



# Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts

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Volume 17  
Issue 3 April 1977

Article 15

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4-1977

## Reading Horizons vol. 17, no. 3

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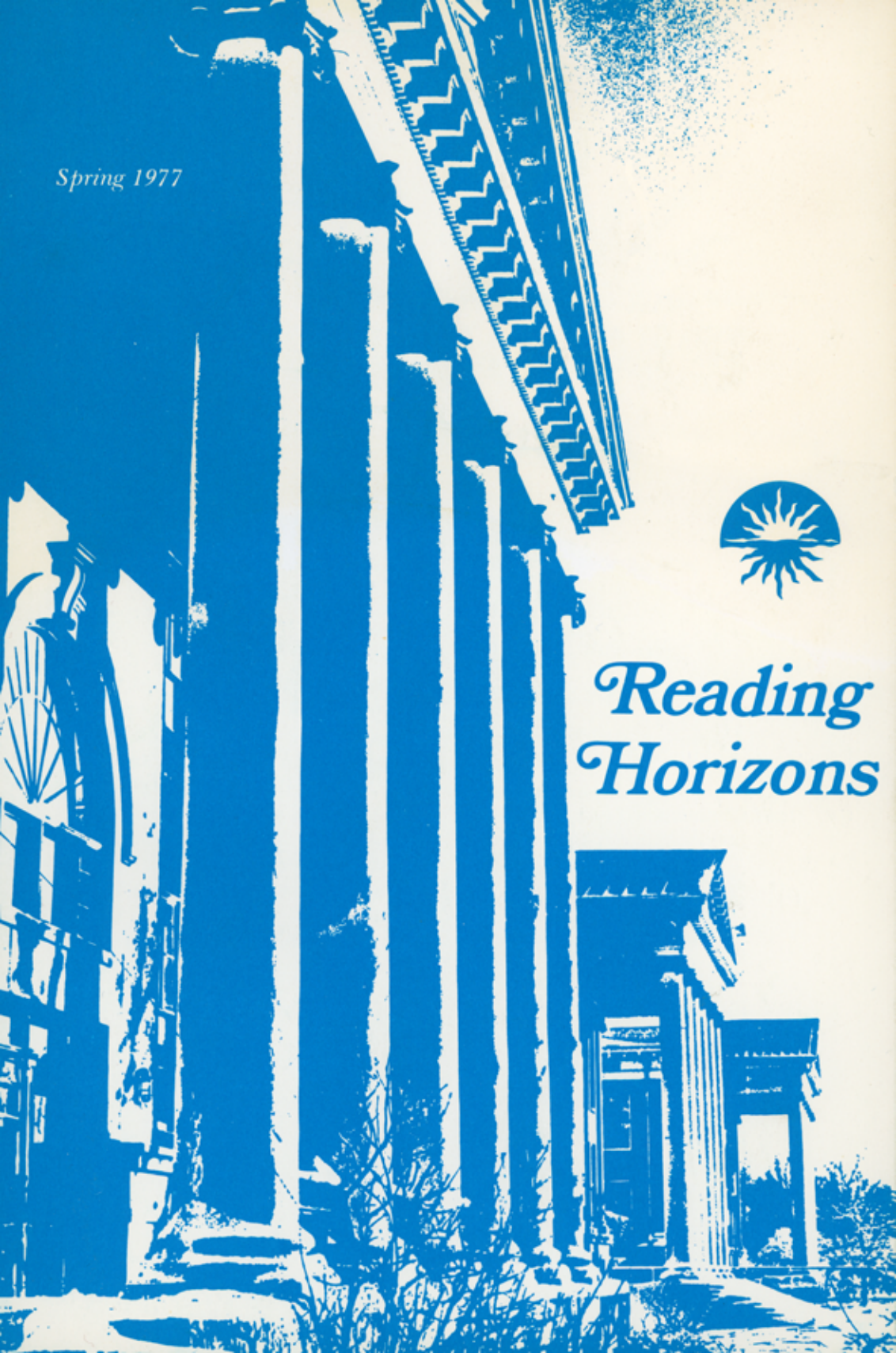
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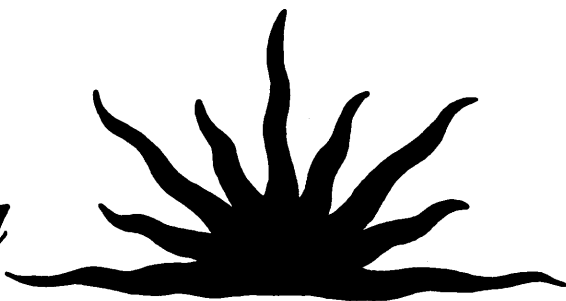


# *Reading Horizons*





# Reading



# HORIZONS

VOLUME 17

NUMBER 3

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A professional journal of the Reading Center and Clinic of Western Michigan University and the Homer L. J. Carter Reading Council. HORIZONS is published quarterly by the Western Michigan University Press. Copyright 1976, 2nd class postage rate paid at Kalamazoo, MI.

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Subscriptions are available to all persons interested in reading at \$4.00 per year. Address all correspondence and change of address to READING HORIZONS, Reading Center and Clinic, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI 49008.

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Manuscripts, books, and any other materials for possible publication or review can be sent to Kenneth VanderMeulen, Editor, READING HORIZONS, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI 49008. Author's guides and publication policies are available on demand.

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### GETTING IT TOGETHER

If there is a ground swell of enthusiasm for teaching reading and writing together (and we don't see how they could ever have become separated), this great movement deserves all the enthusiastic support we can give it. When several articles in recent months have pointed out the excellent results obtained by having students write reflections and reactions as they were stimulated by their reading experiences, the authors were demonstrating the common sense of an approach that should have prevailed from the start.

There is no denial intended here that socializing experiences and audio-visual aids and activities enhance the growing up processes, but we assert that teaching reading has for too long been held as second to oral participation in use of academic time. Writing has too often run a poor third, scarcely emphasized at all.

Now that writing and reading have been recognized as a necessary team in learning communication skills, we would recommend that the next step be taken in a natural sequence of events; that content, reading, and writing be fused in every curricular area. It is not only logical, but it is *essential* that each student be guided in helping authors create the textbooks in the various fields of endeavor. With parts of pages in the lessons on social roles, for example, literally inviting the written contribution by the student, reading and writing can occupy a central place in learning again. Teachers don't need to become reading specialists to teach reading if content, reading, and writing are regarded as one.

Ken VanderMeulen  
Editor





# AVOIDING DANGERS IN THE SECONDARY READING PROGRAM: THE PRINCIPAL'S ROLE

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With the increasing emphasis upon reading instruction on the secondary level, the total school faculty and principal must be wary of the many pitfalls that can doom the program to failure.

While the remedial program is probably the most frequent and likely program to be instituted, it must be designed and organized with care; otherwise, the program may become nothing more than a dumping ground for undisciplined or incorrigible students.

The principal must play a key role in establishing the program; his support and guidance are necessary. He, therefore, must have some knowledge on the Do's and Don'ts of operating a successful remedial reading program.

The following suggestions are made to serve as guidelines in establishing a secondary remedial reading program:

1. *Sell the faculty on the need for a secondary reading program.* In all probability the faculty may recognize the reading problems existing in the school. Depending upon the socioeconomic area, reading retardation can range from 25-60% of the school's student population. Many teachers believe that students should already know how to read before high school; however, in reality, many do not. They have great difficulty coping with the higher level of reading matter encountered. The secondary school, then, must recognize its responsibility to helping children through the establishment of such a program.
2. *Sell the students on the need for reading instruction.* Too often, both teachers and students view reading as an elementary subject. The students view the reading class with negativism. There is a stigma attached to taking reading in high school. This belief has been perpetuated for years by ending formal reading instruction at the sixth or eighth grade level. The concept that reading instruction is essential and necessary, particularly for students needing remediation, must be impressed upon students in a tactful and sensitive manner. A good reading specialist can be helpful here and the faculty needs to be sensitive.
3. *Hire a qualified secondary reading specialist.* Too often the error is made in assigning an existing teacher within the school to teach the remedial reading classes. Several common tactics are used which generally prove fruitless. The first approach is to slot the English teacher into the position. The erroneous assumption here is that

since English involves reading, perhaps more so than any other subject, the English teacher is best equipped to teach reading. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Reading is a skills area, involving diagnostic techniques, specialized methods, and a wide range of specialized materials. The English teacher is oriented toward literature, and as a result, teaches literature instead of dealing with the intricate areas of skill development.

Another mistake frequently made is to bring in an elementary teacher from another building and assign her, usually on a part time basis, several reading classes in the high school. While the elementary reading specialist may be qualified professionally and knowledgeably, she probably will not be successful in the program; her philosophy and orientation toward teaching will be elementary oriented. Her past experience with the attitude toward students will not be conducive toward the nature of the high school student, she will probably encounter great resistance on the part of students and experience personal frustration.

4. *Set the reading program in a physically favorable environment.* Impressions are important, and if a program is to succeed, it must get off to a good start. Too often, when the reading program is initiated, the classes may be held in a room in the basement or some other undesirable place in the school. This will give the program a third rate appearance, and will consequently contribute to any existing negativism or resistance. With an overcrowded or overburdened curriculum, classroom space may be limited; however, the remedial reading program is just as vital to the school as any other subject area and should be treated equally. Therefore, it is essential that the program be initiated and continued on a sound basis for the most optimum acceptance for all involved. The establishment of a favorable looking and material stocked classroom is imperative for the success of the program.
5. *Identify students for the program on the basis of need.* Allow the reading specialist wide latitude in identifying those students who will profit most from remedial instruction. The specialist can examine past reading scores, academic grades, and most importantly reading potential or reading expectancy level. Some students will benefit more from instruction than others. Teacher recommendations should be an integral aspect in identifying those students needing the most aid in reading improvement. If these proper means of identification are utilized, the program will not become a "dumping ground" for academic and behavioral problem students. Above all, keep class sizes small—no more than 15 students per class. It is far better to help 15 students thoroughly than it is to perform little or no help for 25 or 30 students. The reading specialist often has to work on an individual and small group basis; this cannot be achieved if the classes total above 15.

In conclusion, the above guidelines will provide a sound operating framework in establishing the remedial reading program. Good teaching,

faculty and student support and understanding, a favorable classroom environment, and proper identification procedures will enhance the success of the program by allowing it to begin properly. If the principal follows the guidelines and avoids the common pitfalls, he will become the instructional leader of a successful remedial reading program.

# CROSS-AGE TUTORING AND THE SACROSANCT READING PERIOD

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Cross-age tutoring in the elementary school has long been recognized as a valid means of learning for both the tutor and the tutee; (Frager & Stern, 1970). Many studies even show that the tutors make greater gains than the tutees, (Cloward, 1967). Like many validated educational innovations, however, cross-age tutoring is not practiced to any great extent in the schools, particularly the elementary schools. One of the main reasons for this is that tutoring is difficult to fit into the regular school program. Reading, writing, social studies, math, science, health, etc., all seem to fill the day of the elementary school student. The problem of time becomes more severe as the student progresses through elementary school. It is further compounded in the intermediate grades when many schools begin forms of team teaching and/or departmentalization. The question seems to be then: How can one introduce a program such as cross-age tutoring without sacrificing components of the already existing program? The answer is simple. It can't be done! Something has to go! The purpose of this study then was to see the effect on student achievement when a cross-age tutoring program was substituted for a traditional program—in this case; the traditional reading program.

## *Setting Up The Program*

Twenty-four fifth grade students all reading two or three years below grade level were selected for this experiment. This group of twenty-four was then randomly divided into two groups. One group had the normal forty-five minute reading periods, five days a week with the classroom teacher. This group used two different basal programs. The second group received only two days of regular classroom reading instruction per week. The other three days they tutored. This situation was carried out for only ten weeks, but getting classroom teachers and administrators to agree to such a practice required a great amount of persuasion.

The group from which the tutees were drawn consisted of twenty-four first graders all of whom were reading below grade level. As was done with the fifth graders, this group of twenty-four was randomly divided into two groups. One group received added instruction from the classroom teacher while their classmates received tutorial help from the fifth graders.

Both the fifth grade tutors and the first grade tutees, as well as their counterparts in the classroom, received pre and post tests. The fifth graders took the word and paragraph meaning subtests from the *Stanford Achievement Test* (Forms W & X). First graders took a criterion referenced test based on the Dolch List of 220 Basic Words.

The tutoring sessions took place in the small room of the school reading specialist and in the hall immediately adjoining that room. Normally, the classes of the reading specialist numbered about seven or eight. Giving the reading specialist a class of twenty-four represented an innovation in itself.

The first four days of the program consisted of training sessions for the fifth grade tutors. Day one of the training dealt with human relations and stressed simplified behavior modification techniques. During the second and third day of the training prospective tutors were introduced to the proper teaching techniques to use with their young charges. Basically, a flashcard procedure was used. Tutees were presented with sentences constructed from the Dolch list of 95 nouns and the Dolch Basic Sight Vocabulary of 220 words. When they were unable to read a word, the tutors would teach it to them using the appropriate flashcard. Tutors were also introduced to various word games such as Concentration, Fish, and Word Bingo all of which used the Dolch words. Part of the tutoring sessions was devoted to playing these games. In addition, tutors practiced oral expressive reading of high interest books for first graders. Before reading to their students tutors were instructed to read a book into a tape recorder, listen to their own reading, and judge if it was presented in an interesting manner.

The remaining period of tutor training dealt with scheduling and record keeping. Tutors were instructed to devote fifteen minutes of each tutoring session to teaching, fifteen minutes to oral expressive reading and/or word games, and fifteen minutes to record keeping and planning. Each tutor was given a folder in which was stored all the tutee's work. In addition the tutor kept careful record of his or her student's progress and made appropriate comments on the record sheet about the work of the tutee.

### *Implications*

The implications of this study are many. If nothing else it can be concluded that a cross-age tutoring program probably makes more efficient use of the time of the reading specialists. In many elementary schools the reading specialists are consigned to a small room where they see no more than fifty students a week. Thus, the over-all effect of their specialized training on the entire school is rather negligible. The implementation of a cross-age tutoring program definitely increases the scope of their efforts. One of the great advantages of this cross-age tutoring program is the observable increase in the self-concept of the young tutors. These particular tutors had been accustomed to failure, and to seeing their more able classmates grab the academic limelight. By placing them in a position of responsibility and by making them the academic paragons, this program almost guaranteed an increase in the self-esteem of these tutors.

The advantages of a tutoring program for the tutee were also manifold. Not only did the program provide the youngsters with truly individualized instruction, but it also provided these first graders with a truly interested "older brother or sister."

Of course, one of the most interesting implications of this particular is that it offers some proof that a cross-age tutoring situation can be as

*academically beneficial* if not more beneficial than “normal” classroom reading instruction. Thus, the fear of classroom teachers and administrators of depriving students of valuable class time appears to be ungrounded. Cross-age tutoring can be a truly educational experience, for both tutor and tutee. Teachers and administrators should make every effort to build it into the schedule even if it means sacrificing something as sacrosanct as the reading period. Just as obviously, however, no one would advocate complete abandonment of classroom instruction in favor of cross-age tutoring. Both tutors and tutees need the instructional base provided by the classroom teacher. Only then can they benefit from a tutoring program.

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# MEDIA TECHNIQUES FOR THE READING TEACHER

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The McLuhan age posed a special problem for teachers of reading. Realizing the power of non-print as an educational tool, they have had to search for the best ways to use media to strengthen, not detract from, the developing literacy of their students. Often this difficulty, as well as the expense of materials or the poor quality of available software have turned the "media revolution" into something less than a skirmish in many classrooms and schools.

The following are a few suggestions for using films to strengthen comprehension skills in the classroom. They can be used with any narrative film, even the "art-free" type common to many school libraries, or those of the "content-free" variety provided free of cost by advertisers. (A bibliography of film sources follows the examples).

1. For creation of experience stories:
  - a. Project a film, or segment of a film, without the sound. Have the students compose dialogue where appropriate as well as narration. Compare their texts with the original which can form the basis for discussion.
  - b. Same as *a* above, but use the student scripts as a basis for dramatic readings to be taped and played back with the soundless film. Emphasize expressive reading, inflection, stress, observing punctuation, etc.
  - c. Show the middle of a film and have students write and tape the beginning and end.
2. For practice of recall and sequencing: Show a segment of a film with an easily discernible sequence. Turn off the projector and have the students try to list the events and their order. Replay that part of the film to check.
3. Inferring cause-effect, effect-cause: Project the part of a film which shows a causal situation. Shut off the projector and have the students predict the outcome. Continue the film to check. This can be reversed to infer causes.
4. Inferring character traits: Project a film with rather clear-cut characterizations. Before a decisive action, stop the projector and predict how the various characters will act. Project to check and discuss differences of interpretation.
5. For a discussion of propaganda: Use films provided by commercial companies. Show the film without introduction. Following the film, discuss the ways in which they became aware of the product. Reshow



part of the film after presenting classical persuasive techniques, such as bandwagon and testimonial, which are ubiquitous in such films.

6. For study skills:

- a. Research: Have students preview a travelogue-type film, then use research sources to prepare their own narration. Show the film with their narration, using the freeze-frame to accommodate the revised version.
- b. Outlining and summarizing: Have the students create a "story board" for a segment of the film. They sketch out the major scenes and write the script beneath each sketch. Compare story boards to the original for inclusion of essential elements, sequence and subordination.

Other general techniques for use of films include: projecting a sequence backwards and stopping the projector before the causal situation—especially good for science films which can usually be found to correlate with written texts; playing a demonstration film without the sound and having the students produce the directions; thoughtful use of the stop buttons and freeze-frames can provide grist for the prediction procedure which psycholinguists have emphasized as crucial for the development of fluid reading.

The use of such techniques with film before initiating similar activities with print media can provide the task framework for the student much more effectively than verbal preparation alone. By using media intelligently, the classroom reading teacher can provide practice activities for higher order comprehension tasks.

*SOURCES FOR FREE-LOAN FILMS:* Send for catalogues to:

1. Association-Sterling Films, 866 Third Avenue, NY, NY 10022
2. Shell Film Library, 450 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, Ind. 46204
3. Modern Talking Picture Service, 2323 New Hyde Park Rd., New Hyde Park, NY 11040
4. Aetna Life and Casualty, Hartford, Conn. 06115
5. Miller Brewing Co., Film Section, 4000 W. State St., Milwaukee, Wis. 53208

# THE EFFECT OF DELETION PRODUCED SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES ON READING COMPREHENSION

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This study investigated the effect of deletion produced sentence structures, as defined by transformational generative grammar, on reading comprehension. It also investigated the occurrence of deletion produced sentence structures in a selected grade seven social studies text, *Native Tribes of Canada* (Note 1). In addition, it examined the effect of syntactic information in sentence structures in relation to the presence of contentive information on reading comprehension.

The information-processing capacities of the beginning reader are more heavily taxed than those of the more proficient reader. Seldom can the novice reader identify words and meanings directly and mediated word identification (sounding out the word) and mediated meaning identification (word identification must occur as a basis for comprehension) is necessary. Until this time, the beginning reader relies more heavily on visual information, and, therefore, reads slower and with less comprehension until he has learned to use syntactic and semantic cues with facility. As the reader matures, his cue resource expands. The use of minimal language cues in reading culminating in decisions to confirm, reject, or refine, becomes highly selective as the reader matures. To a degree, at least, he is limited or aided by the language structures under his control.

Until Logan's (1952-1963) longitudinal study of children's language any reference to the interrelationships between reading and language were little more than speculative. Logan's findings, that children high in language ability also tended to be high in reading achievement, marked a milestone in reading-language research in that it lent the first empirical evidence of an interrelationship between the two processes. While the findings pointed to little more than a global relationship, they set the stage for research into the nature of these relationships. Strickland's (1962), Ruddell's (Note 2), Hildreth's (1964), Robertson's (1966), Braun's (Note 3), and Tatham's (1970) studies, to name a few, lent further support to Logan's findings when they investigated various sentence patterns and their relationship to comprehension.

The importance of the learner's familiarity with syntactic patterning was given additional weight by Chomsky's (1965) model of transformational generative grammar. Such a grammar postulates that a deep structure is

generated into a surface structure as a consequence of the interaction and application of certain transformations. Within this transformational framework, this study viewed transformational rules as "formal devices in the grammar which express relationships among sentences" (Chomsky, 1965, p. 18).

Chomsky's model opened a new avenue for analyzing reading as it related to comprehension. In an attempt to examine more specifically the nature of the language-reading process, Fagan (1971), working within a transformational-generative grammar framework, investigated the relationship between reading comprehension and numbers and types of transformations in passages from grades four, five and six basal material. Forty-three transformations were identified and grouped into five categories: embedding, conjoining, deletion, simple and position shift. Results showed that the presence of deletion and embedding transformations were significantly correlated with comprehension difficulty of sentences or passages. It appeared that pupils had difficulty processing the information of these structures and consequently experienced difficulty in understanding the sentences in which they appeared. In analyzing the transformations in terms of their difficulty and presence, Fagan found that written language was generally more difficult to understand when deletion transformations were present.

A further study investigating the effect of deletion produced structures, as defined by transformational generative grammar, on word identification and comprehension of first and second grade pupils was carried out by Cosens (Note 4). Results of her study showed that deletion of words had a much greater impact on comprehension than on word identification. She also found a tendency for deletion produced structures to be more difficult to comprehend than the intact form. Comprehension of difficult deletion produced structures tended to be enhanced by inserting words affected by deletion transformation rules. The deletion of redundant contentive information on the comprehension task required pupils to provide more information themselves and comprehension was negatively affected. Deletion of syntactic markers had far less impact on comprehension.

It appears, then, that reading comprehension is dependent upon the type of syntactic structure of the printed language. Cosens and Fagan's studies produced evidence to show that deletion produced structures do affect reading comprehension at the primary and intermediate levels. If deletion produced structures were found to cause difficulties in comprehension at the primary and elementary levels, it seemed logical to assume that these same structures would have some effect on reading comprehension at the junior high level. Therefore, this study focused on one class of structures, those produced by deletion transformations, to determine what effect they had on the comprehension of seventh grade pupils.

In order to investigate the effect of deletion produced structures on the reading performance of seventh grade pupils the following questions were posed:

1. What is the difference in comprehension of sentences in prose passages containing deletion produced structures and those containing intact structures when the number of correct responses in cloze tests are considered for transformations as a group?
2. What is the difference in comprehension of sentences in prose passages containing deletion produced structures and those containing intact structures when the number of correct responses are considered for each particular transformation rule?

### *Procedures of the Study*

To achieve the major purpose, this study was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved the linguistic analysis of sentences in selected passages in the text, *Native Tribes of Canada* (Note 1). This text was chosen from a wide variety of grade seven social studies materials because of its more common use in comparison to other grade seven social studies reading materials. Four of the deletion transformations formulated for Cosens' study (Note 4) were used in investigating the sentence structures. The results of the linguistic analysis and examination of the effects on comprehension of the twelve deletion transformations formulated for Cosens' study served as a basis for selection of the four transformation rules investigated in this study. The second stage involved the collection and analysis of data.

Research instruments were constructed to assess the effect of deletion produced structures on comprehension. Representative passages were selected from the text and subjected to linguistic analysis. Five passages were then reconstructed to include two test sentences for each of the four transformation rules. Two versions of each passage were constructed with half of the test sentences presented as deletion produced structures and the other half in intact form. In the first version, test sentences two, four, six and eight were presented as deletion produced structures, while test sentences three, five, seven, and nine were presented with elements which could be deleted left intact. Version two of each passage was a mirror image of version one with test sentences two, four, six and eight presented as intact structures and sentences three, five, seven and nine presented with elements deleted. The introductory and concluding sentences were left intact and were not used as test sentences. The cloze procedure was employed as the main dependent variable. This technique was applied to the two versions of each test passage resulting in ten forms of each and fifty research tests. To avoid contamination of results, which would occur if any subject read the same passage more than once, ten groups were required, and a counterbalanced research design was used.

The subjects for the experiment were one hundred seventh grade pupils from the total population of a large junior high school in a suburban middle class community in the city of Calgary were randomly selected to form the experimental sample. The sample was then randomly stratified

into ten groups on the basis of reading comprehension scores obtained on the *Canadian Test of Basic Skills* — Form 1, (King, 1967).

After responses on cloze tests had been scored in terms of exact replacements, the data were combined across test sentences for each version of each transformation rule and the combined data were converted to proportion scores. To determine the significance of the difference between mean cloze scores of pupils on deleted and intact sentence structures, t-tests for related measures were applied to the data.

### Summary of Findings and Conclusions

The summary of findings, and conclusions drawn from these findings are presented in relation to the two stages of the study. The results of the analysis revealed a high incidence of sentences produced by deletion transformations in the social studies text, *Native Tribes of Canada* (Note 1). In the passages analyzed in this study, 43.2 percent of the sentences were deletion produced structures. Of the 43.2 percent deletion produced structures, 13.6 percent were applicable to the "WH + BE deletion," 12.8 percent to the "noun phrase + verb + other elements deletion," 8.8 percent to the "comparative deletion" and 8.0 percent to the "verb phrase deletion." As a relatively small sample of social studies material was analyzed, results cannot be interpreted conclusively.

Table 1 presents the results of analyses relative to the reading difficulty of deletion and intact structures.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations and t-Test Results of Comparisons Between Number of Exact Cloze Replacements on Deleted and Intact Sentence Structures with Inserted Words Considered.

Transformation Rule	<i>Deleted</i>		<i>Intact</i>		"t"
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
WH + BE deletion	.355	.379	.399	.416	2.95**
Comparative deletion	.450	.464	.418	.504	1.85
Verb phrase deletion	.409	.441	.449	.465	2.41*
Noun phrase + verb + other elements deletion	.431	.448	.462	.472	2.05*
Combined rules	.410	.419	.446	.455	4.28**

\* Significant at the .05 level

\*\* Significant at the .01 level

When deletion transformations were considered as a group, differences, significant at the .01 level, between comprehension of deleted and intact structures, favored the intact form. When deletion transformations were considered relative to one another, differences between comprehension of deleted and intact structures, significant at the .01 and .05 levels, favored the intact form of the "WH + BE," "verb phrase" and "noun phrase + verb + other elements" deletions, respectively. Differences, although not significant, were in the direction of the intact form for sentences produced by the "comparative deletion."

Table 2 presents the ranked mean proportions of cloze replacements with words that could be affected by deletion transformations.

Table 2

Deletion Transformations Ranked from Most to Least Difficult in Terms of Mean Proportion of Exact Cloze Replacements with Words That Could be Affected by Deletion Transformation Rules Considered.

Transformation Rule	Mean
WH + BE deletion	.355
Verb phrase deletion	.409
Noun phrase + verb + other elements deletion	.431
Comparative deletion	.450

The table suggests that the "WH + BE" was found to be the most difficult deletion for subjects to understand. Sentences produced by the "verb phrase deletion" ranked second in order of difficulty, while the "noun phrase + verb + other elements deletion" ranked third in order of difficulty. The "comparative deletion" ranked fourth in order of difficulty.

On the basis of these findings, it was concluded that grade seven pupils find deletion produced structures to be more difficult to understand than those with all words left intact. This conclusion corroborates the results reported by Fagan (1969) and Cosens (Note 4).

The findings concerning the effect of the presence of syntactic information in relation to contentive information on the comprehension of grade seven pupils indicated that insertion of information to the intact form of deletion transformations, whether syntactic or contentive, increases comprehension scores. The obvious conclusion to be drawn, within the constraints of the limited sampling in this study, was that insertion of this information enhances comprehension.

## Discussion

This study has several implications for educational practice. It appears that specific deletion produced structures present in the social studies material analyzed in this study impede comprehension for grade seven pupils. Authors and educators responsible for preparing social studies materials might consider a careful examination of controlling more the incidence of specific deletion produced structures in print. Sentences should be presented in intact rather than in deleted form. Findings from this study showed that the presence of syntactic and contentive information in the intact form of sentence structures tends to make material easier to understand.

The training of teachers should include an adequate linguistic component in order that teachers may possess some linguistic knowledge. Teachers who have a basic knowledge of linguistics and of the syntactic structures in the English language would have a greater awareness of deletion produced structures and the difficulties caused by them. Such a background would enable them to provide direct and developmental instruction to assist pupils in understanding deletion produced sentence structures.

The insertion of redundant information enhanced comprehension of written material for pupils in this study. The subjects involved were able to make effective use of the semantic and syntactic cues in the material presented. Such findings are consistent with Goodman's (1970) and Smith's (1971) models of reading.

Findings from this study indicate that the seventh grade reader has learned strategies to select the "most productive cues." They are able to make use of the semantic and syntactic redundancies in written language. They are less able to process strings with deleted elements.

The presence of redundant contentive information in the material presented provided several cues to the same information. This was an aid to readers for when they failed to gain meaning when the information was presented in one form, they were able to see it again and gain understanding when it was prepared in an alternative form.

This study viewed reading as an active language processing activity. As children strive to comprehend, they develop strategies for handling the surface structure, which in turn leads to sampling, predicting and testing in order to understand the deep structure of the written language (Wheat and Edmond, 1973). How the control of oral language of the individual interacts with the degree of graphic information required for direct passage from print to meaning awaits further research.

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# CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

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"Learning to read is important, but once an individual has learned to read, the quality of what he reads and the fact that he finds continued satisfaction in reading ought to result in his becoming a lifetime reader."

Helen Huus

President I.R.A. 1969-70

The elementary teacher may well ask why teach children's literature when each day's schedule is already crowded with mathematics, reading, spelling, English, science, social studies, physical education, art, music, values, career awareness, and all subjects that come under these broad headings. This article will suggest some ways that children's literature can be used in the elementary curriculum to achieve reading goals that improve on traditional reading programs. Children's literature in no way replaces these programs, rather, it extends and enriches the reading curriculum while encouraging positive reading attitudes.

## Cross Grade Enrichment

For those schools that have two to four rooms of each grade it is appropriate for teachers to meet and plan a thirty minute to one hour weekly children's literature enrichment program. Such planning gives a common literature base to build upon, preparatory to entering a more formal literature curriculum. A complete basal reading program often includes units on the reading skills of children's literature. *The Harcourt Brace Reading Program* features a literature reader from the fourth grade up. The skills used in reading literature, varying somewhat from those used in reading science and social studies, are worthy of every elementary teacher's study and concern.

Starting the weekly sessions with children's literature filmstrips and records is rewarding. Filmstrips often vary widely as to quality and should be picked carefully. Some of the best at this time come from Weston Woods Studios, International Book Corporation, and Coronet Films. These audio-visual aids introduce desirable and popular children's books and encourage children to read them with heightened anticipation.

The Weston Woods filmstrips are primarily Caldecott Award and Honor books. Photographs of pages from the books are shown and recorded voices of the author and/or other professional readers are played. The International Book Corporation has produced the "Look, Listen, and Learn Reading Motivation Series" which features selected books from Parents' Magazine Press. These books have all received awards from such

groups as The American Library Association, Hornbook, and the National Council of Teachers of English. Coronet Films use original art on their filmstrips for such classics as the *Just So Stories* and *American Indian Legends*.

An average of fifty books can be introduced with some depth each year. For each filmstrip used, copies of the book should be available to the participating rooms, as well as other books by the same author or the same artist. Follow-up activities in the individual rooms could include: oral and silent reading of the books, discussions of the books, and creative art, drama, and writing activities.

### Listening Stations

For each reading group in a classroom, a Scholastic record and a Scholastic paperback can be chosen each week that are pertinent to the stories the students are reading in their basal readers. A Listening Station with eight sets of earphones is ideal to bring groups together, first reading silently with the record, then orally with the record.

Many commercial materials are available for this kind of program, but if funds are limited in your area a paperback library can be built up over a period of time quite reasonably. *Scholastic* offers three levels: *See Saw* for K-2, *Lucky* for grades 3-4, and *Arrow* for grades 5-6, and Teenagers. Teachers can receive bonus books each time students order and may purchase records to accompany these books. *Scholastic* has reproduced many fine award books recommended by library, English, and parent groups. Examples of recent issues are: *Tikki Tikki Tembo*, *The Three Bears*, *The Teeny Tiny Woman*, and *The Little Lighthouse*.

The variety of reading levels available in these three clubs is helpful to the teacher in this day when such a wide range of reading ability is found in a single classroom and instruction is geared to the individual needs of students in the room. It is not unusual in a fourth grade of today to have children reading from 1.0 to 6.0. Listening Stations help the teacher meet each child's listening needs.

### The School Library and Librarian

Each school needs to have an adequate supply of reading materials so each student can take out books at appropriate reading levels for his independent reading. This is ideally one to two grade levels below his instructional level, although children do get through books with enjoyment at higher grade levels if they have a deep interest in the subject. If the supply of hardback books is inadequate in the school library, teachers should take it upon themselves to check out materials for their classrooms periodically from the public libraries of the area. Teachers should encourage their students to take these books home weekly.

A professional librarian in the school can be helpful in many ways: teaching library and research skills, reading stories, showing films and

filmstrips, storytelling, training aides in library skills. It is desirable for the librarian to schedule a period each week when class members can use the library by themselves. It is a privilege for students to go in at other times also, to get materials that help them in specific classes. A respectful relationship between the classroom teacher and the librarian pays off in reading dividends for the children.

### The Paperback Book Room

Various federal and state funds have made paperback books available to schools and these are usually in a special area of the school. Here students may help by supervising the circulation and records. Such a system seems to offer a freedom of choice. It also offers a great variety of reading material to the students, who prefer carrying smaller books home to the heavier hard-back texts and other books.

It is particularly important to fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students to have materials like paperback books to use for improving critical reading, study skills, comprehension skills, and encouraging creative reading in interest areas. More and more in the upper elementary grades students should be given opportunities to self-select materials to practice these advanced reading skills.

### U.S.S.R. Time

Following visits to the library or the paperback book room it is well to schedule an *uninterrupted sustained silent reading* period. During this time, the students and the teacher read without distraction. It is a time for both to give their full attention to reading. If the teacher starts with about fifteen minutes, a thirty minute period will soon be achieved. In many rooms where this is a regular practice the teacher merely writes U.S.S.R. on the board and about thirty minutes later she will actually have to call it to the students' attention that the reading time is up. In the early stages the teacher never reprimands orally, she merely points to the initials on the board when students forget to be silent.

### CAWT on Books — Literature Laboratory

Remembering the words of Jeannette Veatch, "Get books—Get at least 100 books in your classroom!" reading teachers can go one step further by using various forms of guided reading sheets to improve in-depth comprehension skills. One such plan called *CAWT on Books* is being used by the writer. Popular tradebooks and paperback books are used with guided-reading sheets to promote purposeful individualized reading. A guided-reading sheet to match each of the one hundred books has been developed. The books have been color-coded, and the guided reading sheets are placed in colored folders to match the dots of color put on the spines of the books with felt markers. The folders are arranged alphabetically in each color

category. No specific grade levels are indicated by the colors, but books are classified after student use and teachers' observations of the degree of difficulty incurred.

In a day when freedom of choice sometimes becomes overwhelming, students find they like the security of doing in-depth work on books with guided reading sheets. Book discussions, book reviews, and book quizzes become happy follow-up activities, and children volunteer to do these activities because they have so much to share. It often becomes the most exciting and creative reading period of the week.

The procedure of CAWT on Books is as follows: 1) Students select a book they want to read that meets the test of having less than five unfamiliar words on a page; it is roughly at their independent reading level. 2) They read the book through in a recreational situation, at times reading favorite parts aloud to an aide, a peer, or to the teacher. 3) Students find their guided reading sheet in the color coded files. 4) While they work through the sheet, the teacher is present for conferences, for answering questions of procedure, and for guidance to resources that will further enrich their reading. 5) As the teacher looks over the sheet handed in, there is opportunity for discussion of some book parts with the student. 6) The sheets, unmarked by the teacher, are evidence of the books the student has experienced, and accumulate to become part of the student-decorated Literature Folder taken home at the end of the school year.

The advantage of having a CAWT on Books Literature Laboratory in the classroom is the opportunity to use the books the children like and are familiar with. Commercial kits may be excellent, but a teacher-made kit is creative and is more likely to meet the needs of specific students.

What are guided reading sheets like? How can one make them? Here are some practical suggestions. Essential information at the top of the sheet will include student's name, date, title of the book, author, and illustrator. The guided questions can be basically made up of five kinds of comprehension questions, dictionary and vocabulary skills, completion sentences, research leads, creative art and writing starters, and oral reading opportunities.

Here are examples of five kinds of comprehension question:

*Factual*—"What color was Mrs. Jackson's new station wagon?"

*Sequence*—"Did Tom hit his sister before or after she broke his racing car?"

*Interpretive*—"Why do you think Jack liked living on the farm better than he liked living in Detroit?"

*Critical*—"Do you think this story could really happen, or is it make-believe?"

*Creative*—"What would you have done if you had been Mary in this book when Laura broke your bicycle?"

Suggested books for a CAWT on Books Literature Laboratory are: *Parents' Magazine Press Books for Young Readers*, Harper and Row's *I Can Read Book Club*, and *Caldecott and Newbery Award and Honor Books*. Useful paperbacks are: *Scholastic Book Clubs*, *Dell Yearling Paperbacks*, and *Young Reader's Press*. CAWT on Books is an acronymic use of Com-

prehension, *Appreciation*, *Word Study*, and *Thinking Creatively*. Orally spoken the initials become “caught” on books.

### For the Bright and Gifted Students

One way to meet the special needs of the bright and gifted is to have volunteer Children’s Literature Classes after school or on Saturday mornings. Funds are usually available through community schools or various community-minded clubs. Active, interested parents can usually find an enthusiastic teacher to teach it. Children volunteer to take such a class because “they love to read.”

It is helpful at the outset to make a survey of the class as to why they have come and what literature genres they are interested in. If you are having ten sessions, teach the ten genre that receive the most votes. A suggested list for a group ranging from third through sixth grades follows:

adventure	family and home	other lands
American Indians	fantasy	picture stories
animal stories	folk tales	poetry
award books	girls’ books	popular adult
biography	humor	problem solving
boys’ books	long ago	realism
classics	Mother Goose	regional; ethnic
drama	mystery	science fiction
fables	mythology	sports
fairytale	nature	tall tales

For each class the teacher should provide three books for each student being taught. The books are introduced, one at a time, during the last fifteen minutes of the session with short book leaders. The students are then allowed to select one book to take home to read for the next session, using guided reading sheets to direct their comprehension. Activities at the beginning of sessions center around the book read: book discussions, book reviews, literature games, storytelling, and pantomime. The middle of each session is used to introduce the category for the following week. This is done through filmstrips, recordings, guest speakers, films, and realia. Culminating activities include reading theatre, creative writing, creative art, recording voices, and promotional programs.

### Integrated Arts—Drama

There are few better things a teacher can do to use all the skills the child has acquired through the year than to produce a play. The play that will do the most for a room is one that is taken from a Children’s Literature book and is written as a play by the teacher and the students, thus making it uniquely theirs. Throughout the year books can be read with the purpose of finding one exactly suited to the children of the classroom, giving each an

individual and worthwhile part. This play will help them combine all their reading, writing, spelling, art, music, and role playing skills into a meaningful whole. Familiar songs can be worked into the dialogue where they seem right and words are changed to fit the play. For example, in doing *Ozma of Oz*, the song "I've Been Working on the Railroad" can become "I've Been Working for the Nome King." Some books that are especially appropriate to rewrite and provide many character parts are *Aladdin*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Peter Pan*, *Pinocchio*, *Hiawatha*, and *Robin Hood*. Musical numbers fit into these books well, and four or five songs add much to the finish of the play.

For help in writing plays with your students, I suggest you read *Plays as Teaching Tools in the Elementary School*, by Sylvia D. Bordon, and *Creating Plays With Children*, by Sandra Sanders. These books give sample plays and the procedure used to write them. They also help with casting, costumes, scenery, props, and meeting the needs of all kinds of children.

The best reason for writing a play with the class is that it becomes possible to provide every student with an appropriate part to play. The teacher and the children have that objective in mind when they start. No commercial play can be found to fit a class as well as a class-written play. The objective is warranted when one realizes that "a really good part in a play" is a high point in each youngster's elementary career. Educationally, role playing is one of the best vehicles for improvement of self-image. The class play offers unlimited opportunities for the student to grow academically and socially.

### WHY CHILDREN'S LITERATURE?

- (1) *Enrichment* —It meets the enrichment needs in Reading for the entire classroom: The average students, the Resource Room children, the Remedial Readers, and the Gifted. Literature touches on feelings, emotions, problem solving, as well as the other universal thoughts and experiences of man.
- (2) *Best Books* —Children can only read and listen to a small number of the total children's books published yearly—estimated to be 3,000 or more. As teachers we should guide them to be exposed to the best.
- (3) *Motivational* —Studies have yet to prove that children pass standardized reading tests higher when they study Children's Literature. Studies do show, however, that children read more books, enjoy them more, and have better attitudes toward learning to read as a result of a planned literature program.
- (4) *Lifetime Readers* —The development of Lifetime Reading Habits goes beyond basic reading skills. We don't want a nation of "illiterate literates." Which is the greater tragedy—"the child who cannot read" or "the child who can and doesn't?" The use of self-selected Children's Literature Books, having high interest content for the students as well as meeting their individual developmental needs, leads more surely to Lifetime Reading Habits. The

development of Lifetime Reading Habits remains the ultimate objective of most parents, teachers, and librarians for this nation's reading children.

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# THE IMPACT OF MAINSTREAMING ON PRE-SERVICE READING EDUCATION

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Mainstreaming is a complex phenomenon that reaches far beyond placing children in regular classes. Special education people are advocating a mainstreaming process as it applies to exceptional or handicapped students. But mainstreaming should be considered as a new delivery system which can be a potent vehicle to bring about major curriculum and systems changes in American education. In fact, the new delivery system encompassed in mainstreaming seems to be the tip of an iceberg that touches all aspects of the educational process.

For some people the implication of the term mainstream may be a single moving body of students following the same path in the same direction, that is, a regular education program. But the implication is wrong. In a mainstreaming program, each child moves in his individually prescribed program in a fluid adaptive environment, which is able to move with and around him without creating obstacles for him or permitting him to obstruct the flow of learning for anyone else.

Mainstreaming strives to create a management system, a learning environment, in which each child is *individually* evaluated, prescribed for and monitored in a learning program that is *his or hers alone*; the purpose of mainstreaming is not to place him in any kind of group.

Mainstreaming provides a structure in which individualized instruction can mature and be used effectively. It offers an essential management vehicle for the introduction of a variety of program components. For example: if individualized instruction is ever to become a mature reality, evaluation and measurement of procedures for individualization will have to be developed and used. Also, the advantages or disadvantages of particular instructional strategies will have to be identified so that more precise matching of learner and strategy will be possible. If a student's individualized educational plan is to pinpoint specific objectives, materials, methods, programs, reinforcers, and evaluation procedures, then many alternatives must be available for use in such a program. These alternatives must be available to both student and teacher if it is to be an individualized program. No one would deny the need to allow for individual differences in children but individual differences in teachers must also be considered. Until a teacher or school system has installed a fairly sophisticated instructional management system with materials support, record keeping, and the like, it is difficult to see how the new delivery system can work. So a

management system is essential to measure and evaluate individual interactions on a daily and continuous basis. However, the gap between the state of the art of individualizing and the adoption of individualizing procedures for the mainstreaming process is wide.

An alternate teacher education program at the University of Missouri-Columbia attempts to narrow the gap between what is known and what is done. The preparation of preservice teachers to meet this challenge necessitates reorganization of the entire teacher education program including curricula, clinical experiences and instructional methods. In fact, if teachers are to be trained to create humanistic learning environments committed to mainstreaming and meeting the individual needs of their students then they must be trained in the same type of environment.

The Humanizing, Individualizing, and Personalizing (HIP) Program was conceptualized and operationalized as a process model for preservice education which provides the *system* for individualizing, humanizing, and personalizing instruction for teacher education students. The program, in its third year, attempts to incorporate into a single program workable adaptations of the most promising new thrusts in teacher education. It incorporates philosophies and concepts from the Individually Guided Education (IGE) and the Performance Based Teacher Education (PBTE) Movements.

The professional education component of the program (approximately 48 semester hours) is offered in three sixteen semester hour blocks over a three year period (HIP Blocks I, II, and III). Each block coordinates and correlates a field experience with university classroom activities. Each student is a member of an IGE (Individually Guided Education) Learning Community in an elementary school and an IGE Learning Community at the University. Eighty freshmen and sophomore students were selected to participate in the initial project. Each year a new group of students join the Learning Community.

The HIP Learning Community (including both students and faculty) is committed to the following two process goals of IGE:

- A. A process for individualizing, personalizing, and humanizing learning by tailoring instructional approaches to individual differences rather than requiring all prospective teachers to learn in the same way and at the same pace and;
- B. A process for continuous improvement which makes it possible for prospective teachers to evaluate their own performance in a clinical context, alter their instructional procedures where indicated, and advance toward successively higher levels of effective teaching.

The accomplishment of these process goals is the responsibility of an interdisciplinary team of fourteen educators which, along with the students, form a Learning Community. For the most part, the professional training does not follow the traditional course format, but embraces the laboratory,

clinical, small group seminar approach to professional preparation. The didactic content of the academic areas of emphasis in each HIP block has been reorganized around behavioral objectives, instructional alternatives and alternative assessment procedures. In addition to the subject areas being emphasized, each block is designed to include humanizing activities, career education, drug education and the use of media.

Each student selects an advisor from within the Learning Community. The advisor is responsible for coordinating the planning of the professional education learning programs for each of his/her advisees in the manner which best accommodates the student's needs, interests, and abilities.

The students spend one third of each day in their assigned elementary school Learning Community. The one third of the day assignment is rotated each five weeks to allow the student experiences with children which are representative of the full day. When students are not on their field assignments they participate in didactic activities which are designed in 2-3 week increments and scheduled at least one week in advance. A (University) open classroom is maintained fourteen hours per day to accommodate HIP activities.

The emphasis and focus of the HIP Program is the *individual* prospective teacher education student. It meets the demands of students and practitioners for earlier and expanded field experiences where students, teachers, administrators and specialists are mainstreamed. The experiences are correlated more directly with classroom theory. It deals with the problem of drugs, sexism and racism in schools. It provides the students with an awareness of and opportunities to become involved in the humanistic and career education movements, which are essential for mainstreaming. In addition, it serves as a mechanism to bring teacher educators and practitioners together in the decision making process for the purpose of enhancing the educational experiences of all concerned: all types of children, the college students in training, the cooperating teachers and the teacher educators. It is truly a mainstreaming relationship.

Student reaction to the program has been extremely positive. Students have also indicated a strong desire for additional emphasis on the humanizing, personalizing and individualizing aspects of the program. The changes in student perceptions, students' roles as aides in schools where elementary children are mainstreamed, and students' grade point averages led to the belief that humanizing, individualizing and personalizing education is of much benefit. Mainstreaming is benefiting the elementary school child and its impact on preservice training is benefiting the teacher education student.

# LEARNING BASIC (READING) SKILLS K-12

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Seldom in the history of American education has an issue received more public attention than the reading question is receiving today. Such an abiding concern about a basic skill is almost ironic in view of the fact that the last several decades have brought a flood of "innovations" in curriculum design and approaches to instruction. Prominent figures such as John Holt, Herbert Kohl, Neil Postman, Charles Weingartner, William Glasser, Ivan Illich, Carl Rogers, Alvin Toffler, and many more have called continually for radical school reform. "Relevance" and "change" have been by-words in virtually every piece of recent literature pertaining to education. A wide and largely receptive audience has heard call after call for "open" schools, ungradedness, team teaching, inquiry, process-oriented approaches to instruction, the use of "real-world" materials (newspapers, magazines, paper-back books, non-print media) in the classroom, community resources as working laboratories for students, and drastic changes in curriculum design and course offerings.

The desire to "change" and to provide "relevant" learning experiences for students in schools certainly is not new in American education. In fact, relevance and change occupy the cornerstones of the educational enterprise. From the one room school house of the 17th century to the comprehensive high school of today, the issues of change and relevance have been omnipresent in the progress of schools. We can rest assured that educators always will issue new calls for relevance and change, as indeed they must if schooling is to meet the needs and demands of tomorrow's students. But sane and serious educational reformers never advocate structuring or re-structuring schools to de-emphasize the basic skills. Many vociferous critics of change in education seem to believe that school reformers are merely advocates of permissiveness, who would be delighted to see the complete collapse of the most iconoclastic change advocates. Among all the reformers, Ivan Illich is perhaps the most radical. Although he calls for the abolition of schools as they exist today, even Illich would set up centers where students would master the basic skills:

Such centers could and should be established in industrialized areas, at least for those skills which are fundamental . . . such skills as reading, typing, keeping accounts, foreign languages . . .<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Deschooling Society* (New York: Harrow Books, 1971), p. 130.

Many of the same self-styled “fundamentalists” and “champions of traditionalism,” who unfairly criticize serious reformers, sometimes demonstrate a disturbing naivete by calling for “one way” or “one program” that “surely someone can find” to ensure students’ improvement in the basic skills. An example of this over-simplicity pertains to the reading question. Many concerned but, alas, uninformed would-be-reformers—often from outside the community of professional educators—presently are calling for “*a* program, *a* way” to guarantee that students in schools will improve their reading skills. Obviously, since students are different, there is no “one way” nor “one program” that can be universally effective in helping students improve their reading skills. If the educational process were clearly a science, then perhaps “one way” would work with all students. There would be few, if any, variables. But teaching is perhaps far more an art than a science; therefore, both teaching styles and learning styles, as well as teaching materials, must be well-matched if significant learning is to occur. Some parents, politicians, school boards, journalists, and concerned citizens, in their well-meaning zeal to improve schools, are making unrealistic demands on educators to discover magical solutions to many perplexing and long-standing problems. Reading instruction is one of those problems.

To perceive the complexity of the schooling process generally, one can glance briefly at the history of learning theory.<sup>2</sup> Plato believed that the purpose of education was to train man’s intrinsic mental power, i.e., we already know and we must discover what we know. Students, therefore—through some mystical process—must be helped to discover innate knowledge. John Calvin, Johnathan Edwards, and the faculty psychologists believed that education should provide activities to exercise and to toughen the brain, which was thought to be a muscle. Rousseau believed that one’s emotions lead to truth, so education should permit freedom for the learner, without coercion or prescribed courses of study. Theorists such as E. L. Thorndike postulated that the more a response is repeated, the longer it will be retained, so drill-learning is “the answer.” To J. B. Watson and E. R. Guthrie, behavioral psychologists, education is a matter of conditioning. The human being is a machine, devoid of spirit. An appropriate dialogue between behaviorists might begin with, “Hi, you look O.K. How am I?” B. F. Skinner would give rewards, or reinforcements, after proper responses to a learning task. In his *schema*, education is a continuous process of systematic changes in the learning environment to increase the chances of desired responses. Gestaltists believe that a thing cannot be understood by its parts, but only by its totality (look-say *vs* phonics?). For the Gestaltists, learning occurs through sudden insights which one perceives in whatever is to be learned. Lately, attention is being paid to a theory which holds the brain is composed of two “hemispheres,”

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<sup>2</sup> For a comprehensive survey of learning theories, see Morris Bigge’s *Learning Theories for Teachers* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964).

the left and the right. The left hemisphere is characterized by rational and linear functions, while the right handles abstract thinking. Schooling, the “hemispherists” say, has sorely neglected the brain’s right side. In this admittedly over-simplified survey of a few learning theories, one can readily observe the complexity, the obscurity, and the subtlety of the learning process. How does one learn to read, then? The answers are as diverse as the students to be taught.

When the “Right to Read” program began in the early 1970’s, one estimate indicated that about 50 percent of school children were deficient in reading skills.<sup>3</sup> But, of course, anyone who teaches knows that reading problems abound in classrooms. Generally, pre-service education prepares elementary teachers to teach reading; however, because of many complex factors (over-crowding, lack of “readiness” and proper motivation on the parts of some children, poor home environments, a paucity of school funds and materials, etc.), many students enter secondary schools as deficient readers. As a result, secondary teachers, who rarely have been trained to teach reading, find themselves in a quandary over what to do with such children. Although secondary teachers—through in-service training and additional schooling—should be strongly encouraged by their principals to acquire competencies in reading instruction, such a solution is unrealistic for meeting the *immediate* needs of students who are deficient readers. So what can be done?

Among curriculum planners, there has been an increasing interest of late in discovering more effective ways of providing comprehensively developed curricula for students, K-12. Traditionally, educators always have been interested in such a goal, but few attempts to reach it have been successful. One pervasive reason for failure is the logistical difficulty of bringing K-12 teachers together for long-range and in-depth planning. All too often, elementary teachers plot their own instructional designs; middle grade teachers plot theirs; and secondary teachers plot theirs. Even within each of the three groups, “conflicts of interest” arise. I learned recently that in one North Carolina high school, tempers flared in an English department meeting over one teacher’s use of *The Red Badge of Courage* with tenth graders because that novel had always been taught in the eleventh grade. Reportedly, an eleventh grade teacher angrily asked, “What will I teach in the eleventh grade if the tenth grade teachers use my material?” It is almost trite to declare once again that we must discover the needs and the achievement levels of our students before we decide on the content and skills to teach them. But, unfortunately, many teachers still ignore that axiom. The point is, if teachers on the same level cannot plan and work cooperatively, how can we expect cooperation among teachers, K-12? We *must have* such cooperation, if students’ needs are to be met in a curriculum designed for continuous growth.

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<sup>3</sup> John Henry Martin, et al., *Free to Learn: Unlocking and Upgrading American Education* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 18.

Particularly with regard to reading instruction, elementary teachers have much to offer teachers in the upper grades. Time should be built into school systems' calendars to allow for sessions in which elementary and secondary teachers frequently meet together for the purpose of sharing concerns and advice with one another. Before school opens in the fall, a few skillful elementary teachers might be permitted to conduct workshops on reading for their secondary colleagues. Such workshops would focus on identifying reading skills, workable approaches, and creative activities for students. In elementary teachers, every school system has practical, experienced, and capable resource people for improving the teaching of reading at the secondary level. Such cooperative sharing among teachers can help to meet the immediate needs of students with deficiencies in reading skills. In formal workshops, or simply in seminar sessions, elementary teachers can advise secondary teachers as to ways of enticing students to read, of using print and non-print materials in the classroom, of making effective use of the library, of identifying sources of free reading materials, of suggesting techniques for diagnosing different types of reading problems, of using reading tests, and of suggesting alternative approaches to reading instruction.

Finally, teachers at all levels should consider taking the following additional steps to improve reading instruction:

- Subscribe to and read *Elementary English*, *English Journal*, *The Reading Teacher*, *The Journal of Reading*, *Reading Horizons*, and other professional journals in the field. All teachers, K-12, should read regularly *all* of these minimally.
- Teach at least one reading skill each day (for secondary teachers, in conjunction with their content area) and keep a record of skills taught.
- Group students to avoid continuation of student failure; carefully place students in groups which create a cooperative, rather than a competitive, learning atmosphere.
- Use a wide variety of print and non-print media, with constant attention to "reading relevance" for students.
- Discuss departmentally ways in which each teacher can teach reading skills (all too often, faculty and departmental meetings are occupied strictly with "administrivia").
- List reading materials and equipment in budget plans, and pressure principals and supervisors to place high priorities on reading instruction.
- Create a reading environment in every classroom, with rugs and

carpets; scores of games (puzzles, scrabble, etc.); racks of magazines; hundreds of paperback books (solicited from students themselves and the community at large); some reading machines, workbooks, and typewriters; several daily newspapers; and occupational reading pamphlets and brochures.

- Have frequent periods of non-evaluative types of learning experiences for motivational purposes; the “super-efficient” teacher, who believes nothing will be taught without testing, will find this suggestion hard to accept.
- Make frequent use of peer-tutoring techniques to assist in individualizing instruction.
- Regularly conduct school-wide activities, such as Read-In’s (time allotted during the school day for free reading), to promote interests in reading as a habit.

With a system-wide (K-12) approach to improving reading instruction, in a cooperative spirit among teachers at all levels, students can begin to correct their reading deficiencies. Also, critics can be silenced. No magic programs, formulas, and approaches exist. Improvement of reading requires a total, system-wide effort in every local education agency.



# AN ASSESSMENT OF PHONICS KNOWLEDGE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

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In recent years, much attention has been given to the phonics skills of teachers and prospective teachers. Beginning in the early 60's with Aaron (1960), Gagon (1960), and *The Torch Lighter: Tomorrow's Teachers of Reading* (Austin & Morrison, 1961), it was noted that teacher training programs were deficient in the area of phonics training, and that, resultantly, prospective teachers showed a deficit in their knowledge of phonics. These results have been upheld by Ramsey (1962), Schubert (1962), and Spache and Baggett (1965), all of whom found that experienced teachers and/or prospective teachers showed a marked deficit in the basic phonics skills required of elementary school pupils. As recently as 1970, Janet Lerner (1970) conducted similar research which demonstrated that this same group knew little more than the pupils they were intended to teach.

Though these findings all refer to teachers of normal children, the problem would seem even more crucial if it were found to exist in a population of teachers of exceptional children. Frequently, children labeled mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, and learning disabled have major academic and/or behavioral problems which are associated with reading achievement. With regard to mentally retarded youngsters, two studies (Bliesmer, 1954; Dunn, 1954) have shown that these children have lower reading achievement levels than brighter, normal children with the same mental ages. Also, it has been suggested that many youngsters labeled retarded are actually learning disabled children with normal intelligence who have been misplaced as a result of group test scores which presuppose reading ability as a requisite for taking the test (Clemmens, 1969).

The cyclical relationship between emotional disturbance and reading achievement has never been fully understood. Hewett (1967) postulates that reading is an extremely beneficial tool in gaining the recognition which fosters socialization skills and a positive self-concept. Both factors contribute heavily to the healthy development of the personality. Carried a step further, Sanford (1967) and Bower (1967) suggest that the socialization and fantasy values of reading may be a deterrent to juvenile delinquency. These hypotheses find support in a summary of research on emotionally disturbed children cited by Eisenberg (1966). The conclusions reached indicate that school problems are the major presenting complaint received at children's psychiatric clinics and that physicians studying reading retardation have

noted a high association between this factor and concomitant emotional disturbance.

The enigma of emotional disturbance and reading achievement is further compounded with the introduction of the term learning disabled. Eisenberg (1966) suggests that the inability to read may be, in and of itself, a major component of emotional disturbance, and it has long been recognized that inability to read is the major academic deficit of children labeled learning disabled (McCarthy & McCarthy, 1969).

The reading achievement problems which seem to be inherent in retarded, disturbed, and learning disabled youngsters, as well as their consequences, seem to imply a great need for special education teachers to be especially adept in techniques which are required to successfully teach academic skills in the reading area. This coupled with the recent trend of school systems toward adopting phonetic reading series seems to make basic phonics knowledge a crucial skill for this particular population of teachers. This is especially true in light of the fact that the phonetic approach has been shown to increase reading achievement in both disturbed and mentally retarded youngsters, and in the primary grades, the learning disabled (Warner, 1968).

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the phonics knowledge of prospective special education teachers to determine whether deficiencies do in fact exist in this population. The need for such research seems obvious in light of the above findings derived from samples of teachers of normal children. Should the same deficiencies be found in this population, massive implications are evident for the future direction of pre-service and in-service education, as well as for the prognosis of the special education concepts of mainstreaming and competency based teaching.

### *Methods*

A sample of 34 special education majors were used as subjects in the study. This included all spring semester students taking Remedial Reading, a course in the teaching of reading which is required of all special education majors at Virginia Commonwealth University. The sample included 13 graduate and 21 undergraduate majors in the areas of learning disabilities, emotional disturbance and mental retardation. Many of the graduate students were experienced teachers working toward a Master's Degree while holding a full time teaching position. None of the subjects will receive further training in the teaching of reading as a part of their degree program.

The criterion measure used to test basic phonics knowledge was Lerner's *A Foniks Kwiz* (1968), which is a 50 item, multiple choice test designed to measure basic phonics knowledge in the following areas: consonants, vowels, syllabication, accents, silent letters, usage of the "y" sound, terminology, phonic generalizations, and general phonic knowledge. Public school children are generally expected to know these skills prior to completion of the sixth grade.

During the final week of the semester, the examiner asked all subjects to complete the test during class time as part of the course requirements. Within the defined population, there was 100% participation in the study. Following data collection, each test was scored according to the scoring procedures outlined by the author of the test.

### *Results*

The results of test scoring showed that the prospective special education teachers had severe deficits in their knowledge of basic phonics. As is demonstrated in Table 1, the total group showed a mean score of 53.23, with a standard deviation of 13.39. The range of scores was from a low of 22 to a high of 84. When viewed as separate groups, the graduates performed slightly better than the undergraduate group. A possible explanation for this finding is the fact that several of the graduate students are teaching in a system which has adopted a phonetic reading series, and they may have gained some familiarity with phonics through instructing children in their own classroom. Even so, 27 of the subjects scored under 68, which is considered below the Poor range according to the test rating scale. Four subjects scored within the Poor range, no one scored within the Fair range, only one of the subjects scored within the Good range, and none of the subjects was rated as Excellent.

TABLE 1  
Means and Standard Deviations of Teacher's Scores

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Total group	34	53.23	13.39
Graduate students	13	58.0	14.21
Undergraduate students	21	50.28	11.94

The surprisingly low results evidenced by this study suggest a grave need for further investigation in this area of competency as it relates to teachers in the field of special education. If, in fact, this sample population is indicative of the phonics knowledge of a majority of teachers in the field, there seems to be an urgent need for the problem to be addressed through teacher training programs at both the pre-service and in-service levels.

With current trends in special education moving rapidly in the direction of mainstreaming, it is more important than ever for the teacher of mildly handicapped children to both remediate underachievement in reading quickly, and utilize the child's reading ability to maximum potential. With the growing popularity of phonetic reading programs and the development of independent reading skills, it is extremely unlikely that this can be done without the teachers having a thorough understanding of the reading skills

they are intended to teach. Along with these trends is the impetus to establish competency based education programs and principles of accountability in the teaching of exceptional children. It will be impossible to achieve either of these goals until the academic competencies required of children are in the full command of their teachers and until an analysis is performed on those constituencies required of teachers to effect changes in reading behavior for which they are to be held accountable. If in-service and pre-service teacher training does not address itself to the basic skills which special education teachers must have, there is a danger of judging reading programs, teaching methods, and other aspects of modern pedagogy as unsound, while never reaching the root of the problem. Meanwhile, special education children are likely to pay for the deficits with reduced reading achievement levels.

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# THE WHY AND A LITTLE HOW— TEACHING READING IN THE CONTENT AREAS

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Any classroom teacher who is employed to teach students from approximately the third grade through graduate school faces a common problem—those students who cannot read their textbooks or have difficulty doing so. Many of them share another common dilemma—what to do about their students' reading problems. Perhaps two factors, to be discussed here, can help these teachers. One factor is understanding the reasons why the students have reading difficulties, while the other is finding some way to teach the subject content and reading at the same time.

## The Why

There are many complex and diverse reasons why students have difficulty reading content area materials. Many upper level teachers like to blame the primary teachers (who say it was the parents!), but most of the time the reasons are much more complicated. Harold L. Herber (2) has summarized the numerous causes in four concise categories. He states that the problem can usually be traced to (1) student competence; (2) content materials; (3) curriculum pressures and/or (4) teacher education.

Often, student competence is *not* simply an inability to read and can be coupled with the second category, characteristics of content materials. Sometimes, as Herber (2) notes, reading has never been practiced in content area materials, and therefore, the reader cannot apply what he knows. At other times, the student is simply not skilled enough to read the content area materials—which tend to run one to two years higher in readability than the grade level in which they are used. Gail B. West (3) suggests that text difficulty can be traced to several culprits. The authors of content texts are often scholars in their fields, and, as such, in their writing they make no effort to control vocabulary, sentence complexity or even concept load. The first two factors are those most often measured by readability formulae, and, therefore, cause the readability levels of the books to rise.

A third source of problems for content area reading is curriculum pressures. Many administrators and subject-area teachers feel that they must teach their discipline *or* reading; they cannot do both. As Austin and Morrison (p. 50) have concluded, teachers "reportedly do not have sufficient time to 'teach everything' and unaware that a dichotomy need not exist, feel it more important to cover the content than to teach reading skills

in content areas.” Practices in many school districts often enhance the feeling among teachers that pages must be covered and books finished, whether or not the students are successfully learning. This writer once taught in a district where “progress in pages covered” was measured at the end of each six weeks! The principal actually asked teachers to fill out such a form.

The final category of causes for difficulties in content area reading is teacher education. Unfortunately, most content area teachers, particularly at the secondary level, have never had any training in teaching reading. Their study has been devoted to their specialty. Therefore, even if they are willing to try to help students who have reading problems, they do not know what to do—and many times have no one available to help them. Thus, the lack of training in teaching reading may complement the student’s incompetencies.

Enough discussion of the why’s. Teachers know that students have difficulty reading content area materials, and perhaps understanding some of the reasons makes the problem easier to handle. However, the handling part is what is most important.

#### A Little How

It is impossible for every teacher—even for those who want to—to become a teacher of reading. Furthermore, it is beyond the scope of this article to cover all the possible methods and adjustments for teaching content area reading. However, two approaches to the teaching of reading—the language experience approach and the individualized reading approach—can be easily modified for teaching reading in the content areas. A description of such modification follows.

The language experience approach might be used in this way. After a class discussion, film, lecture or similar “stimulant,” the class might be divided into about three groups. The teacher acts as supervisor for the whole class and a capable student as recorder for each group. If no capable student is available, the teacher will have to alternate recording for each group. The students dictate a passage on a topic that the teacher has assigned (“How to Find Square Roots,” “Causes of the Civil War,” “How to Parallel Park”) based on the “stimulant.” Ground rules appropriate for the group are established, such as, “one sentence per student can be contributed,” “the first sentence must tell the main idea,” etc. The recorder writes the passage on the board, an overhead projector or chart tablet so that the entire group can see it. The recorder should repeat each sentence as she/he writes it down. When the passage is completed, at least one student reads it over. The next day a duplicated copy is given to each student. Specific vocabulary words and comprehension questions from the passage should be studied—perhaps by making word cards, doing a handout, or writing a summary. In most cases, the students can read the passages and they generally learn the same material covered in the text—with much less frustration for students and teacher.

Individualized reading can be another useful alternative. The individualized approach to teaching reading in the content areas involves the use of a large number and variety of books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets and anything else “readable” on the topic under study. These materials should cover many reading levels, ranging from those needed by the poorest reader in the class (which might be just pictures) to something to challenge the best reader. Librarians can be a tremendous help in collecting these materials.

In this approach, each student reads something of his own choice at his own rate, but all the materials deal with the topic being studied. The teacher can circulate around the room and help with difficult vocabulary, ask questions to make sure the student is understanding what he reads, explain difficult ideas or conduct small group discussions. After a few days of classroom reading, and as students finish at different times, assignment sheets can be ready for them to work on. Later, discussions can be held, and/or group projects carried out. Finally, some sort of evaluation would be done; usually, this would be a test. Whatever reteaching that is necessary should be carried out, and then the group progresses to the next topic.

Such is the individualized approach. Throughout this procedure, each student is successful at reading something on the topic being studied. They all learn at least some of the concepts, and an unlimited range of abilities can be handled within one classroom. If it is too much work for consistent use, it can be employed two or three times a year.

Either of these approaches can be readily used in the content classroom. Moreover, both have the advantage that the content teaching goes on at the same time as reading instruction. They are not “either-or” methods. The teacher who uses both also demonstrates an insight into why students have difficulty reading in the content areas, as well as a willingness to employ some strategies that will help solve the problems.

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# WE SUGGEST

**Eleanore Buelke**

Schlosser, Courtney D.

*The Person in Education*

New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1976. Pp. xiii + 413.

To live means to have courage and to remain strong in the face of adversity and suffering, as well as to have the illusion of complete happiness. Remaining a person when things are bad is not easy; but it may be the truest test of character in that it means being willing to rise above what threatens to reduce one's self to an object or an abstraction. There is no easy way to learn how to become a person except through living, and that means suffering and enjoying, despairing and hoping, hating and loving, and taking one's stand upon the conviction that we are always something more than any of the feelings, threats, or forces of existence that tend to reduce us to the status of objects and things.

In this volume, the author-editor challenges, questions, and deplors many of the "stereotypical, socially acceptable, role-playing modes of behavior, thinking and feeling" currently appearing in schools and colleges, modes which restrict the sense of experience that is required for growth as a person. At the same time, he supports, suggests, and explores ways in which teachers and students, staff and administrators, may "transcend their merely socialized selves and relate honestly, openly, and authentically to one another." This anthology is a humanistic approach to focusing attention upon the *person* in education. The claim that there needs to be a close relationship between educational thought and practice and humanism is supported by vital, significant developments in human knowledge and experience. In recent years, such knowledge has advanced through research and study in varied disciplines, and by appearance of many problem-solving groups among minority and, heretofore, excluded/deprived segments of the world's population. For many, the awareness and experience of themselves as autonomous persons is a new and exuberant feeling.

The concept of *person*, viewed by Schlosser, provides an intellectual and philosophical frame of reference from which to inspect and project a uniquely humanistic way of perceiving learners and education. In Part I of the book, writers of the past and present contribute to the understanding of this concept from historical, philosophical, psychological, and sociological vantages. Part II focuses upon educational contexts: implications for humanistic change. Here, Schlosser has chosen writings which take into account two important functions of teaching; he refers to these functions as *transmissive* and *transformative*. The first assumes that the teacher has something to transmit to the student, promoting an active teacher-passive

student relationship. The second assumes that both student and teacher are active in the learning process, resulting in mutually significant changes and growth as persons.

The section dealing with historical foundations helps to increase awareness that humanism has deep, historical roots, that most solutions to life's problems are neither final, nor ultimate, and that reaching for ideal being and experience is a life-long quest. The section on philosophical foundations attempts to uncover the essential meanings of existence as they may contribute to enlivening and deepening the daily tasks of teaching and learning. As these readings center on the significance and nature of pragmatism, idealism, realism and existentialism, they build understanding and appreciation of humanistic education. Concern for the identity of the individual and its effect upon human potentiality functioning in the here-and-how is emphasized in the section on psychological foundations. Rationale for modern theories of education grounded in the acknowledgement of close, interdependent linking of healthy ego and mind with reality and experiences of the body is related, and reiterated. Exploration/education in these areas might well be what one writer here calls "the challenge and promise of our lifetime." On the sociological level, "freedom" of the individual, in any measure, remains viable only as long as the individual, the personal self, exercises some action and thought of his own in actual encounters with his world. The whole person who educates, and comes to be educated, takes his/her individuality in part from his/her history, biological and genetic; in part from his/her philosophy of Being, a definition of the meaning of existence; in part from his/her concept of self, living inwardly and outwardly; and in part from his/her surrounding social environment. To this end, education needs to be actively "co-intentional" and cooperative, rather than prescriptive, passively dialectic, and personally dehumanizing. It must be viewed as a "continuous and interactive process, engaging both student and teacher alike as persons."

In practice, then, humanistic education calls for commitment to the importance of *caring* and *trust* in the interpersonal relationships that occur in the classroom. Education in human relations is the core of humanistic education, and should begin at the teacher-education level, with major emphasis in this area. Teacher educators, themselves, must exemplify humanistic teaching. Prospective teachers, from the beginning of their college education to its end, need to be involved in a continuous, integrative seminar, focusing on "personal development in terms of ideas, beliefs, and attitudes." Ideas and information invigorate and vitalize only insofar as they "animate and enrich the ordinary course of life." A humanistic curriculum takes into consideration the basic biological nature of the child and how the child grows. Vital and personal experiences of the learner and processes by which they are derived and lived become the curriculum. One writer suggests that the humanist in curriculum design ought to "free himself from the bureaucratic school and from the sorting function which it performs for the status system."

At the present time, some dimly discernible changes in favor of more humanistic teaching and learning are being made in the well-established, middle class system of public education. Flexible scheduling, independent study, work-study programs, individualized learning, certain values-clarification techniques, inclusion of almost all aspects of human activity in curriculum planning and discussion—all of these are indicative of movement toward cherishing the *persons* in the classroom. In “A Personal Note” at the conclusion of this book, the author states that, although there is hardly a mass movement toward radical reform in the schools, still he has optimistic, good feelings for the future of mankind. In order to fulfill their responsibilities deeply and meaningfully, those persons engaged in educating other persons must do all that they can “to know and to encounter personal freedom and the love of life” for themselves. Perhaps, then, they can join Schlosser in a poem he has written to a group of his students:

. . . . . You gave to me the experience  
of being alive with you  
and knowing and encountering  
the spirit within us  
and between us . . . . .

So, to each of you  
I want to say thank you,  
thank you for allowing me  
to see into your lives  
and to experience what  
only those whom you love  
experience and know.

I shall not forget you  
since you have shown me  
who you are, in such a short time,  
nor can I be the less  
for it . . . . .

## PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS: ENGLISH FOR DESPISERS

**R. Baird Shuman**

EDITOR

**Ruth Van Arsdale**

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*Professional Concerns is a regular column devoted to the interchange of ideas among those interested in reading instruction. Send your comments and contributions to the editor. If you have questions about reading that you wish to have answered, the editor will find respondents to answer them. Address correspondence to R. Baird Shuman, Department of Education, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina 27708.*

Do some of your students view the book as enemy? Are some of your students completely turned off by English? Do you have trouble getting some of your students to read?

Ruth Van Arsdale, a teacher at Salina High School South in Salina, Kansas has faced up to some of these questions and has found answers to them. In the following account she tells how she made reluctant students more enthusiastic readers, and—perhaps more importantly—how she brought her turned off students to the point of wanting to learn the basic skills which most educators would agree should be a part of the English curriculum. Ms. Van Arsdale has worked within a rather conventional framework. She has not relied on exotic or expensive materials in order to achieve her ends. The elective course which she describes here is one which can very easily be adapted to almost any middle school, junior high school, or senior high school teaching situation. Perhaps the unique honesty of the course's title helps to establish the climate of trust between the teacher and her students which is a necessary concomitant in any teaching situation.

### English for Students Who Despise English

English can be a traumatic experience for students who have never had success in it. By the time these people reach the junior or senior year, they are trying desperately to pass some English course to get their diplomas and get off the educational treadmill. In homogeneously grouped classes they are accustomed to defeat, to being labeled by everyone as poor students. Even worse, they consider themselves hopelessly unable to handle their language in anything other than conversation. But because these students are people, they deserve more than drudgery. How can their language experiences come alive?

Discussing these problems with my principal helped me to devise a course known in our curriculum as “English for Students Who Despise English” or simply “English for Despisers.” Far from shunning the class when it was placed on the electives list, students asked for it. Careful as we had been not to group these people together on a “level,” they quickly grouped themselves by admitting their attitude toward English.

I must admit that I began with some trepidation, for the course was run by an open-contract system, throwing the responsibility back on students who had never taken much responsibility for school work. Also I was traditional enough to feel that English needed to involve reading, writing, and oral skills, not just fun and games. A preliminary survey quickly showed me that the students really wanted success in the same skills I felt were important; they simply despised English because of the prescribed materials they were required to read, write about, and discuss. With the assurance that our goals were compatible, I began to load the table with *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, *U.S. News*, *Reader's Digest* and *Scholastic Scope* magazines. Added to these was a set of *Illustrated Classics* from Pendulum Press.

Most of the students began with *Reader's Digest* or the classics, in the latter recognizing the titles of books they wanted to know about but found too formidable to approach even in paperback. Soon they felt they knew the basic plot of such books as *Call of the Wild*, *Moby Dick*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *Frankenstein*. Almost everyone read and discussed the articles in *Scope* magazine within two days of its arrival. Many also worked the crossword puzzles and the cryptograms. After about a month, most of the students were finished with the classics, but all the magazines were still consumed each week as they arrived. I was amazed. Were these students really changing their ways?

A questionnaire I prepared recently answered some of my questions. Seventy percent of the students felt that their attitude toward reading had changed. Some of the comments were as follows: “It isn’t quite as bad . . . I really don’t feel like I have to read; this just makes it easier for me to enjoy the book more . . . I don’t think it’s boring as I usually would . . . I read what I want and keep interested in things that I read and learn at the same time . . . I’m not forced to read what everyone reads but what I myself enjoy reading about . . . I used to not be interested in it at all, but now I find I can learn from it if I try . . . I now realize that you can learn something from reading . . . I read more than before.”

Only one student of the thirty said he was beginning to dislike reading more (the one student who failed the class). Those who said their attitudes hadn’t changed generally commented that they had always liked reading when they could choose what to read.

Six of the thirty students felt that they were succeeding in other classes because of their reading experiences in English for Despisers. Some of the books read by students indicate that many of these people are capable of reading challenging material but have been discouraged by something in the traditional approach. Sample titles are *To Sir With Love*, *Bury My*

*Heart at Wounded Knee, Looking for Mr. Goodbar, Jane Eyre, Wuthering Heights, One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest, Mountain Man, The Unquiet Death of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, and The Wilk Are Among Us.*

Many students read the news magazines; others read consumer guides to find the best buys in tires, appliances, or stereo equipment. Almost all use the *Reader's Guide* as a practical source of information and have learned to save time by using the card catalog; others have discovered the purpose of the vertical file. Recently I've had reports on the Manson family as portrayed in magazines and on TV in "Helter Skelter," on Jimmy Carter's personality, and on the Quinlan Case. A young man who last semester had reported on Karen Ann Quinlan came to me to find out if I'd learned that the doctors "could pull the plugs" on Karen now.

I can't claim a revolutionary change that has carry-over value in the total school experience, but I see students eagerly reading books and magazines, really using the library, conversing about things they've read and recommending books and subjects to other students. Even if these students have learned only that reading isn't drudgery, I take heart; for they have opened up for themselves a valuable source of lifelong pleasure and learning.

# 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  $4.0 \pm .5$ ) involves the acquisition of the fundamental areas of communication and computation (listening, speaking, reading, writing and math). At the Basic Literacy level (grade level  $5.5 \pm .5$ ) 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.

## Carla Everett

MUSKEGON PUBLIC SCHOOLS, MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN

*Imaginary Worlds: Notes on a New Curriculum* by Richard Murphy,  
Teachers & Writers Collaborative, Inc., New York, 1974.

It is probably a universal trait of teachers—those, at least, who read to grow professionally—to face with frustration the reality gap in any “new curriculum.” How quickly inspired we become, to what ecstatic proportion, with a fresh idea. How disparaging we are, what ruthless self-critics, when classroom practice falls short of the proclaimed prescription for success.

Richard Murphy has come up with a fresh idea or two in his *Imaginary Worlds*. But more important, he has written with a candor that should soothe the most fragile ego of any classroom teacher. Although Murphy modestly maintains that he is not a teacher, his accounts ring disturbingly true.

The book has a dual format. It is not only a compilation of children's writing, but also a seemingly unedited diary of thoughts which prepared for and evaluated one semester's work in a New York public school. During weekly sessions within two traditional classroom settings—one sixth grade and one eighth grade—Murphy set out to test and re-establish a curricular base for independent student writing.

His selection of Utopias as a theme is never really discussed, but tucked away on an introductory page is a quote by Henri Michaux which may in part explain his rationale: “The most urgently needed science is one that will *show us how to make civilizations*.” Obviously, Murphy's purpose is also dominated more by motivation than by craft. The independent writing he sought to encourage, despite the free-floating threads of imaginary worlds, strengthened itself on such timely concerns as ideal states, religions, wars, and schools. The adolescent students were able to attend to larger concepts in the non-threatening forms of nonsense and whimsy.

Using personally favorite excerpts from Utopian literature, Murphy read to the children and invited their ideas to help shape assignments. At the same time, he was able to expand his own ideas and to discard those strategies which proved unexciting. Obviously, Murphy read himself and researched thoroughly in preparation for his lessons, but he was flexible enough to change his plans. Super-organized teachers might do well to consider such a lack of intimidation by their own boxed-in weekly planning.

Murphy admits that he is more apt to quickly “turn kids loose” than to envelope a writing assignment with too many preconceptions. But he also admits his frequent disappointment with results. I believe that one of the most common frustrations of teachers is successfully directing The Classroom Discussion. We should take heart when we read of Murphy's struggles: How does one move from a spontaneous thought to a general

issue? When are the students beginning to write only to put an end to a laborious introduction? Don't some kids just talk louder than others? How does a discussion keep from becoming overdirected, overcontrolled, and "simply done to death"?

Murphy suffered his share of pat endings, exhausted inspiration, stifled yawns, and lack of "substance." But, more important to the reader, he was able to admit what he didn't understand (not only to his journal, but to his class as well), to laugh, and to keep alive his sense of exploration. Late in his experience, he himself began fulfilling the assignments he had been dishing out—and was given others by his class—an approach he considered the most important "find" in his teaching.

Throughout the book, Murphy increasingly realized the limitations of the traditional classroom of thirty to his purpose. He felt unable to reach students individually and never fully resolved the dilemma. His compromise—as with so many teachers—filled many evening hours with critical reading and correspondence with his students.

Despite the familiar trials and woes, however, the *Imaginary Worlds* curriculum produced some impressive evidence. Examples of extraordinary children's writing are woven into the narrative.

I lay there on my patch of orange, looking at this solid ochre mass over me. Looked a little like marshmallows. And the fog lifted. I stood up, bumping my head on my sky. Venturing out into my infant universe. After walking, skipping around for an hour I saw it.  
(Jill)

"There's a brown speck of dirt on your garment." "Oh that's just a speck of dirt—here, I'll brush it off onto the floor," I said. "No you don't. I don't want that piece of unsanitary speck of bacteria contaminating my office! Dump your debris in the debris eliminator," said the general. "All right," I said. So I put it in and I heard some pretty strange noises. First I heard violins, then a humming sound.  
(Randy)

While I enjoy the rather fantastic images, I confess that I am equally astounded by the vocabulary!

Richard Murphy is doing something right. And, although *Imaginary Worlds* is hardly prescriptive, I believe it could be therapeutic for all teachers who understand the agony of trying to make an idea work.

# NEW MATERIALS

**Sandra Ahern**

READING CONSULTANT, COMSTOCK, MICHIGAN

*Media '77 Catalog*, Miller-Brody Productions, Inc., 342 Madison Ave., Dept. 77, New York, 10017.

The new listing of books and accompanying records and/or filmstrips for use by elementary teachers. The wide range of materials available includes over twenty combinations of curricular areas, from Health & Safety to Shakespeare and Art Education.

*Insights Into Why and How to Read*, Editor Robert T. Williams, International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, Newark, Delaware, 1976, 97 pps.

One need only glance at the table of contents in this book to realize how useful and valuable it would be to have it available on the school professional shelf. There is much stimulating material in the thoughts expressed by the authors of the first section: Edgar Dale, Leila Whitcombe, and Helen Huus. The section which follows is a practical approach to teaching language, word attack, and comprehension skills.

The unique quality in this book is that the authors are in agreement in starting from the fundamental premise which says *teachers* are the keys to excellence. Too many articles on reading tend to regard methods, formulas, and machines as the way to success.

*Structuring Reading Activities for English Classes*, Graves, Michael F., Palmer, Rebecca J., and David W. Furniss, National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois and Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, National Institute of Education.

Because teachers at the secondary level are being challenged to assume responsibility for developing their students' reading skills in their specific subject areas, monographs such as this one are particularly useful and immediately applicable. The booklet is divided into two parts; the first presents the rationale and the theory behind the suggestions, and the second shows English teachers where and how the principles may best be used.

*Attitudes and Reading*, Alexander Estill J., and Ronald Claude Filler, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, 1976, 73 pps.

This work discusses many of the factors that are causative in the establishment of certain attitudes related to reading. The authors believe that if teachers understand attitude formation and are made aware of ways to help build positive attitude, positive results will become evident to a measurable degree. Many of the suggestions given in the final chapters are designed to stimulate a much needed sense of creativity in youngsters.

*Using Readability Formulas for Easy Adult Materials*, Laubach, Robert S., Koschnick, Kay, New Readers Press, Syracuse, New York, 1977, 40 pps.

The key word in describing this monograph is practicality. From the straightforward title to the Tips for helping readers choose books, (last page) the booklet is packed with useful and much needed information. Since one of the authors is the son of the late Frank C. Laubach, originator of Each One Teach One, and the other author is an official in this publishing company that devotes itself to materials for adults with low reading skills, there is evidence enough that the booklet meets a felt need in the area.

*English Skills Handbook*, Wiener, Harvey S., and Charles Bazerman, 1977, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, Mass., 343 pps.

This well-organized book would seek to fit the needs of any teacher who needs to work with secondary students in the essentials of reading and writing. This is not a grammar book in the old-fashioned concept, but its examples and approaches present students with proper expression. The section on reading is given first billing, and is offered in a straightforward manner. Writing skills are taught in close relationship to reading—another important point in the book's favor. The most important point of all is the fact that a secondary student, and probably many college students, could use this kind of book for independent (and private) study.





