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## Ten-Second Reviews

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# TEN-SECOND REVIEWS



*Summer 1976*

Bachner, Saul, "The Reading Teacher: Strength With Sensitivity," *Reading Interaction*, Brother Leonard Courtney (Editor), Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976, pp. 35-39.

Here are some old-fashioned cautions based on very modern advice from highly qualified sources, to teachers of difficult children at almost any age. Don't be the soft, patronizing teacher who actually isn't paying much attention. Be firm, be positive, and be well-organized. Classroom control, says Bachner, is a matter of "strength with sensitivity," of being able to fill the atmosphere with respect for the subject without losing the warmth of feeling between student and teacher. Although the author addressed his article to teachers of disadvantaged children, his ideas apply equally well to us all.

Betts, Emmett A., "Viewpoints IV: On Spelling Reform" *Spelling Progress Bulletin*, (Spring 1976) Vol. XVI, pp. 6-10.

If we trace to their beginnings the various movements to reform the spelling of our language, we should find ourselves reading in Chaucer's time, or shortly thereafter. In this article, Betts contents himself to enumerate and cite those spelling reformers of the past forty or fifty years. Invariably, as occurs in this article, the conclusion is reached that the changes would be more confusing than leaving the language alone.

Brown, James I., "Techniques for Increasing Reading Rate," *New Horizons in Reading*, John E. Merritt (Editor), Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976, pp. 158-164.

Avoiding the usual objections to speed of reading for its own sake, this article suggests that students need to raise their sights. Brown gives teachers conclusive proof that counseling away the self-limiting attitudes and carefully organizing student practices may result in dramatic rate increases without losses in comprehension. Since these increased rates are being attained on the campus at the University of Minnesota, the ideas merit serious attention.

Braun, Carl, Allan R. Neilson, and Robert Dykstra, "Teacher Expectation: Prime Mover on Inhibition?" *Reading Interaction*, Brother Leonard Courtney (Editor), Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976, pp. 40-48.

Here is convincing evidence that teachers' low expectations of students have led to lowered achievement levels. The article inveighs against grouping as "social and academic stigmatization." I.Q., is regarded as a measure of student potential, is equally guilty of hurting students' educational opportunities.

Burmeister, Lou, "Vocabulary Development in Content Areas Through the Use of Morphemes," *Journal of Reading* (March 1976) 19:481-487.

This article includes a host of practical ideas for helping students become well acquainted with word elements, especially those derived from Latin and Greek. Most important is the practical suggestion that content teachers at all levels can find interesting ways of familiarizing students with prefixes and roots which make up much of today's standard written language.

Carlson, Ruth Kearney, "A Baker's Dozen of Personal Values in Children's Literature," *New Horizons in Reading*, John E. Merritt (Editor), Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976, pp. 49-59.

True to the title's pledge, the author presents the readers with thirteen ways of looking at the importance of reading for children. Expressing her ideas in language as fresh and as full of imagery as her subject, Ruth Carlson emphasizes the influence every book wields in the lives of the young. Teachers of young children don't need to be told, but may need reminding, and this is an exquisite reminder.

Castallo, Richard, "Listening Guides—A First Step Toward Notetaking and Listening Skills," *Journal of Reading* (January 1976) 19:289-290.

Reference is made to middle schools in this article, but the reader may adapt these practical ideas about teaching the neglected skill of listening to almost any level. Furnishing students with practice lectures and cloze procedure type notes obviously offers great possibilities. The self-teaching potential is immense.

Early, Margaret, "Important Research In Reading and Writing," *Phi Delta Kappan*, (January 1976) 57:298-301.

Viewed as an assignment—describe the changes and directions

in a fundamental area of education—the article sounds impossible of accomplishment. Yet the author has managed to explain movements and methods with such lucidity that all readers, from the uninitiated to reading teachers themselves, will doubtless feel rewarded with new perspectives. However, as we may have anticipated, the article's message is that no new methods or theories are working startling changes in the ways reading and writing are taught.

Ekwall, Eldon, "Informal Reading Inventories: The Instructional Level," *The Reading Teacher* (April 1976) 29:662-665.

There has been considerable confusion about ranges and limits in what is called *instructional* level in IRI's. Ekwall describes experiments to show the amount of emotion elicited by reading challenges at lower "instructional" levels. He states that errors in placement of children can drive them away from reading for life.

Goodman, Kenneth S., "Miscue Analysis: Theory and Reality in Reading," *New Horizons in Reading*. John E. Merritt (Editor), Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976, pp. 15-26.

This important new concept in the analysis of oral reading is described from the point of its origin a decade ago, to the new perspective and taxonomy of questions used as a diagnostic tool today. Included are basic definitions in psycholinguistics, the study of interrelationships of thought and language.

Greenlaw, M. Jean, "Promoting the Reading Habit: Cultural Problems," *New Horizons in Reading*, John E. Merritt (Editor), Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976, pp. 392-399.

This article reviews the special educational needs of children whose cultural background is different from that being taught in the school. Usually through ignorance of other cultural values, teachers may do more harm than good in working with such children. Many important ideas relative to the needs which must be met are succinctly expressed here by the author. Publishers and parents, as well as teachers, should read this article.

Greenspan, Steven B., "Effectiveness of Therapy for Children's Reversal Confusions," *Academic Therapy* (Winter 1975-76), 11:169-174.

In reviewing the several relatively new approaches to treatment of reversal tendencies, the author judges the therapy which employs perceptual-motor training as "apparently effective." However,

because children are very different, we cannot expect uniform results. Several suggestions for future experiments in this area are included.

Harker, W. John, "Lesson Planning for Remedial Reading," *The Reading Teacher* (March 1976) 29:568-571.

This article is intended for teachers who recognize the organization of developmental reading, but hesitate to tackle organizing lessons for teaching remedial reading. Using basic stages described by Betts and Stauffer, the author develops an organizational pattern which provides for the most important needs of remedial readers in all lessons.

Harris, Albert J., "Practical Applications of Reading Research," *The Reading Teacher* (March 1976) 29:559-565.

Harris compares the impact of bandwagon slogans and publicity on the teaching of reading, with the amount of attention valid research results receive from the teachers of reading. In this informative article many important research studies and their authors are listed and evaluated. Moreover, Harris tells the reader how to avail himself of the real helps to effective teaching, thereby avoiding the temptation to climb on the bandwagon.

Harris, Theodore L., "Reading Flexibility: A Neglected Aspect of Reading Instruction," *New Horizons in Reading*, Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976, pp. 27-35.

To make a dramatic case in favor of ability to change rates of reading rather than speed per se, Harris restates basic research results, quotes humorous passages on speed reading, but cites Buswell's standard of 500 words per minute as a realistic goal for high school students. The implication is that secondary teachers can help students set efficient rates as they state their purposes in reading assignments.

Hopkins, Lee Bennett, "Dinosaurs, Monsters, and Other Beasts of Weird," *Teacher* (February 1975) 92:34-40.

The unusual appeal this topic has for people of all ages has led many excellent writers to create mini-works of art about dinosaurs and other creatures. Excellent background, both for children with scientific bent and for those whose imaginations need a little "freeing-up," this article lists many titles and describes books teachers might note for future reference. A few, however, may need to be put on the "last resort" page of the notebooks, as being too scary for teachers.

Larrick, Nancy, "The Paperback Bonanza," *Reading Interaction*, Brother Leonard Courtney (Editor), Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976, pp. 101-105.

This article recalls the surveys of twelve years ago which indicated the great promise of paperbacks in education, but shows that teachers generally have not made use of the potential. To hasten the trend, author Larrick lists sources of available titles, suggests methods, and cogently argues for extensive use of paperbacks in content courses and at all levels.

Miller, Julano, "Perceptual—Motor Skills—Checklist," *Academic Therapy* (Winter 1975-76) 12:243-249.

Here is a terse treatment of a topic of great concern to teachers of children with serious learning difficulties. The steps and the approaches are described in detail. As a specific learning disabilities consultant, the author has outlined a practical set of ideas in teaching certain skills, methods which have doubtless undergone much pragmatic testing.

Miller, Wanda M., Anne G. Dye, and Doris Flood Ladd, *Reading Faster and Understanding More*. The Winthrop Publishers Inc., Cambridge, Mass., 1976, 343 pp.

What makes this workbook in reading improvement stand out from the usual or commonplace are three important ingredients. It is a realistic book which makes no false promises of immediate or dramatic change; the drills and practices indicate that results are preceded by real effort. Second, a great deal of human understanding and insight went into choosing selections for reading exercises; a student will read closest to his upper limits of ability when he is reading timely material of the highest caliber. Finally, all aspects of reading improvement are given adequate attention, according to the best known methods of treatment. This review only questions the workbook's effectiveness if used much below college level, as suggested in the early pages, since high school students often lack the self-discipline to profit from such drills.

Morrison, Coleman, and Mary C. Austin, "The Torch Lighters Revisited—A Preliminary Report," *The Reading Teacher* (April 1976) 29:647-652.

Fifteen years after their major study of teacher-preparation in reading, Morrison and Austin are taking a second look at progress in fulfilling recommendations originally made. In the areas of courses required, field experience, and availability of reading

courses, there was much progress reported. A few recommendations still needing implementation are: *all* preparing secondary teachers have reading training; that students be exposed to children sooner and more often; and, that screening of students entering elementary education be stringent.

Robinson, Helen M., "Identifying and Planning Reading Research," *Improving Reading Research*, Roger Farr, Sam Weintraub, and Bruce Tone (Editors), Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976, pp. 8-12.

Because so many well-intentioned research studies fall short of making a contribution to the body of knowledge in reading, this article is offered to help those interested to systematize their approach. Many practical suggestions are made to neophytes, not the least important of which are the ideas of enlisting in a cooperative project to gain experience, and to continue studying a particular field of focus so that the deeper implications may be unfolded. "One shot" research studies merely "scratch the surface," Robinson says. Needed research topics in several categories are named, and steps to follow are given to assure that study results may constitute a plus value.

Schaefer, Martha, *The Writing Process: Step by Step*, The Winthrop Publishers Inc., 1975, Cambridge, Mass., 328 pp.

Here is a workbook to meet the needs of the inadequately prepared college student, if one happens to be a teacher of college freshmen. While it is not self-instructional, the book is designed in a pattern of sequential goals and objectives which lead to self-reliance in expository writing. *The Writing Process* does not assume a level of proficiency at the beginning. Students may move at their own pace through the steps, from recognizing a sentence and its parts all the way to developing style in writing about timely topics. The range of practical use doubtless begins with the secondary level and extends to adults who need to refurbish their communication talents.

Smith, Arthur, D. W., "Reading Skills—What Reading Skills?" *New Horizons in Reading*, John E. Merritt (Editor), Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976, pp. 39-48.

After investigating the kinds of communication skills required in 37 occupations, Smith gives us a number of ideas as to how those skills might be measured and taught in schools. He would, for example, replace the teaching of sentence and paragraph structure with listening and conversation skills. His suggestion that we de-

emphasize the study of literary art in favor of literal comprehension is sure to startle many readers.

Squire, James R., "How Publishers Develop Instructional Materials," *Reading Interaction*, Brother Leonard Courtney (Editor), Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976, pp. 106-112.

In times of accelerating change and increased accountability demands all around, a need for closer informational exchange between classroom teachers and publishers becomes essential. The author, former president of NCTE, shows the trend in materials development to be away from the textbook concept, and toward tested learning programs which are both timely and widely varied.

Sutherland, Zena (Editor), *The Best in Children's Books*, Guide to Children's Literature, The University of Chicago Press, 1966-1972, 484 pp.

This compilation of best books is the result of work by the advisory committee of the *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*, which has been in operation since 1945. Every one of the 1400 books listed and described in some detail has been carefully analyzed and evaluated by education experts. In addition, each book represents the best of several looked at in the category of age-group. The members of the committee considered many more factors than level of difficulty in making their choices, attempting to meet the needs of rapid changes in children's growth and taste patterns. Especially important to the value of this compilation is the fact that book choices were made on the basis of good style, well-constructed plot, and characterization that avoids stereotyping.

Walker, Laurence, "Comprehending Writing and Spontaneous Speech," *Reading Research Quarterly* (Winter 1975-76) 11:144-167.

In this comprehensive account of an experimental study, the author sought to answer the following: Do we reconstruct meaning from what we *read* with more complete comprehension than from what we *hear*? The hypothesis, that we recreate the message from written material with more precision than from spoken ideas, was borne out by the study. However, the author feels much more work needs to be done to identify the factors that make the differences in processing so great.

Wiener, Harvey S., and Rose Palmer, *The Writing Lab*, An Individualized Program in Writing Skills, Glencoe Press, Beverly Hills, California, 1974.

This kit of thirty-seven mastery lessons and nine experience

assignment booklets has been incorporated for individualized practice and learning in basic composition skills. The problems that face a high school student or beginning college student in writing an essay or even a paragraph are anticipated by the authors, and arranged in alphabetical order on instruction cards. If commas are confusing, one turns to card 5 to find complete and sequential information.

Wolfe, Denny T., and R. Baird Shuman, "Poetry in Secondary Schools: Reading, Analysis, and Response," *Reading Research Quarterly* (Winter 1975-76) 11:168-192.

Using criteria assembled from a dissertation on teaching literature and literary criticism by I. A. Richards, the researchers conducted a study of secondary students' comprehension of and response to two poems. Because the study attempted to examine the entire spectrum of students' attitudes and achievement through the general questionnaire following the readings, the results were a pot pourri of implications. Especially important here was the strong suggestion that a teacher's appreciation of that form of literary art throughout life.

Young, Edith M., and Leo V. Rodenborn, "Improving Communication Skills in Vocational Courses," *Journal of Reading* (February 1976) 19:373-377.

Sometimes teachers who feel the pressure of time in trying to produce efficient business and secretarial students miss a good opportunity for improvement if they neglect reading skills. Described here is a happy combination of skills in both fields being used and practiced in "Draft a News Release." The versatile assignment may serve purposes from pre-test to remedial practice.