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Round Robin

Dorothy E. Smith
Western Michigan University

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Round Robin is a forum intended for our readers' use to express or comment on any topical subject affecting the field of reading. Send your letters or comments to Dorothy E. Smith, Round Robin Editor.



Dorothy E. Smith, Editor

The name of this department is Round Robin, in the sense of exchanging ideas in an ever upward and outward spiral.

There is another connotation to the phrase, however, that isn't quite so salubrious. Too often, as everyone knows, when there is a problem the buck is passed from person to person and from one level of authority to another.

Most people in the field of reading decry the great chasm between good teaching and good teaching of teachers. The school teachers say, "Why weren't we taught the real-life day to day solutions to teaching reading?" And the professors say, "Why weren't you interested in what we had to offer?" Or else they say, "We wanted to give you first-hand experience, but there wasn't money from the bursar," or "there was no cooperation from the schools."

The Reading Unit at Western Michigan University took a dramatic step in attempting to break the Round Robin syndrome. Or, rather, to create a Round Robin of real merit. Ronald Crowell, the chairman of the unit, invited Clara Harbeck, Reading Consultant, Kalamazoo Public Schools; Leona Hefner, Reading Consultant, Portage Public Schools; Martha Fuce, Secondary Reading Teacher, Plainwell High School; and Karen Dybeck, a teacher at Comstock Central Middle School, to discuss with the professors of reading their concerns in this matter.

Here are some of their suggestions:

Teacher training is needed in secondary developmental reading

programs.

Every student in the Teacher Education program should have at least one course in developmental reading.

Better course definitions are needed and duplications should be avoided; not one course with two titles.

Graduate programs should have a greater interdisciplinary emphasis, and the student should have a wide range of experiences in testing and measurement.

More functional training in classroom situations should be provided, for practical application of techniques and strategy in working with groups of children in therapy.

Use classrooms as a laboratory; get out into the schools.

Require that student teachers get acquainted with the reading teacher.

The Federal government is drying up funds for “down the hall” services. Student teachers need instruction on classroom supportive services.

“Tune in earlier.” Students should learn more about diagnosis and remediation before graduation.

Most school districts require the use of a basal series, therefore the university people should help students become acquainted with basals and their strengths and how they can most effectively be utilized.

Learning disabilities courses and information on working with the gifted should be available to prospective teachers.

With the proliferation of new publications in reading it appears essential to offer a course which gives the student a broad survey of all modern publications.

These suggestions, if implemented, could have a salubrious effect on prospective teachers. What is your reaction?

DES, Editor