Reviews

REVIEWS

Homer Carter Reading Council

Baskin, Barbara Holland, Karen H. Harris, and Coleen C. Salley, "Making the Poetry Connection," *The Reading Teacher,* (December 1976) 30:259-265.

    This article restores one's faith that some teachers are diligently putting into practice their conviction that "poetry should be one of the most widely enjoyed experiences in the elementary school." Until more future teachers are led to see the beauty, strength, versatility, and affective potential in poetry; education may continue its drift toward sterility.

Bowden, Nancy Butler, Laveria E. Hutchison, Lee Mountain, "Where to Share: A Potpourri of Reading Journals," *The Reading Teacher,* (January 1977) 30:405-411.

    Once in a while a group of energetic professionals do us all the great service of compiling information that the rest of us all wished for but lacked the drive to look up. This annotated listing of journals related to reading will be welcomed everywhere. The authors give the scope, the direction, the availability, and the affiliation of journals in the U.S.A., Canada, and England.

Canney, George, and Robert Schreiner, "A Study of the Effectiveness of Selected Syllabication Rules and Phonogram Patterns for Word Attack," *Reading Research Quarterly,* 1976-77 Winter, Vol. XII, International Reading Association.

    Canney and Schreiner found in their study that intensive instruction in the flexible application of syllabication rules, or the identification of specific phonogram patterns did not improve word attack skills or the reading comprehension of second grade pupils tested. The study did not, however, attempt to examine the value of teaching syllabication rules to improve spelling, or to help the more fluent readers explain their ability to divide unfamiliar words into syllables.

    Although the investigators realize more research is needed in this area they do maintain that syllabication instruction which adheres closely to dictionary rules and rote learning of common phonogram patterns as decoding strategies should be questioned as sound practices of instruction.

Carrillo, Lawrence W., "Fonyx," *The Reading Teacher* (December 1976), 30:280-282.

> In this very important brief article, the author calls for some caution and reevaluation of teaching practices in phonics. Many teachers have fallen into habits of presenting phonics in ways that are ineffectual at best, and possibly harmful to the learning child at worst. Carrillo pleads with reading teachers to re-examine what they are doing, with certain of the author's admonitions in mind.

Cunningham, James W., "Metaphor and Reading Comprehension," *Journal of Reading Behavior,* (Winter 1976) VIII:363-368.

> This article seemed to have the design and the intention to help close the door on further argument about measuring readability. It wished to point out that metaphor in passages makes the job of reading more difficult than indicated according to readability formulas. Since figures of speech and other devices are what make the difficulty of poetry non-measurable, the reviewer looked for this article to clinch things at last. However, the figures used in the passage may be somewhat questionable choices for this experiment, and we would suggest further research is in order.

Hack, Gary, "Theme Schemes," *Teacher,* (January 1977) 94: 77-78.

> A stimulating and fascinating way to entice children to read a variety of content is to use Theme Schemes. Motivation techniques include: bulletin boards that flash lights; activity cards; and, plenty of adventure, mystery and autobiographical books. The children make their own choices, prepare a folder, and are evaluated with a teacher-student conference.

Hood, Joyce, "Sight Words Are Not Going Out of Style," *The Reading Teacher,* (January 1977) 30:379-382.

> In this succinct article the author gives the reader a quick photographer's panning across the changing sight word lists through educational history, marking the disagreements among experts over methods and concepts, and offering some excellent practical considerations for teachers who have questions about the uses of sight words for remedial readers and others.

Ivarie, Judith J., "Programming for Individualization in the Junior High School."*Journal of Reading,* (January 1977) 20:295-300.

> The author uses a program matrix to teach students self-management skills and meet individual needs. The matrix provides

organization for both the teacher and the student. It also enables the teacher to work with each student on a one-to-one basis. Details of the matrix are explained, and concepts of the program are illustrated through photographs

Judge, Robert E., "The Effect of Presentation Mode and Material Difficulty on Third and Seventh Graders' Use of Phonemic and Semantic Attributes to Encode Words into Long-term Memory" (abstracted report), Reading Research Quarterly. XII/2 Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976-1977.

Judge used a population of 80 Schenectady public school third and seventh graders to test three hypotheses concerning encoding: phonemic and semantic attributes, presentation modes, and difficulty of material. Students were divided into visual and auditory groups, presented 40 words in isolation as well as embedded in context of passages; words written for visual, taped for auditory. Students were asked to recall words four to six hours later; phonemic and semantic distractors were used in the process. Partial support was found for the researcher's first and third hypotheses' none for his second. Although this experiment did not lend itself to generalizations about memory encoding, it clearly indicated that embedding items in context does improve recognition memory for words. Judge challenges reading and psycholinguistic researchers to develop a better understanding of what is taking place when children are processing information within the bounds of linguistic behavior.

Kavale, Kenneth A. and Jimmy D. Lindsey, "Adult Basic Education: Has It Worked?" *Journal of Reading,* (February 1977) 20:368-376.

The authors of this detailed report contend: ". . . a review of the literature suggests that the Adult Basic Education movement has made little progress in achieving its aim of promoting adult literacy." Attention is drawn to the need for quantitative and qualitative data in the research literature, knowledge of how adults learn, and programs that are appropriate.

McCullough, Constance M., "Teaching Time." *Journal of Reading,* (February 1977) 20:358-360.

With tongue in cheek the author delivers a stirring commentary depicting several ways the educational process has made it difficult to learn to read. The commentary is a strong reminder that readers need to understand what they are doing and why.

McNair, Shirley and Bischoff, Velma, "Cooperating Reading," *Teacher,* (December 1976) 94:61-62.

> Can a classroom teacher find happiness with a remedial reading specialist in a coordinated curriculum?
> The article deals with steps you might take to develop, improve, or maintain a reading program for disabled readers with the concentrated effort of classroom teacher and reading teacher.

Morrison, Faye, "On the Right Track," *Teacher,* (February 1977) 94:94-99.

> Practical and useful techniques for teaching elementary students to organize research materials are discussed in this article. The ideas are designed for students with reading and writing abilities and simplify all the tasks included in preparing a research paper.

Namekawa, Michio, "Reading the Oriental Way of Thinking,"*Journal of Reading,* (March 1977) 20:482-487.

> Traditional Oriental concepts of reading emphasize quiet concentration, depth of interpretation, and sharing through recitation. A meld of these with the Western stress on keeping up with the "knowledge explosion" could benefit both cultures.

Peters, Charles W., "How to Get More Comprehensive Reading Programs at the Secondary Level,"*Journal of Reading,* March 1977) 20:513-519.

> Since most reading programs at the secondary level tend to operate in isolation (remedial, developmental, and/or reading infused into the content area), there is a genuine need for a comprehensive approach to reading. A schoolwide program needs clearly defined roles of content teachers and specialists, administrative support, realistic goals, and well planned inservice programs.

Pienaar, Peter T., "Breakthrough in Beginning Reading: Language Experience Approach," *The Reading Teacher,* (February 1977) 30:489-496.

> According to the teachers' comments, anyone who uses LEAP and observes the progress made would not want to go back to any other system. Language experience is not new, but each school that gives it an honest attempt is impressed with results, and feels deeply gratified by the "discovery."

Powell, William R., "Levels of Literacy," *Journal of Reading,* (March 1977) 20:488-492.

Powell describes three levels of literacy. Preliteracy (grade level 4.0 ± .5) involves the acquisition of the fundamental areas of communication and computation (listening, speaking, reading, writing and math). At the Basic Literacy level (grade level 5.5 ± .5) the skills are equal to the demands of the surrounding world.

Richek, Margaret A., "Reading Comprehension of Anaphoric Forms in Varying Linguistic Contexts," *Reading Research Quarterly,* XII/2, International Reading Association, 1976-77.

The inability of school-aged children to comprehend anaphoric forms (words such as pronouns) comes in conflict with the frequency of these forms in print. Both the comprehension of three anaphoric forms: 1) noun: John saw Mary and *John* said hello to Mary; 2) pronoun: John saw Mary and he said hello to her; 3) null: John saw Mary and said hello to her; and, the effects of contextual variations: kernals (embedded elliptical sentences), length, parallelism, and question were investigated in Richek's study. Two hundred children were asked to read paragraphs and respond to a question by writing a one word answer identifying the appropriate antecedent. The researchers found that if the results reflect children's ability to comprehend anaphoric structures in a school setting, then they are disturbing. In the null form, which is widely used in children's reading, comprehension drops to 60 per cent correct. Of the four complexity factors only the question variable significantly affected difficulty, but complexity affects comprehension. The results have implications for both educators and editors of children's books.

Stecher, Judith, "TV As a Two-Way Street in Learning, *Teacher* (November 1976) 94:46-52.

Television is influencing today's school age children. Television occupies too much of a child's life. Television is essentially a passive, secondhand experience.

Judith Stecher says teachers can use television as a valuable stimulus to language expansion and gives many ideas.

Terry, Pamela R., "The Effect of Orthographic Transformations upon Speed and Accuracy of Semantic Categorizations" (abstracted report), *Reading Research Quarterly,* XII/2 Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976-77.

Terry addressed herself to two questions: Do good readers vary only their speed when reading difficult material as opposed to easy

material, or do they also vary their manner of processing the materials? The researcher then concerned herself with the controversy over whether reading is a process of serially processing words letter-by-letter or whether it is a process of recognizing larger units (syllables, morphemes, or words) so that several letters are processed simultaneously in parallel. By using a word list with regular or transformed (mirror image) orthography and degraded and non-degraded (randomly deleting 30% of dots forming each letter) print with forty college students, she found "when fluent readers encounter familiar words presented in regular orthography, they seem able to chunk that information holistically, at least within the upper bounds of 3-6 letter words as used in this study. On the other hand, when fluent readers encounter words which tend to pose a decoding problem, there was evidence for serial letter-by-letter processing." Fluent readers adopt different, strategies of word recognition depending upon factors having to do with the ease of decoding the visual input. She concluded that we ought to be wary of assuming that the way to teach a beginner is to start him or her out with the same strategies used by fluent readers.

Troy, Anne, "Literature for content Area Learning," *The Reading Teacher,* (February 1977) 30:470-474.

The author, a Loyola University faculty member, gives teachers many ideas for helping students *feel* the impact of their lessons, through the use of biography in history and fiction in science. Many titles of works which can be used in various fields are given and commented on.

Vacca, Richard, "Readiness to Read Content Areas Assignments,"*Journal of Reading,* (February 1977) 20:387-392.

Since the mental state of readiness is a prerequisite at every level of learning, the author suggests that a "structured overview" is needed which will help learners link what they know with what they will study. Content area teachers need to concern themselves with such readiness factors as motivation, background information, purpose, direction, and their subject's specific vocabulary.

Yep, Lawrence, "Writing Dragonwings," *The Reading Teacher,* (January 1977) 30:359-363.

A writer's frank account of how he wrote a book is always useful to teachers who encourage the creative motive in students. This article is especially valuable because it explains authors' complex motivations, and draws comparisons to other stories, other cultures, and other writers' handling of the language.