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Ten-Second Reviews

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TEN-SECOND REVIEWS



Fall '76

Berger, Allen, and Rita Bean (editors), "School Reading Programs: Criteria for Excellence" *Proceedings of the 28th Language Communications Conference*, Nov. 7-8, 1975, University of Pittsburgh.

The five main presentations given in their entirety in this booklet are coordinated attempts to treat in detail the several facets of school reading programs. The discussions and summaries that follow the talks are included. From the "Instructional Outcomes" (delivered by William Eller, SUNY, Buffalo) to "Assessment of Effective Reading Programs" (delivered by Rita M. Bean of University of Pittsburgh), the depth of deliberation and the incisiveness of the authors are most impressive.

Breslauer, Ann H., Jay D. Mack, and W. Keith Wilson, "A Visual-Perceptual Training Program," *Academic Therapy*, (Spring, 1976) 11:3, p. 321.

This article is a detailed description of an innovative program of remediation for children experiencing learning difficulties related to perceptual deficiencies. In addition to evidence of success for the program, the authors offer lists and sources of tests used in measurement and evaluation.

Burgett, Russell Edward, and Roger W. Dodge, "Is There a Difference Between Learning Disability and Reading Personnel?", *The Journal of Reading*, (Apr., 1976) 19:7, p. 540.

This is a discussion comparing the roles of reading teachers and learning disabilities teachers. In the light of the responses the authors received to their study, it would seem persons designated as learning disabilities teachers are doing more for less remuneration. This matter needs further investigation, if teacher preparation programs are to have significance for hiring agents.

Carrillo, Lawrence W., *Teaching Reading: A Handbook*, 1976, St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, N.Y., New York, 148 pp.

In the space of less than 150 pages, the author takes the uninitiated reader through the main ideas that are important to the teaching of reading. In addition to explaining the latest basic methods and strategies being presented by experts, Carrillo informs his readers where they may obtain further materials on each of the many aspects of this field. The book has an excellent chapter on "Improvement of Specific Reading Skills" which includes symptoms, objectives, procedures, references, and materials. The section on tests and testing is up-to-date and comprehensive. Finally, the author has included a valuable glossary of terms related to the teaching of reading. From this reader's standpoint, the handbook would be a most useful aid to beginning teachers, and to secondary teachers who have little background in improving reading techniques.

Ching, Doris C., "Reading and the Bilingual Child," 1976, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, 41 pp.

In this monograph of the Reading Aids Series, the author uses upwards of thirty sources, plus her own expertise and experience, to make the challenge of teaching children of other cultural settings more a likelihood than a possibility. It is a practical booklet. The ideas will help the teacher avoid the error of insulting the child of another culture through misunderstanding or ignorance.

Dwyer, Carol A., "Test Content and Sex Differences in Reading," *The Reading Teacher*, (May, 1976) 29:8, p. 753.

Working for the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, the author examined tests on elementary and secondary levels to learn about the extent of sex-role stereotyping. Dwyer gives a comprehensive report on the progress that has been made in "balancing the content" since the problem was first recognized. The article pays special attention to the Scholastic Aptitude Test.

Earle, Richard A., *Teaching Reading and Mathematics*, A Monograph in the Reading Aids Series, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, 1976, 88 pp.

This brief work is written by a person who has a rich background of experience in reading, and has here woven that reading knowledge into the techniques and approaches used by math teachers. The monograph will be extremely useful to teachers who wish to help prevent reading difficulties in their particular content areas; that is, it helps one teach reading in the language of math.

Fretz, Sada, "Why Nonfiction Books Are So Dull and What You Can Do About It" *Learning* (May/June, 1976) 4:9, p. 68.

Being angry, plus having a great deal of comprehensive data on the matter at hand, add up to an article approaching an expose. Sada Fretz accuses the authors and publishers of selling "low quality juvenile nonfiction" to libraries in the schools, and tells us bluntly that the "condition will continue until teachers themselves go into the libraries to discover for themselves which books are inaccurate and useless and which deserve to be read and used."

Fry, Edward B., and Lillian R. Putnam, "Should All Teachers Take More Reading Courses?" *Journal of Reading*, (May, 1976) 19:8, p. 615.

In this cogent open letter to the state board of education of New Jersey, the authors support the proposal that all teachers certified in the state should have at least six hours of teaching reading on their transcript for a Bachelor's degree. An editor's note indicates the letter was effective, as the requirement will be enforced in 1977.

Graves, Michael F., and Judythe P. Patberg, "A Tutoring Program for Adolescents Seriously Deficient in Reading," *Journal of Reading Behavior*, (Spring, 1976) 8:1, p. 27.

The authors describe a one year project in tutoring ten students who were five and six years retarded. While the approach and the methods are well delineated, meriting the attention of professionals in the field, it was not difficult to predict success for the project. Statistics do not hide the fact that deficient readers are helped by enthusiasm and warmth, unlimited time and patience, and trained personnel.

Hansell, T. Stevenson, "Readability, Syntactic Transformations, and Generative Semantics," *Journal of Reading*, (April, 1976) 19:7, p. 557.

In addition to an excellent review of readability development since its beginning, the reader is treated to a discussion of the deeper and more technical factors that make written communication difficult.

Kaplan, Don, "Getting Into Shapes: Exploring Abstract Form in the Classroom," *Learning*, (April, 1976) 4:8, p. 68.

Teachers of elementary children who discuss the need for more experience with concepts as a means for preparing to read should look at this article. The author is most creative and imaginative in his descriptions of ways to develop experiential background for learning

concepts. His ideas may not be immediately adopted, but his methods will stretch the thinking of all readers.

Kaufman, Maurice, "Measuring Oral Reading Accuracy," *Reading World*, (May, 1976) 15:4, p. 216.

The article points out the need for some standards or norming procedures in the oral reading part of diagnosis. Clinicians have measured oral reading ability for two generations, and have now stopped to look at the several standards being used.

Lang, Janell Baker, "Self-Concept and Reading Achievement—an Annotated Bibliography," *The Reading Teacher*, (May, 1976) 29:8, p. 787.

Here are listed almost sixty sources of materials about a most important and timely topic. The sources range from dissertations to popular articles, each described briefly as to scope and depth.

Laurita, Raymond, "Anxiety Behaviors: Cause or Effect of Faulty Reading?," *Reading Improvement*, (Summer, 1976) 13:2, p. 118.

This is a major article with considerable documentation. The author reviews the literature to establish some agreement of concepts, then makes a series of observations concerning the logic of treating the disable reader before adequate treatment of faulty reading can be undertaken. Effective means of avoiding further anxiety (expecting responses which are too sophisticated) are described.

Marzano, Robert J., Norma Case, Anne Debooy, and Kathy Prochoruk, "Are Syllabication and Reading Ability Related?," *Journal of Reading*, (April, 1976) 19:7, p. 545.

The authors attempt to answer a question which plagues conscientious secondary teachers: Is it necessary to spend time teaching syllabication for better reading comprehension? Their study results indicate some correlation between syllabication ability and word recognition; however, the gain in reading comprehension is very slight.

Mazurkiewicz, Albert J., and Jane Gould, "Spelling Preferences and Instructional Considerations," *Reading World*, (May, 1976) 15:4, p. 203.

Continuing his interest in the problems connected with spelling (see March '76, *Reading World*), the author asks the question "Do teachers teach *both* spellings of words which have variant spellings?"

Jane Gould, reading specialist in Madison, New Jersey, helped the author find some interesting answers in this study. We as teachers are found wanting in *awareness* of equivalent spellings.

Muehl, Siegmar, and Mario C. Di Nello, "Early First Grade Skills Related to Subsequent Reading Performance: A Seven Year Followup Study," *Journal of Reading Behavior*, (Spring, 1976)8:1, p. 67.

In their research to find the skills which best predict success in reading, the authors uncover some answers to long-standing mysteries. While there were significant short-term predictors, the indication of future reading success which most consistently contributed to reading performance at each grade level was the ability to name letters.

Neilsen, Allan R., and Carl Braun, "Teaching the Drop-Out to Read—A Case Report," *Academic Therapy*, (Spring, 1976) 9:3, p. 275.

If a reading specialist wished to use a clinical case to point out the pitfalls that line the way from identification to recommendation, one might be well advised to cite this case of an eighteen-year-old illiterate. For instance, the tendency to evaluate students according to a single test of potential and interpreting without considering individual limitations, may be *creating* causative factors in severe retardation cases. Lorne's case is typical of the many students who spend ten years in formal schooling, yet are only taught to believe themselves total failures.

Phillips, Charles M., "Illiteracy: A Shortcut to Crime," *Spelling Progress Bulletin*, (Summer, 1976) 16:2, p. 1.

The author of this brief article pleads with educators and legislators to *do something* to help young people become successful in reading. His one statement, "Eighty percent of the new criminals I see would not be (in court) if they had graduated from high school and could read and write adequately" should be sufficient. The need for action is most urgent.

Rosen, Ellen, "Readability Analysis of SRA Power Builders," *Journal of Reading*, (April, 1976) 19:7, p. 548.

The author applied the Dale-Chall Readability Formula to one graduated set of folders in the individualized reading kit. Her findings may be taken as advice to teachers: regard all grade level pronouncements as being *in that range*. The article is a clear call to publishers to begin using accurate scales.

Ross, Stephanie S., "Bibliotherapy," *The Florida Reading Quarterly*, (April, 1976), 12:3, p. 23.

This is an article containing basic concepts and definitions in a field that is growing as a body of scientific knowledge. Here, the rationale and the processes are related in some detail by an author who is herself deeply concerned and involved in the area of endeavor.

Stewart, William J., "Teaching Children and not Subjects in the Language Arts," *Reading Improvement*, (Summer, 1976) 13:2, p. 71.

A specific description is given in this article of an individualized approach to the teaching of language arts. The way to avoid the pitfall of teaching subject matter, says the author, is to adjust programs of work in the communication skills to each student.

Thelen, Judith, "Improving Reading in Science," an IRA Service Bulletin, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, 1976, 54 pp.

Here is a monograph which attempts to give practical help and ideas to science teachers who are willing to incorporate reading instruction into their work. As Harold Herber says in the foreword, reading and the reasoning process should closely accompany the content of science courses. This six chapter booklet helps the teacher keep the process and the content in simultaneous progress.

Vaughan, Joseph L., Jr., "Interpreting Readability Assessments," *Journal of Reading*, (May, 1976) 19:8, p. 635.

Before the advent of the "easy to do" readability formulas, there was little comparison or comment as to what degree of accuracy was involved. Now, with four or more to choose from, we are taking closer looks at the old and the new, placed side-by-side. In his article, Vaughan raises some interesting questions about expected levels of comprehension in reading.

Welker, William A., "Reading and the High School Student: An Attitudinal Approach to Reading," *Reading Improvement*, (Summer, 1976) 13:2, p. 98.

The reader is treated in this article to a step-by-step way to develop a successful reading program that will *appeal* to high schoolers instead of reinforcing resistance. There is real merit in an approach that considers and treats the attitudes of students who need help in reading.

Zimet, Sara Goodman, "Reader Context and Sex Differences in Achievement," *The Reading Teacher*, (May, 1976) 29:8, p. 758.

This psychiatrist author cites the content of elementary reading materials as one probable cause for the fact that boys make up 75-80% of all disabled readers. Her request that new content be written which "breaks away from old patterns of stereotyping" will not be easy to fulfill.