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We Suggest

Eleanor Buelke

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WE SUGGEST

Eleanor Buelke

Van Gilder, Lester L., and Wasinger, Sister M. Lucy Ann
Achieving Maturity Through High School Reading
Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Book Company, 1967, pp 10+ 219.

In recent years, research has probed further, and more precisely, than ever before into processes of human development. Perhaps, one of the most exciting, yet frightening, implications of findings in this area is that the human being never remains the same, never stops changing, never really reaches completion. Piaget's discoveries and assertions concerning equilibration, the name he gives to the individual's own active regulation of, and accommodation to, experiences in his world, lead to the belief that human intellectual development "proceeds as partial understandings are revised, broadened, and related to one another."¹

In accordance with this theory, the authors of *Achieving Maturity Through High School Reading* believe that there is an almost unlimited variation of possible development in reading among students, that achieving maturity in this skill is a lifetime process, characterized by spiraling abilities, reinforced and perfected in height and breadth.

This paperback text is intended for use with high school students who already have had considerable success with reading. Selections with varied interest and readability levels are included. For the most part, they center on activities and problems beyond the reader's self, yet related to his personal experiences. They seem to lend themselves to continuation of thought, exceeding that of an involved reader in an initial reading. Appropriately, then, these readings qualify as bases for thoughtful group study, productive interaction, and critical evaluation.

Apparently, it is also assumed by Van Gilder and Wasinger that the users of their book have already attained some measure of maturity. Structure and format of the book provide guide-lines for reading individual selections at varied rates, utilizing differences in procedures according to varying content, literary style, and purposes for reading. Comprehension checks and evaluations call for, and help to perfect, such skills as: thinking on varied levels of abstraction; categorizing;

1. Eleanor Duckworth, "Piaget Rediscovered," *Reading And The Cognitive Processes*, p. 32. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1967.

discovering relationships; substantiating inferences; accommodating personal experience to reported facts or opinions; skimming for pertinent information; identifying and using linguistic patterns, techniques, and methods; and sharing learnings in interaction between teacher and students, and among students. For students who care enough to pursue further reflection and study concerning a particular lesson, additional direction may be found under "Beyond The Lines" at the close of each reading.

An important goal of these two authors seems to be similar to what Gunn calls "continuing satisfactory interaction" between readers and what they read. Such interaction is based upon the development of reading power, discipline of tastes, and a deepening view of the world.² For students of any subject, for teachers of high school reading, or for teachers in any content area at high school level, this text holds much of relevant value. It might also be considered an excellent resource for similar pedagogy based upon self-selected materials by students as they grow into an ever-increasing maturity through reading.

2. M. Agnella Gunn, "Promoting a Love Affair with Books," in *Combining Research Results With Good Practice*, p. 44, Vol. 11, Part 2, Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention, IRA.