



REVIEWS

Professional Materials

The Child and the English Language Arts. (Fifth edition) (1990). Mildred Donoghue. California State University, Fullerton CA. William C. Brown, Publisher, 2460 Kerper Boulevard, Dubuque IA 52001. ISBN 0-697-10403-6. Softcover, 562 pages. US\$34.07.

Reviewed by Kathy Seeley
Western Michigan University

Mildred Donoghue's goals in revising her text are threefold: to provide a basic understanding of the language arts as individual entities, to address implementation concerns, and to provide a sound basis for professional decision making. It is clear in reviewing this text these goals have been accomplished. The fifth edition of *The Child and the English Language Arts* combines current research findings, traditional theoretical foundation and suggestions for instructional techniques in a comprehensible and practical format.

As an undergraduate-level guide for pre-service classroom teachers, the revision of this text presents the *what* and *how* of an integrated language arts program. Included are examples of daily plans, learning centers and bulletin boards to provide the novice with a "birds-eye view" of classroom organization.

The complexities involved in the teaching and learning of the English language arts are explored in depth in the book's

fourteen chapters. From readiness concerns and the “tools of writing” to the “Limited English Proficient student,” language acquisition theory and practical application are covered in a comprehensible, yet sophisticated manner. Informal assessment techniques, ready-to-use evaluation forms, and diagnostic teaching are the cornerstones of this edition. Photographs of children and teachers at work in the classroom and media center are interspersed with reproductions of actual student work, observational checklists, and samples of published instructional materials.

The five appendices include an extensive listing of Caldecott and Newbery Medal books and honor books and evaluation aids for both computer software and basal reading programs, as well as answers to the chapter “anticipation guide” questions. Features such as the “Discussion Questions,” “Suggested Projects,” and “Related Readings” found at the conclusion of each chapter help bridge the gap between the theoretical aspects of the college classroom with the practical concerns of inservice language arts teachers.

Overall, this is a well-developed text and teaching resource worthy of consideration in language arts instruction and methods courses.

Materials reviewed are not endorsed by *Reading Horizons* or Western Michigan University. The content of the reviews reflects the opinion of the reviewers whose names appear with the reviews.

To submit an item for potential review, send with complete publisher's information to Kathryn A. Welsch, Reviews Editor, *Reading Horizons*, Reading Center and Clinic, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI 49008.

Books for Children

The Talking Eggs. Robert D. San Souci, author. Jerry Pinkney, illustrator. 1989. Dial Books for Young Readers, A Division of Penguin Books, 2 Park Avenue, New York NY 10016. ISBN 0-8037-0619-7. Hardcover, 29 pp. US\$12.89.

Reviewed by Sue Coker
Western Michigan University

The Talking Eggs is a new offering in an area that is much neglected in children's literature, that of the Afro-American folk tale. According to the author, the story was originally published in the late nineteenth century in a collection of Louisiana folktales by Alcee Fortier. In a new and enchanting way, this book tells the fable of two young Afro-American sisters grappling with the familiar issues of good and evil. The two sisters, Blanche and Rose, are each given a chance for wealth and treasures by a black-shawled, mysterious woman in the forest surrounding their home. Only Blanche, with her honesty and kindness, succeeds, while the cynical Rose is punished for her pettiness by forest animals that many children fear — snakes, spiders, and wolves.

The illustrator, Jerry Pinkney, provides the reader with lush, beautifully detailed, and colorful drawings. The treasures capture the imagination of the reader, and scenes of the forest and the animals are intriguing, but should not be frightening to young readers or listeners.

The Talking Eggs is a valuable addition to a fable collection on its own merit, as well as a fairy tale with realistic portrayal of Afro-American children. Readers, both children and adult, will immediately warm to the story of the two little girls, one "so bad" and the other "so good."

***How Joe the Bear and Sam the Mouse Got Together
and I'm Calling Molly***

Reviewed by Cindy Overly
Western Michigan University

I'm Calling Molly. Written by Jane Kurtz; illustrated by Irene Trivas. 1990. Albert Whitman & Co., 5747 West Howard Street, Niles IL 60648. ISBN 0-8075-3468-4. Hardcover, 27 pp. US\$12.95.

"It's not fair, not fair." Christopher's next-door neighbor, Molly, who has red hair and "knows everything about dragons," is making gorilla stew with Rebekah and won't let Christopher play. This familiar scenario in which popular but fickle Molly excludes her friend from her adventures offers the reader an opportunity to explore a frustrating social situation, and learn how the magic of books can provide a solution.

The enchantment of Christopher and Molly's imaginative games is enhanced by Irene Trivas' fanciful illustrations of sand dragons and camel rides. But the reader is pulled back to reality with Christopher's dilemma: Mother is busy and no one wants to play. Finally, Christopher's mother reads him a story which takes him to a world where he has power over Molly. *I'm Calling Molly* is a story which shows how a book can sometimes be just as exciting company as your best friend.

How Joe the Bear and Sam the Mouse Got Together. 1990. Beatrice Schenk De Regniers. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard. 105 Madison Avenue NY 10016. ISBN 0688-09079-6. Hardcover, 28 pp. US\$12.95.

Although they try many times, Joe the Bear and Sam the Mouse can't agree on what to do. Will they ride bikes fast or slow? Will they play football or baseball? A simple story about an emerging friendship between two different personalities

offers a great deal of insight about relationships. Joe and Sam's discussions about their recreational preferences demonstrate that relationships sometimes take a lot of effort, and friends don't always agree. But that's okay, because if you keep trying to communicate and are patient, eventually you might have a wonderful new companion.

Bernice Myers' new illustrations for De Regniers' classic 1965 fable vividly express the contrasting emotions shared by Sam and Joe, ranging from laughter to tears. The tale is ideal for Readers' Theater. Joe's and Sam's lines are printed in different styles of type, and we can imagine both the big, booming bear's voice, and the tiny squeaky mouse voice. Young readers will love both story and pictures.

National Worm Day. Written and illustrated by James Stevenson. 1990. Greenwillow Books, 105 Madison Avenue, New York NY 10016. ISBN: 0-688-088771-X (trade); 0-688-08772-8 (library). Hardcover, 40 pp. US\$12.95.

How is National Worm Day celebrated? "We elect a president," Herbie tells his friends Dawn the mole and Amelia the snail, "and we sing the worm national anthem." Dawn can join in by burrowing underground with Herbie — but sometimes friends need to create their own excitement. Thanks to Amelia, snails now have a national anthem, too.

The second story in Stevenson's delightful trilogy introduces a rhinoceros, struggling to be happy in the midst of insensitive fish, frogs, turtles and beetles. "Want to be a real friend?" says the beetle. "Probably," says Rupert, with a caution based on experience. Finally, in "Herbie and Rupert and Dawn," large and small creatures use good will and imagination to create a basis for mutual satisfaction. The moral lessons don't overpower the fun; children and adults will enjoy stories, pictures, and language play. (JMJ)