

The Many Lives of Miss Crusemire

BETWEEN the hours of 8:30 in the morning and 2:30 in the afternoon, Madeline Crusemire hears her name called by twenty-seven voices, and behind each voice is a child. The children are first-graders at Glenside Elementary School in Cheltenham Township, where Miss Crusemire teaches.

Miss Crusemire's prime assignment is to teach the twenty-seven to read, write and to do arithmetic. Time was when teachers did just that, little else.

But times have changed. Miss Crusemire and her numberless, nameless colleagues are more than teachers. The children have changed, too. They're no longer an anonymous entity known as a "class" but twenty-seven individuals.

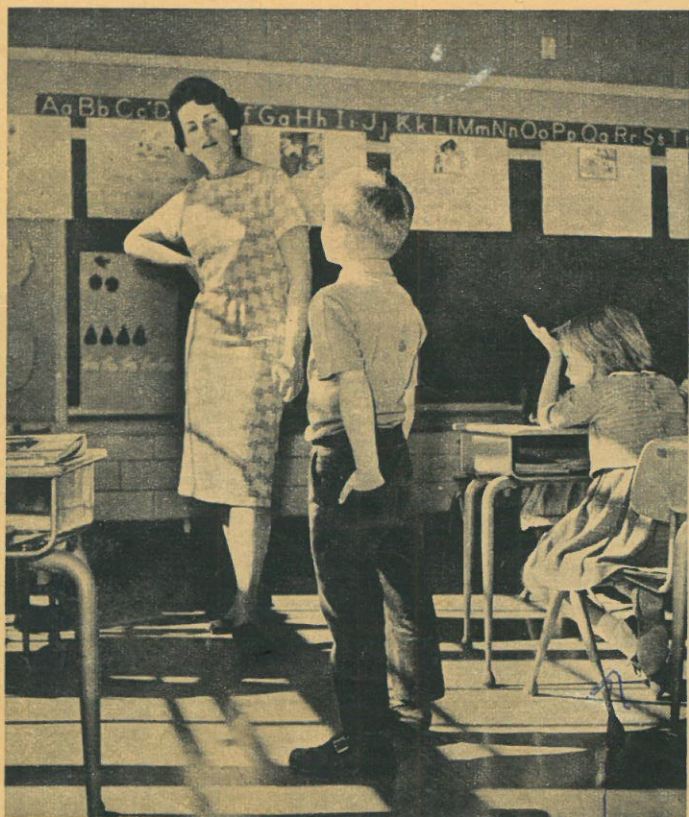
Likewise, school no longer is quite a place away from home but rather a home away from home. Miss Crusemire is a teacher, true. But she's also part mother, nurse, peacemaker, space expert, wardrobe mistress.

And, when the twenty-seven pour out of the building at 2:30, her day's duties don't end. There are district committee meetings to attend, next week's lessons to prepare, papers to mark. There are, too, PTA panel discussions and in-service courses.

Somehow, everybody seems to remember his or her first teacher. This is no accident. The first teacher is something special. The first teacher opens doors to a strange new world. She is the guide from the safety of the harbor to the exciting wonder of the open sea. She can teach the three R's. She can comfort and cajole, talk about snails and jets, play the piano, sing a song, even bat a ball with the best of them.



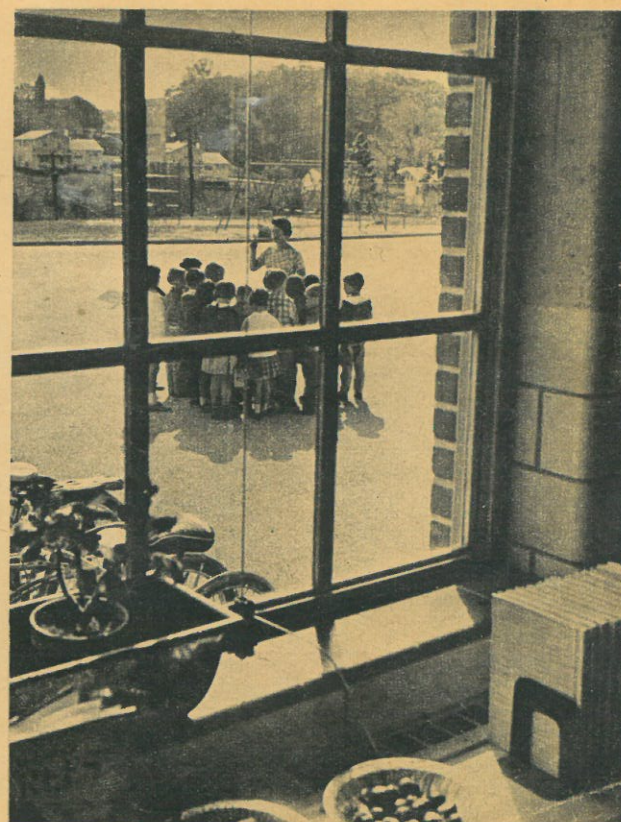
Hands in the air, questions in the air.



On his feet with the answer.



Teacher's daily luncheon date.



School isn't all work, of course.

me



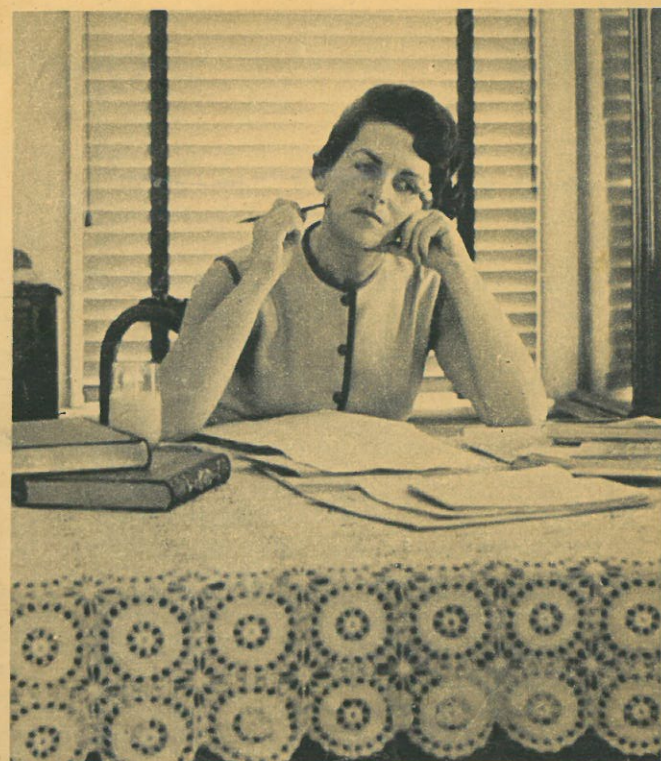
A teacher must be a bit of a nurse, too.



Hands must be clean for lunch.



Bird's nest makes good conversation piece.



School's out—but teacher's day is never done.



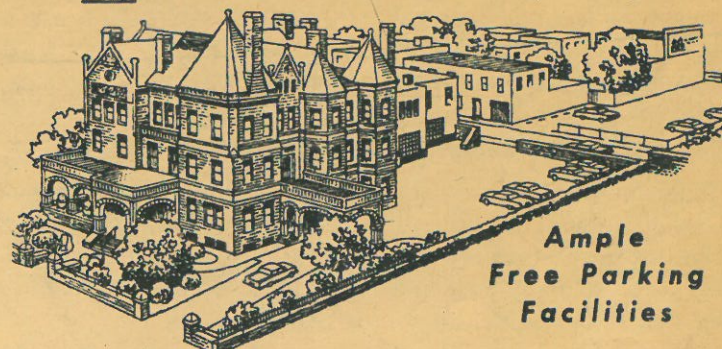
Bulky boots are a problem to a six-year-old.

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