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Quick Reviews

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QUICK REVIEWS

Homer Carter Reading Council

Barron, Roderick W., Linnea C. Ehri, and Jeffrey M. Feldman, *The Recognition of Words*. International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, P.O. Box 8139, Newark, Delaware 19711.

The Recognition of Words by Barron, Ehri, and Feldman is the third title in an IRA series on "The Development of the Reading Process."

The series is organized around the notion that the child's reading behavior, among other things, is a developmental phenomenon. In *The Recognition of Words*, Linnea Ehri proposes a general model for the recognition of words which requires that various aspects of words must be amalgamated and assimilated into the child's previously constructed linguistic systems.

Berger, Allen and Anne Werdman, "Listening and Auding Activities and Research." *The English Journal*, Vol. 67, #5, May 1978; pp. 36-39.

The authors stress the millions of dollars lost each year because of poor listening habits, together with the emotional distress and anguish caused in part by our not listening to the needs of ourselves and others. They feel teachers must learn and teach better listening. With this in mind, they present fifteen classroom activities which can be used as presented, or in modified version, for children of all ages and backgrounds. Also, they laud the steady increase in listening research in the past twenty-five years.

Cleary, Donna McKee, *Thinking Thursdays: Language Arts in the Reading Lab*. International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, P.O. Box 8139, Newark, Delaware 19711.

This 87-page book reveals a creative and humanistic method for approaching reading problems of the secondary student.

Author Donna Cleary feels thinking is what reading and learning is all about and that students experiencing difficulty need warmth, love and success in their reading program.

Citron, Abraham F., "All the Way with Phonics," *Spelling Progress Bulletin*, (Summer, 1978) 2:15-18.

Through extensive experimentation in the Detroit Public Schools Citron has drawn the conclusion that the success rate for spelling is significantly higher when a phonic system of teaching is employed.

While there are many proposals and ideas for changing our present system, Citron suggests one similar to that chosen by the Australian Teachers Federation where one change to bring the phonemic system back in line to an alphabetic one is made every four years. This would allow for necessary changes and adjustments over a long period of time.

Examples of advantages and research experience are provided to support the proposal.

Fay, Leo, "Spelling and Reading: How are They Related," *Spelling Progress Bulletin*, (Summer, 1978) 2:11-12.

The relationship between spelling and reading has long been debated. While there are definite commonalities between the poor speller and poor reader, the relationship between the good reader-poor speller and good speller-poor reader is less understood.

Most problems stem from English spelling inconsistencies and teaching techniques. Teachers are cautioned to take both into account but to avoid confusing the important differences in the encoding and decoding processes involved in spelling and reading respectively.

Graves, Donald H., "Balance the Basics: Let them Write," *Learning*, (April, 1978) 8:30-33.

Sure to provoke controversy, this timely article deals with the current neglected state of writing in American schools today.

Donald Graves emphasizes the importance of writing as a complex discipline that develops a person's intelligence and ability to analyze and synthesize many levels of thinking. Unfortunately, due to a myriad of reasons, writing is rarely taught or even valued in education according to the author.

The mutually beneficial relationship between reading and writing is explored. However, Graves feels that the concern with reading is a "national neurosis" and has directly contributed to the decline of teaching writing.

A lucid and well thought out "process-conference approach" to the teaching of writing is defined that would eliminate many of the traditional pitfalls of teaching writing.

Harper, Robert J., and Gary Kilarr, eds., *Reading and the Law*, International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, P.O. Box 8139, Newark, Delaware 19711.

Will minimal literacy standards for graduation and funding turn into maximum standards? What kind of reading will the law prescribe? Are the Basic assumptions that underlie the present

relationship between law and reading accurate?

These and similar questions are raised in *Reading and the Law*, edited by Robert J. Harper II, Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and Gary Kilarr, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, a joint publication by the International Reading Association and the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. A compilation of the writings of various authors, this text raises provocative questions in order to provide information and to encourage the awareness of a very complex problem—that posed by the relationship between law and reading.

Mountain, Lee, *Attention Span Stories*, Jamestown Publishers, P.O. Box 6743, Providence, Rhode Island 02940. 1978. Illustrated by David Ireland.

Jamestown publishers have presented a series of high interest low level reading booklets that are both well constructed and beautifully illustrated.

The grade 2-3 reading level booklets are the "branching" story variety where a student chooses the outcome from among 3 possibilities. Author Lee Mountain has written exciting sequences and follows up each "trip" with a unique system of pressure sensitive picture stickers the student places on worksheets in the back. The pupil then answers appropriate questions designed to improve his attention and concentration.

The series all involve trips with varying outcomes. Students are motivated through the exciting, well written material to explore all the possibilities available. While these are most suitable for grades 6-12, adult learners and capable upper elementary students would find them of value also.

Myers, Miles, "Five Approaches to the Teaching of Writing," *Learning*, (April, 1978) 8:38-41.

Five tried and proven means for effective teaching of writing are explained. These methods: the models approach, the steps approach, the sentence-combining approach, the relationships approach and the theory-of-the-world approach are not necessarily new or gimmicky but are based on past practice and research.

Confusion in the field of teaching writing has resulted in some chaos regarding techniques but author Miles Myers believes that the above, in combination or isolation depending on individual needs, still are the best means for providing a sound approach to writing.

Naumann, Nancy, "Anatomy of a Reading Problem," *Learning* (May/June, 1978) 6:80-83.

An interesting solution to the management of individualized reading instruction. A great deal of summertime work turned out to result in a successful reading skills program. This may give you an idea about how you can spend your summer profitably. Utilizes existing materials in a functional manner.

"Nonsense Word Stories," (Idea Place), *Learning*, (April, 1978) 6:53.

Nonsense Word Stories from *Thinkerthings* (duplicating masters published by Addison Wesley). Uses nonsense words in logical context. Could be used as model for similar activities. Should be stimulating and challenging for all levels.

Osburn, Bess, and Gloria McDonell, "Improving Language Arts Instruction: A Three-Part Workshop." *Language Arts*, Vol. 55, #5, May 1978; pp. 591-595.

Osburn and McDonell feel that if reading skills are to be improved, classroom teachers must become aware of the interrelatedness of reading to language processes so that instruction may be geared toward activities which reinforce all communication skills. With this in mind, they have designed a series of workshops to be used by primary, upper elementary, or secondary school teachers, and describe them in detail. These workshops have been designed to develop teachers' understanding of the systems which underlie language and the language process, and to provide model activities which will support and build on the language competencies.

Paine, Carolyn, Ed., "If I Read This Book . . . Do I Have to Write a Book Report?" *Learning*, (May/June, 1978) 9:64-65.

Readers of *Learning* share some innovative approaches and alternatives to the typical book report.

Included are such suggestions as secret student pen pals sharing ideas about books, activity cards placed in book pockets, pictorial book reporting, letter correspondence between students in different classes about books, creating art type "quilt" of books read by students with appropriate data, and collecting various items related to a book in a brown bag to share with other classmates. All ideas presented move away from the structured report form.

Readers are asked to remember that not every book needs reporting of any type; free reading should be free.

Robinson, Richard D., "Children's Reading: What Parents Can Do To Help," University of Missouri-Columbia, 1978.

This 16-page booklet offers simple and practical advice to parents who wish to help their children achieve a good experience with reading. A 50-point checklist for parents is provided to see how the home reading program measures up to the ideal. Suggestions that could interfere with the actual teaching experience are not made.

In addition, common questions that parents might have regarding today's teaching of reading, techniques, and materials are answered. Cooperation and communication between the school and home is stressed as essential.