

10-1-1980

Quick Reviews

Nancy Weddle
Lincoln University

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Recommended Citation

Weddle, N. (1980). Quick Reviews. *Reading Horizons*, 21 (1). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading_horizons/vol21/iss1/14

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QUICK REVIEWS

Nancy Weddle
Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri

Freedman, G., and Reynolds, E. G. "Enriching basal reader lessons with semantic webbing." *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 33, no. 6 (March, 1980), pp. 677-685.

This article describes an unusual and interesting instructional technique, semantic webbing, as a way for students to organize and integrate the concepts of stories. The semantic web is a visual display representing the categories and relationships of the story content, as well as the reader's related knowledge and background of information. Freedman and Reynolds present the basic model for constructing a web, and a detailed example of using semantic webbing with a basal reader story. The basic model may be used with all grade levels and reading materials to help students to organize and integrate information.

Yarborough, B. H., and Johnson, R. A. "How meaningful are marks in promoting growth in reading?" *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 33, no. 6 (March, 1980), pp. 644-652.

This synopsis of a research project, which examined the significance of marks in promoting cognitive and affective pupil development in the area of reading, will be of interest to specialists and classroom teachers. The findings of this study suggested equally effective reading instruction can be offered through either nongraded or traditional settings. It was further suggested there is no great difference on global or specific intelligence test scores or the affective development of pupils at the elementary level between reading instruction without marks or report cards, and reading instruction with marks or report cards. The affective development of students in the bright or gifted ranges may have been slightly more effected by marks than other students. Generally, the study suggested that marks have limited meaning and value as a means of promoting growth in reading or as a means of communicating pupil achievement to parents. Yarborough and Johnson state the need for educators to devise more effective methods of informing parents and students of academic progress.

Sulzby, Elizabeth. "Using children's dictated stories to aid comprehen-

sion." *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 33, no. 7 (April, 1980), pp. 772-778.

Many teachers and specialists use LEA in their classrooms. Oftentimes, however, these educators do not know how to use language experience to aid reading comprehension. Sulzby suggests two teaching strategies to use the LEA. The first strategy involves students rereading and editing his/her own text in order to better understand their own dictations. The second strategy involves comprehension, but also explores the child's awareness of the conventions of written language. The author clearly describes the development of these strategies in the class room with beginning reader/writers.

Lauritzen, Carol, "Oral literature and the teaching of reading." *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 33, no. 7 (April, 1980), pp. 787-791.

The four linguistic patterns of oral literature are of interest and helpful to reading teachers. First, the pattern of repeated wording uses a set of words in a poem, story, or song. Also, a syntactic pattern may be repeated many times with new words substituted into the pattern each time. In addition, link wording is common in oral literature. In link wording the ending phrase or word of one sentence becomes the beginning phrase or word in the next sentence. Finally, the characteristic of cumulative structure is found in many folktales. The tale begins with one episode, this episode is repeated and another added, these two are repeated and another added, and the process continues to the end of the tale. These four patterns may appear in combinations of two or more. Teachers may use oral literature for listening and reading. The constancy of an oral literary pattern may be used as a pattern for using prediction strategies. Children usually enjoy the repetition and the rhythmic nature of oral literature, as well. Lauritzen suggests additional ways to use oral literature in reading, as part of a total language arts program.

Moustafa, Margaret, "Picture books for oral language development for non-English speaking children: A bibliography." *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 33, no. 8 (May, 1980), pp. 914-919.

All teachers occasionally have difficulty finding appropriate materials to use in the classroom. This may be especially true for teachers of non-English speaking children. The bibliography in this article is an excellent reference for those teachers. The books were selected for their usefulness in illustrating English meanings when read aloud to elementary-

age, non-English speaking students. The language pattern characteristic and a brief suggestion for using each book are also indicated. The list is divided into three levels, noting those books most highly recommended by the author.

Johnson, Laura S., Ed., *Reading and the Adult Learner*. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, Inc., 1980.

In contemporary society many adults are discovering a need for additional help in reading. According to Laura Johnson, such adults "are not seeking the right to read, but the right to know how to read." The responsibility for instructing the adult learner in reading education is clearly a challenge to reading professionals. The challenge lies not only in working directly with students but, also, in training para-professional assistants and volunteers. This publication, *Reading and the Adult Learner*, is a compilation of selected IRA convention and journal articles which describe a few selected reading programs for adult learners in the United States.

Survival Series, as told to Ben East. Edited by Jerolyn Nentl and Howard Schroeder, ill. by Jack Dahl. Crestwood House, 1979.

The eight dramatic stories of the Survival Series offer a moving and vivid saga of wilderness survival and man's struggle against nature. Each story is a first-person account of the adventures as told to Ben East. Mr. East, who is a well-known and popular editor/writer for "Outdoor Life Magazine," uses his special talents as a wildlife journalist to retell each story in a way which will capture the interest of juvenile readers. The series is edited by Jerolyn Nentl and Dr. Howard Schroeder, and illustrated with realistic sketches by Jack Dahl. The books are of consistent length and yet, each story is complete and exciting.

The following stories, as told to Ben East, are included in this series.

Mistaken Journey. A rancher and his family travel through wild, virgin country in Canada to homestead land. The family's joy turns to despair when they encounter many problems in the wilderness. Finally, on the final leg of their five-week trip, the homesteaders realize they have been traveling in the wrong direction. This story is a gripping account of their survival on the pioneer journey.

Forty Days Lost. Seven men make an emergency airplane landing in the wild bush country of Canada. Extensive rescue efforts fail and the stranded passengers must attempt to keep themselves alive for 40 days. The determination to survive and

help each other are dramatically related in this adventure.

Grizzly. This story is an account of Napier Shelton's adventure when his long time desire to meet a grizzly bear is realized. When Shelton is attacked by this wild animal, he narrowly escapes with his life. His frightening experience teaches him the important lesson that bears, especially grizzlies, are not to be trusted.

Desperate Search. This book relates the experiences of a 77-year-old man who becomes lost in the woods while grouse hunting. The hunter must survive three days and four nights of hunger and cold because he is without food to eat or matches with which to start a fire. This older outdoorsman, who hardly hoped to get out of the woods alive, has timely advice to share with others who may become lost and are faced with survival in wild country.

Danger in the Air. A calm, winter night in Florida Bay turns into a fight for survival when three people in this story are trapped in a sudden storm. When the rough and turbulent seas destroy their boat, the trio barely reach a nearby island. The following day, one of the brave men must set out to open sea in a small boat in search of help and rescue for his companions. This episode relates the survival of those brave people during a violent storm in the isolated Florida Keys.

Trapped in Devil's Hole. In this survival adventure two trout fishermen become injured and stranded in the gorge of a dangerous river. Their ordeal becomes even more complicated and dangerous when the rescue team is not sure the men can be brought out alive. This exciting story relates the courage of the trapped fishermen, as well as the skill and bravery of the men of the rescue team.

Found Alive. Junior Harmon, a fourteen-year-old boy, sets out on his first hunting trip in unfamiliar wilderness and becomes hopelessly lost. Two hundred searchers comb the woods for five days and nights before the young hunter is found. This saga tells of his struggle to survive without food or fire and to endure ice and snow without shelter.

Frozen Terror. The ice-fishing trip of a northern Michigan man ends in terror when he becomes stranded on an ice-floe. For a terrible week in January, this brave fisherman fights the bitter cold and ice-fields attempting to get back to shore. This true story vividly describes one man's steadfast courage and fight for survival in the face of constant danger.

Learning Through Reading in the Content Areas. Richard Allington and Michael Strange. 258 pp. D. C. Heath and Company 1980. (125 Spring Street, Lexington, Massachusetts 02173).

Reviewed by Suzanne L. Bunkers, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin

An innovative and useful new methods text, *Learning Through Reading in the Content Areas* is organized around the belief that "one of the primary goals of content area instruction should be to develop and refine the learner's ability to learn from textual materials" (p. 237). In targeting their book not only at content area teachers but also at reading specialists and curriculum directors, Allington and Strange show these groups how to supplement each other's instructional work and help students learn to read critically.

The authors begin by discussing factors which influence the student's learning from text as well as the teacher's choice of text; for example, the learner's reading ability, the readability of the text, the author's writing style, and the teacher's objectives. Then Allington and Strange present their thesis: before a teacher can "tailor textual material to the reading abilities of the learners and to the goals of the content area lesson," he or she needs to understand (1) the basic processes in learning from text and (2) the most common barriers to such learning (p. 10).

Subsequent chapters present orderly and thorough analyses of aspects of content area reading instruction. Elements and theories of the reading process are briefly but clearly explained. Barriers to learning from text (such as inability to vary reading rate and lack of structural analysis skills) are covered not only in sufficient depth but also in a style conducive to readers who are not necessarily experts in the reading field. Humor is often effective in getting points across. For instance, when discussing strategies for increasing "wait time" after asking students a question, Allington and Strange advise teachers to scan up and down the rows of students, count slowly to five, and "take a deep breath and check your fingernails for hangnails" (p. 199).

By focusing first on assessing reading ability by commercial and informal means, then on evaluating textual materials, and finally on setting goals for teaching and learning, the authors provide their audience with an appropriate sequence for examining students' reading experiences, needs, and objectives. Particularly noteworthy is the emphasis on helping students learn to read effectively in both the narrative mode, in which they "learn to read," and the expository mode, in which they "read to learn" (p. 182).

A highlight of *Learning Through Reading in the Content Areas* is its final chapter on differentiated instruction, which describes strategies (multiple text instruction, use of the Group Informal Screening and Diagnostic Tests, and constellation grouping) that enable the reading specialist, curriculum director, and inservice consultant to “ease the burden” of the content area teacher. The authors’ “Three-Year Plan” provides an especially workable timetable for the beginning teacher who would like to introduce differentiated instruction into her or his classroom (pp. 229-33).

Admittedly, some aspects of this text may fall short of the reader’s expectations. One might, for instance, take issue with the authors’ belief that middle- and secondary-level students should receive instruction that focuses exclusively on the development of silent reading abilities to the exclusion of oral reading abilities (p. 92). Then, too, at times one might find the authors’ solutions to teaching problems too flippant, as when they discuss reluctant learners’ complaints about being asked to read what they consider “baby books.” Rather than offer concrete suggestions for dealing with the situation, Allington and Strange simply state that “such reluctance can be overcome with adroit efforts by the teacher” (p. 231).

Despite these minor shortcomings, however, *Learning Through Reading in the Content Areas* admirably fulfills the purpose for which it is intended: it provides content area teachers, reading specialists, and curriculum directors with specific strategies for helping students improve their literal textual comprehension as well as their ability to read carefully and critically.