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We Suggest

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WE SUGGEST

Eleanor Buelke

Berger, Allen, Editor
Elements

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: The Department of Elementary Education, The University of Alberta.

Valuing their integrity as members of a true profession, many teachers commit themselves to continuous, personal, intellectual growth, agreeing with Dr. Bruner when he states:

Making something comprehensible to the young is only a continuation of making something comprehensible to ourselves in the first place—that understanding and aiding others to understand are both of a piece.¹

Because making something comprehensible to the young is of primary importance to educators, they are searching constantly for better ways to make things comprehensible to themselves. They deplore the gaps, the discrepancies, which exist between research in many fields and the means for implementation of implications in actual classroom instruction. For many teachers, descriptions, or models, of learning theories are not sufficient bases to act upon. They realize that:

Knowledge is not a copy of reality. To know an object, to know an event, is not simply to look at it and make a mental copy, or image, of it. To know an object is to act on it. To know is to modify, to transform the object, and to understand the process of this transformation, and as a consequence to understand the way the object is constructed. An operation is thus the essence of knowledge;²

Consequently, they keep looking for ways to promote that true, intellectual growth which happens when theories are translated into action and transaction in human learning situations.

As bodies of research in various disciplines increase, generalizations and inferences made by experts in these fields are published and disseminated among the members of professions involved. Teachers welcome well-reported summaries of findings, accurately interpreted, and made viable in the light of curricular theory. Of particular value are those which may have interdisciplinary relationships and significance.

¹ Jerome S. Bruner, *Toward A Theory of Instruction*, p. 38. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1966.

² Russell G. Stauffer, "Integrating the Language Arts," *Elementary English*, (January, 1971), 48: 23.

A comparative newcomer in the publications field, a newsletter, published monthly, September through April, by the Department of Elementary Education, The University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Canada, appears to be of promise in helping teachers to translate educational research theory into practice. Each issue highlights a specific area of instruction. Areas included are those of art, language, mathematics, music, physical education, reading, science, and social studies. However, study of the articles printed in any one issue reveals the emphasis the authors place upon empirical evidence presented and proclaimed by those who have done respectable, honest research in the problems and patterns of human growth and development. By their very nature these emphases transcend the boundaries of any one discipline.

Each issue of this newsletter, *Elements*, contains several articles, usually reliably documented. Some of the authors include suggested readings, or annotated bibliographies, for further study. Illustrations, diagrams, or photographs often accompany the articles. Occasionally, an editor's note clarifies, or stimulates, further thinking concerning an article which follows. General format of the newsletters and selections seems to be planned with time limitations of the busy classroom teacher in mind, promoting quick grasp of main ideas, and rapid retrieval for subsequent use.

It is worth noting, too, that this publication is a product of students and teachers from a neighboring nation, supporting the "one world" concept of educational tasks facing teachers everywhere. The human family of educators lives in a global community of shared confrontation with problems of teaching and learning. For them, the words of Carl Sandburg in *The Family of Man* might appropriately be paraphrased to read:

There is only one learner in the world
And his name is Every Learner.

There is only one teacher in the world
And the teacher's name is Every Teacher.³

³ Carl Sandburg, *The Family of Man*. New York, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1955. p. 192.