used in connection with the Oral History Program at Jackson State College; Jackson, Mississippi. The purpose of this program is to gather and preserve information for historical and scholarly use.

A tape recording of your interview will be made by the interviewer, and a typescript of the tape will be made and submitted to you for editing. The final retyped and edited transcript, together with the tape of the interview will then be placed in the oral history collection at Jackson State College, Jackson, Mississippi. Other institutions or persons may obtain a copy. These materials may be made available for purposes of research, for instructional use, for publications, or for other related purposes.

I, Emma J. [Signature], have read the above and, in
(Interviewee, please print)

view of the historical and scholarly value of this information, and in return for a final typed copy of the transcript, I knowingly and voluntarily permit Jackson State College, Jackson the full use of this information. I hereby grant and assign all my rights of every kind whatever pertaining to this information, whether or not such rights are now known, recognized, or contemplated, to Jackson State College, Jackson, Mississippi.

Emma J. [Signature]
Interviewee (Signature)

5/26/77

Date

JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEWER AGREEMENT

I, Mynthe L. Hoies, in view of the historical and scholarly value of the information contained in the interview with Emma Jones knowingly and voluntarily permit Jackson State University, Jackson the full use of this information, and hereby grant and assign to Jackson State University, Jackson all rights of every kind whatever pertaining to this information, whether or not such rights are now known, recognized or contemplated.

Mynthe L. Hoies
Interviewer (signature)

1
Interview Number

8/1/77
Date

11.15

Heading!!

JONES

I am Louise Goins. I am going to talk to Mrs. Emma Jones. I am here at Canton Public High School. Mrs. Jones has worked with the head start program.

G: Mrs. Jones, were you exposed to an early childhood education?

J: I guess you can call it that Mrs. Goins. I started to school at the age of five. I don't even remember the name of the school that I attended. But I do know it was located in Holly Spring, Mississippi, and that I was five years of age. I also remember that it was a Catholic school.

G: You are not referring to the first grade, second grade or what have you? This is a school that you attended before you actually entered school?

J: That's right.

G: What kind of education were you given at that period?

J: Well, I suppose that they called it then, as they do now, they refer to it as the primary grades or kindergarten grades. We were sort of introduced to to what we, you know, would come in contact with during the first grade. We learned the basic that we would be exposed to in grade school.

G: Do you believe that this training had an effect on the way you performed once you entered grade school?

J: I think so, Mrs. Goins. I feel that an early childhood education is essential to a child's progress in school during the latter years. I feel that it helped me tremendously. It helped me to adapt socially, as well as academically, to the things that I was faced with through grade school, and secondary school, and then on to graduate school and then graduate school.

G: So you are considering this education as a foundation for education you would receive later?

J: Certainly. I definitely feel that

G: So are you saying that you believe that it would be to the advantage of children before they enter the elementary grades to be exposed to an early education program?

J: Yes, Mrs. Goins. I sincerely feel that it is an advantage. I worked with the head start program, which is an early childhood program, and then I was fortunately enough to leave the head start program and enter into the public school system. And while I worked with head start, I had a chance to substitute. And in this capacity, I had an opportunity to work with grades one thru twelve. Course once I was contracted I worked with grades seven thru twelve. But the point I would like to make is that you could definitely identify the children who had had early childhood training. Once you worked with first graders, second graders, they were just adjusted more so than the other children. Their academic progress was superior. I just feel it really is advantageous.

G: How many children were there in your family?

J: There were ten of us.

G: And were you all exposed to an early childhood education?

J: No. I think about two of us were exposed to early childhood education.

G: Well can you tell me how the other children received preschool learning?

J: Basically, through home training, and you know, experiences with the older sisters and brothers. I was the oldest sister and I had one brother who was older than I am. And naturally children who are subjected to methods and materials that they will encounter in the later years at school will do better. And they had the opportunity to talk over and look over, and learn from us. And I think it helped. Even though they didn't have the opportunity to attend an early childhood program, they were somewhat exposed. Of course my mother was a great factor behind all of us. She would always sit and try to teach us our ABC's and learn some of the fundamentals, you know, that you would get in school, grade school.

G: Well, Mrs. Jones, why was it that two of you were exposed to an early childhood education and the others weren't?

J: It had to do with personal factors. My mother was a nurse when we were very young we were the two oldest. And upon her second marriage, she moved to Oxford, Mississippi. And in the sixties, there was no program in the city, you know, that the children could be enrolled in. You may have had very few kindergartens there but they were so expensive until family finances would not permit momma to enroll the other children. And she was a nurse at the time we lived in Holly Springs, younger. So we were just lucky.

G: Do you think it would have been the desire of your parents to have had their other children probably enrolled in a program similar to the one you attended? If it had been possible?

J: Certainly. Now as my mother got older and head start came into existence, some of my younger sisters did attend head start. I guess about the last three of them. But these in between did not have the opportunity due to lack of facility. But knowing my mother as I do, I know that would have been her desire to have everyone of her children in something like head start or preschool institution.

G: Well, Mrs. Jones, you mentioned that some of the children were taught at home. The two of you attended a kindergarten. May I ask who taught at home? How did you determine when to teach?

J: Well, actually, you know, now children generally just sit around and mother sometimes instruct us to help so-and-so learn his ABC's, and we would sit and have spelling contest. And my mother came from a family that was educational oriented. Her father was a minister and school teacher and she always had a strong desire to go to school. So this is one thing that she has tried persistently instill into us. Go to school and learn. So many times she would sit and give us little prizes for spelling or take us over our ABC's. And, you know, try to entice us to do the things

that were necessary to acquire a quality education.

G: What you are sayin in a sense is that your parents had to take a greater role in seeing that the younger children did get some preparation for the preschool training.

J: Definitely so.

G: What did you teach these young people that probably they would not learn at home in your head start class?

J: I worked and I did not have direct contact, you know, in the capacity of teaching the children. I would supervise, you know. But the teachers who were employed at the center would teach things like the alphabets, numbers, and things of that sort.

G: And the children in this particular program, what kind of family would they come from? What would be their family background?

J: Well it was really a mixture of it all. I would say we did have some people from background you would consider to be middle class, but most of them, I would have to conclude came from perhaps poverty stricken families. Usually considered to be underprivileged. Parents who were working and needed a place to leave their children, get them a free meal. It served two purposes to educate them and those purposes.

G: Is there something other than this that they are taught at head start that they probably would not get at home?

J: Well, I would have to think about that one a little bit. One thing they would get would be learning how to mix with the children. Learning how to adjust, you know. You can learn this to a certain extent at home, but it would be limited to the family group, and head start of course brought them in contact with persons outside the family. And this is very important in going to school. I think Mrs. Jones, Mrs Aradell Jones,

JONES

the principle at McNeal, said in one of our faculty meeting when we returned to school from summer one time that her school dealt basically with learning the children to sit. Just to sit in chairs. Many of them come to school and they are accustomed to getting up and flouncing around. If they want water, they get it. If they they want to go to the bathroom, they go. But in head start they learn to go at intervals as designated for these purposes. They learn to share, they learn to adjust sociably.

G: Can you think of any other services rendered by head start that is not in the area of education? So to speak.

J: Definitely so. We did have people employed to work with them to take care of their physical needs. Like they would be taken to doctors, get dental work done and have an opportunity to be checked thoroughly. Get a complete physical at least three times per per year, and they would keep records on all this. A lot of children came in who were in need of dental work and physical attention from physicians, and they were given this. You know they get balanced meals. I think I mentioned that. I think this is highly important.

G: Mrs. Jones, What do you think about the head start program in your community? Do you think it is serving any need that could not be fulfilled in the home? Is that what you are saying?

J: Well, I think you know that the human race is intelligent and they could adjust and adapt to the need at hand. But it is certainly one of the means that could be utilized to solve a lot of problems. And because of head start, they do not have to seek other means. Child care, for instance, a at the age of three would have to be cared for, would have to be fed, and head start does this. They get cereal and snacks in between and I know this is advantageous to parents.

G: What do you think the future of the head start program is? Do you think the need for it will eventually fade away? Or do you think the need for it will continue to exist for coming generations?

J: Well, the need won't fade away but the program itself will, I think, will fade into a very large operation. It will be much larger and perhaps it will phase into something on a national scale. The trend is leaning toward that presently. And I certainly hope that this will be true in the future.

It's a very effective program. It's very instrumental in preschool training for children and I think that the federal government has proposed plans that will have funds release or appropriated, you know, for this program on a large scale. I think President Carter has started something. I think he was suppose to make some type of proposal to the legislature in this regard.

There is nothing definitely concrete, you know, on this now. But it has been mentioned I think in The US News and World Report. I definitely think its going to phrase into something, you know, that will exist on the national scale. The only thing is that I hope that it will not get too bogged down with red tape and paper work and cause it to phrase out in many local areas where it is definitely needed, you know. People are afraid of red tape and, you know, paper work. If you put too much of this on them, then sometimes they will not become involved in the program rather than to be bothered with, you know, paper work.

G: Mrs. Jones, Why did you say that you felt the program will get larger? Why?

J: Well, like I said, the President has made proposals, or he has mentioned proposals that he hopes to offer to Congress. You know that will enlarge the program make it something on a national scale.

G: Would this be an indication that the program has thus far been very effective?

J: I think so and then they see a great need for it now and in the future. And

we know we are not going to stop reproducing, so caring for children and educating of the people is one of the task of the government and I suppose he is working toward that end.

G: Thank you Mrs. Jones.

Pages	Subjects
1	preschool
2	family
3	home
4	background
5	discipline
6	curriculum
7	government