

4-1-1964

Editorial Comment

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Recommended Citation

Carter, H. L. (1964). Editorial Comment. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts*, 4 (3). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading_horizons/vol4/iss3/1

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Are we teaching students to read or are we merely teaching them *about* reading? Do those we instruct hunger after reading and thirst for understanding "as the hart panteth after the water-brooks?" There is evidence that individuals in our schools from elementary grades to university do no more reading than is necessary. Reading for these young people is a task, a chore to be avoided whenever possible. There are few students in our schools who, like Lincoln, would walk twenty-two miles for a book. Who motivated his reading? Who were his teachers? What did they know about reading methods?

The teaching of reading should begin with *stimulation* and lead to *achievement*. The intervening steps are *Activity*→*Difficulty*→*Aid*. Stimulation provided by the teacher and by individuals in the class must lead to the active process of reading for a definite purpose. During this activity *difficulty* may be experienced. As this occurs, *aid* can be furnished by the teacher and perhaps by students making up the group. This sequential process of teaching or problem solving can lead finally to achievement which in turn can result in more stimulation, more activity, and more reading.

Does our teaching, yours and mine, provide this sequence of activity? Are we so busy with phonics, workbooks, methods of instruction, and gadgets that we fail to inspire our students to read more and more of the interesting, exciting and worthwhile literature of our time? Do our boys and girls make effective use of the library? If the school has one, it may be like a museum in which books are only on display. On the other hand, the library can be like a dynamic, enterprising bank with a steady flow of wealth both in and out. Surely, the utilization of the library is a test of our efficiency as teachers of reading. Perhaps some day it will be used as much as the gymnasium.

Homer L. J. Carter
Editor