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Reading

HORIZONS



Spring 1963

Reading **HORIZONS**

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Editorial Comment

“To him that hath shall be given.”

Reading is an active and purposeful process of identifying, interpreting, and evaluating ideas. One can read without the use of words, sentences or paragraphs. The well trained and experienced scout can read the signs of the trail. The woodsman, well acquainted with the lore of field and forest, can identify, interpret, and evaluate the signs of the approaching storm. The telegrapher reads the message sent to him by means of dots and dashes, whereas the uninformed and inexperienced hears only the clicking of the instrument. The effective counselor, teacher, and psychologist can read the reactions of those whom he is observing. The tone of voice and even smiles have a meaning. The physician identifies, interprets, and evaluates the reactions and symptoms of his patient. He integrates information from all available sources and reads his patient as he would read a book. Surely, reading is more than a mechanical recital of ideas and the spelling out of words. Reading from all media of written communication makes use of symbols which must be identified, interpreted, and evaluated. The act of effective reading requires experiential background or mental content. In fact, meaning is directly proportionate to the kind and amount of mental content available at the instant the act of reading takes place. This concept is aptly expressed by Goethe for he says,

“Every reader, if he has a strong mind, reads himself into the book and amalgamates his thoughts with those of the author.”

It is obvious that he who has an extensive background resulting from previous experiences not only will have more to contribute but also more to receive.

Homer L. J. Carter
Editor

FOCUS ON THE LEARNER

Sara R. Swickard

Western Michigan University

There is perhaps no area of human experience that has as many "authorities" as are involved in the continual controversy concerning the teaching of reading. These "authorities" range from nuclear scientists to almost any layman who has achieved fourth grade proficiency in reading. This search for *the* answer may prove to be the greatest deterrent to a vibrant, zestful program involving the honest quest of children.

When the search is for *an* answer, the searcher often becomes involved in a narrow re-searching of past programs; a new kind of manipulation of children, a reappraisal of skills needed and available materials. The results are a new system, a new set of books to replace the old set, a new arrangement of children to fit a new arrangement of materials and techniques.

Eager, creative, professional teachers are asked to fit into narrow, rigid, stereotyped "systems." Energetic, searching, growing boys and girls are asked to respond to materials which have no real content or meaning once the pictures are removed. Children are placed in sorting machines and fed into bins marked "slow," "average," "fast." Human dignity and the feeling of personal worth are made to suffer in order that the "system" may be served.

Could it be that the answers are being sought in the wrong places and by the wrong people? Is it not reasonable to assume that an intelligent, professional teacher working with an individual child knows more about that particular child and his learning nature and power than does anyone else? Is it inconceivable that a professional teacher is in the ideal position to look at a wide range of systems, books, materials and help an individual child select those that hold promise of helping him to grow confidently and with dignity?

Children deserve something better as a teacher than a mere cog in the machine, an accomplished practitioner. Children deserve professional teachers with vision and courage who act on principles rather than dogmas. They deserve teachers who are dedicated to the worth

and dignity of every child. They deserve teachers who seek endlessly to fulfill their function of teaching each child by using those materials and methods which appear to hold the greatest promise for him.

In a school system dedicated to the optimal development of all children, there is need to be more realistic in the approach to standards of achievement in reading. Any arbitrary standard carries with it a subtle acceptance or rejection of certain children. The school tends to accept those children who meet or surpass the standard and reject those who do not. The children in turn tend to accept or reject themselves on the same terms. Thus, the child who is labeled by the school as an under-achiever sees himself as a poor reader and often checks reading off as a way of gaining ego satisfaction. He may cease to try because the task appears impossible.

A flexible standard which is realistically based on the individual child's growth offers him encouragement and self-dedication. If he can be helped to see his successes, however small, he becomes more willing to put forth effort. If he can maintain self respect through the process of learning, then learning becomes more desirable and goals more positive.

If arbitrary standards and pre-designed systems seem to work a hardship on children, then what might take their place? Perhaps what is needed is a set of principles which guide the reading experiences and which allow for the freedom of both teachers and children to pursue realistic, worthwhile, personal goals in reading.

These principles need to be arrived at by groups of teachers and others who know about children and how they grow and develop and learn. These need to be people who are familiar with the research in the field of reading. Some ideas which might serve as a launching platform for such discussions follow.

Children Should Have Teachers Who Read

Young children's main avenue of learning is through imitation. For this reason, many teachers decry the fact that all children are not brought up in reading homes. Of even more concern is the fact that some children arrive at school with no aspiration to read. They love their non-reading fathers, mothers, uncles and aunts, and hence they have no apparent interest in changing the family pattern.

Unfortunately, some teachers spend considerable time regretting the background of these children but do little to change it. Many of

these children do not find any more inspiration to read as a result of the day by day living with the teacher than they found in their own homes.

The teacher may give little, if any, evidence of reading beyond the grade level books from which he or she teaches. The day is spent in routine, dull, skill-building drills and the door to reading aspiration remains closed.

Other teachers, who enjoy reading, leave no stone unturned in helping these youngsters find the magic and thrill of reading which has enriched their own lives. These are the teachers who read vibrant, exciting, dynamic tales to open for these children the wonder of books. They record the children's own stories and help them develop pride in authorship. They "feed in" ideas from their own adult reading which help children extend their ideas and their vision of the world. They provide many books concerned with the real interests of children. Every opportunity to read is utilized.

This teacher is characterized by statements such as: "John, try this book. You will like it." "By the way, Harry, did you read the directions? You will find them helpful." "I think you are right, Beth, I found that same point of view in a book I read last week." Children are encouraged to see how reading "works" and to experience the fun and joy and excitement of books so that the willingness to work on skills develops naturally within the child. He does not just learn how to read—he becomes a reader.

Children Should Have Teachers Who Observe Them and Who Regard Them as Individuals

An honest interest in children must precede any attempt to teach them to read. The first concerns should center around the total development of each child; his interests, his language facility, his experience background, his reaction to stories and books, his physical, mental, and psychological development. A good program for any child must start where that child is.

Many children who have reading problems have them because of the arbitrary choice of material and the arbitrary decision concerning the date on which reading is to start. In other words, a child who may be "closing the gap" between what he *can* read and what the school says he *should* read may find himself in a school situation which starts children reading at the "should-be-able-to" level. When this happens,

the child often tries desperately “to catch up.” Sometimes it is possible for him to do so. On the other hand, it is more likely that he will become discouraged and cease making the effort to read even those books which he can read.

Most of our children want to learn to read. Reading is important to them for it helps them to learn what they want to know. If schools would encourage teachers to engage in the kinds of activities that allow children to reveal their real interests and concerns, then teachers would know where to start and what materials and methods might serve a particular child for his best reading growth.

This means, then, that time should be provided for reasonably free, self-directed activities which afford the teacher the opportunity to observe and record important information. The child who, during library time, picks up a dozen different books and discards each one almost immediately is very different from the one who picks up one book and becomes “lost” in its pictures or content. The child who can express his ideas in a clear and interesting fashion is very different from the one who speaks in such a disjointed way that no one can understand his message. The child who has many rich broad experiences in his home and neighborhood is much more ready to use context clues than the child whose background is fallow and limited.

Too many failures result from children being expected to read material which is either geared above or below their reading level. The former become lost and withdraw from reading, the latter become bored and also may withdraw from the situation. Teachers, then, need to take more time to look at children and put effort into hearing what their behavior is trying to say. The individual child must be the first concern and methods and materials are significant only to the degree that they can serve to help the child move forward. This is the exact reverse of what is happening in many schools where the material and methods are examined and chosen and the child is forced to do the adjusting.

Children Should Experience Success in Reading

Every child needs to be helped to see what he *can* read, rather than be confronted constantly with what he *cannot* read. This does not mean that children should be given a false impression of their own reading skill. It does mean that methods of grouping, choices of teaching methods and materials, and the teacher’s attitude toward the

child's reading should be designed to help him see his progress, not his failures. He needs to believe that he can read and that the task is worth the effort. Some teachers who accept the importance of success are doing interesting things with "lost" readers.

One way which appears to bring results is to present the child with several books below his actual reading level. After he reads a few pages of each book the teacher informs him that the book is too easy for him. By the time the teacher presents a book at the child's actual reading level, he is able to look at a whole stack of books which the teacher has termed "too easy." Now the problem changes, it is not that he can't read; but rather, that he needs to develop more skill. Somehow this makes a difference to many poor readers who have always been shown what they cannot read.

Creative, professional teachers find other ways to build this feeling of confidence to move forward. No effort should be spared to kindle the child's view of himself as a reading person. Most people find it impossible to keep trying to develop any skill, or solve any problem, when the results are continuously frustrating.

Children Should Have at Least "Equal Time" Provided for Reading Materials of Their Own Choice

In some situations, basal reading books are used as the prime source for teaching children how to read. Certainly other materials must be used for practicing this growing skill. Children must not be permitted to assume that the basal reading book is the whole of reading. Why learn the skill at all if it has no functional use in the life of the child?

Teachers and others must make sure that every school is equipped with many and varied books. If reading is important, then books must be available and time must be planned for reading and sharing these books.

One small community asked a consultant for help with the reading program. The children of this community did not appear to do much reading. The consultant discovered that the school did not have a library and that there was no library in the community. How can children feel that reading is important when money is not allocated for the purchase and housing of the main ingredient in a good reading program; namely, something to read?

If it is believed that books can add to the richness of life and can

be sources of new insights, new information, and new pleasures, then many books and time to read them become musts.

Children and Teachers Should Utilize Opportunities for the Joint Evaluation of Growth in Reading

In an era of tape recorders, teaching machines, programmed books, and the like, there appears to be new opportunities for helping children evaluate their own reading skills.

Some teachers find it helpful to make at least three tapes of each child's reading. This practice allows the child to record his reading and then listen to himself. It also allows him to hear his progress from one tape to the next. Such a plan permits the teacher to raise questions, make suggestions, and help the child move forward in terms of what he believes he needs to do. Learning to read more effectively becomes the responsibility of the learner and the teacher becomes more of a teacher and less of a judge.

Many teachers are working out plans for listening to each child read individually, on some sort of scheduled basis. One teacher reviewed her program and discovered two ten-minute periods each day when nothing of importance seemed to be happening. She started listening to each of four children read for five minutes every day. With a total of thirty-two children, this means that she hears each child read alone at least twice a month. Now the children are helping her look for more time as they feel that this undivided attention to individual problems is helpful.

The above list represents only a small fraction of the many ideas which need to be explored if reading is to be improved. The responsibility of individual teachers and school systems is great. No one can deny that following an organized system is less time consuming and less strenuous. The rewards of a creative approach to problem solving are also great. Usually, those teachers who seek constantly to find new and better ways to teach reading are rewarded by better reading and infinitely more satisfying living in the classroom.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL STUDENTS WHY READ?

Dorothy Edna Smith

Western Michigan University

A few years ago Morris Bishop (1) wrote a fantastic and fascinating tale about a professor who invented a reading machine. This machine would read everything that was fed into it, making it unnecessary for anyone to go through the tedium of reading for himself. This invention seemed as sensible to the professor as the computers are that solve complicated mathematical problems for scientists. There was a slight flaw in his reasoning, of course and that was, what would anyone do with the results of the reading machine's labors? Read them?

This final step, the result of reading, is the important step. This is where many of us need help. We already can read, poorly or well, but we can read. We say, why bother, when what we read doesn't stick around inside us long enough to matter? What we read goes in our eyes and out the holes in our heads, leaving barely a trace.

Do you think so? If you do, you're wrong. You and I, all of us, have a helper so marvelous it puts to shame the professor's reading machine. The helper is our own private data processor, a machine which can do so much more than the professor's invention. Does it sound silly to say that you own a data processor when you barely can make it financially from that Saturday night date to Tuesday's lunch? Everybody knows computers cost thousands of dollars.

Believe it or not, though, you do have a calculating machine, an organizer, a memory machine, built within you. The complicated mechanism is designed solely to your specifications. It will operate at peak efficiency for nobody else in the world, only you.

How do you make it work? What will activate it? You. You and practice. As you know, what makes all electronic data processors produce the right answers is the material that is fed into them, material which is both qualitative and quantitative. In other words, you must do two things, feed it a mixture that is rich, and feed it one that is also accurate. This rich feeding process is recognized by

investigators in the field of reading. It is called “mental content” by Carter, “. . . if one possesses appropriate mental content, he is able to identify, interpret, and evaluate . . .” (2), and Holmes calls it “Substrata Factor.” He says, “Incoming information (is) ordered and stored in localized cell-assemblies in the brain.” (4) Then all these coded comprehensions, or punched cards as it were, are compiled and cross-indexed, ready for use whenever you push the button.

The rich mixture is what your data processor feeds on, and the bin that you use for storage is your preconscious. (3) There has never yet been a machine developed by IBM or any other electronics firm which is so individually tailored to you, nor so accurate for you, as your preconscious. Everything you have seen, heard, dreamt, felt, decided, been forced into, thought, and *read* is dumped into this bin. Everything. Your beliefs, additions to, subtractions from, modifications of are recorded faithfully by this super-secretary. It is never home with a cold or out to lunch. It stays on its feet and operates at maximum efficiency no matter how you feel.

All right, You have a preconscious. Everybody except human vegetables has one. And if you are a vegetable you won't be reading this. Ergo, you have a preconscious. What are you doing with your electronic brain? Are you using it to capacity?

Few of us do. In the first place, we're afraid to trust it. If an answer comes from within us, unbidden and without strain, we tend to mistrust it. We're sure it can't be right. But that is where we're wrong. Our preconscious can almost always come out with the right answer. IF. Our preconscious can almost always come out with the right answer if we have fed it the right dope in the first place. If we have learned facts and balances and principles, if we have fed all of these into our private machine, when we need to solve a problem involving those same principles, our preconscious can come up with the one best right answer.

One word of caution, however. Our preconscious takes all the facts and figures and conclusions that we give it, but it also takes our own personal biases, our individualities (called our peculiarities by outsiders) and amalgamates them with our problem-solving facts, correlates them with a heavy balance on the side of “feeling,” and gives us the solution. Ordinarily this is not a bad thing. Ordinarily the answer we want is one that is palatable to us, one that we can tolerate. Occasionally, however, we need an unbiased answer, an answer

that has nothing to do with the way we feel about something. Then, when we feed the data to our preconscious, we must add that restriction—please omit the hearts and flowers.

What has all this to do with the problem of reading or how to study or how to learn? It has almost everything to do with it. It means that all you have to do is to learn something right, use it a few times to establish the right pathway within your machine, and behold! That bit of knowledge is forever stored in your nervous system. It has to be used now and then so it won't be put into "dead storage," from whence things only reluctantly ever reappear. Nobody ever forgets completely anything he has ever learned. He may bury it or overlay it or even mislay it, but it's there, in his preconscious until the day he dies. Such an array of knowledge, if it were put onto 3" x 5" cards, would require a building the size of Westminster Abbey. But we—each one of us—can carry that much around with us in our cantaloupe-sized brains, wherever we go, all day, every day. And we can use it. And we should use it.

The moral of this story is: stuff your private computer with everything you can read, every item, mote of knowledge, idea, vague thought that comes your way. Work at it. Feed it. And, if you have fed it well—not too much starch, not too much sugar, not too much pap—it will return the favor. It will feed you.

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Dorothy Edna Smith is the co-author of *An Introduction to General American Phonetics* published by Harper and Row. A suspense story she wrote, "Thirty-nine," was anthologized in *The Lethal Sex* as one of the best mystery stories of 1959. At one time she was assistant to the director of the Speech Clinic at Western Michigan University, and she is now a member of the staff of the Psycho-Educational Clinic. Mrs. Smith has four children—all going to college—and a professional humorist for a husband. He is also a professor. Her extra-collegiate activities include having been a member of the Board of Directors (with George Romney) of Citizens for Michigan, president of the League of Women Voters of Kalamazoo and president of Friends of the Juvenile Court.

TEN SECOND REVIEWS

Blanche O. Bush

Western Michigan University

A poem's not a puzzle
With hidden thoughts to find,
But is a work of beauty,
Born in the author's mind.

A poet paints his pictures
With words that are exact.
He colors all his concepts
Yet keeps his thoughts intact.

A poem has a rhythm
As music or a dance.
It has a lilt that lifts one up
To heights of greater chance.

A poem rhymes or has free verse.
The meter is oft varied.
But beauty, not mechanics,
Should in the mind be carried.

Quite often teachers squelch the joy
A child gains from a verse
And kills the innate love he has
For thoughts expressed so terse.

A teacher's love for poems,
Enthusiasm, too,
Will help to bring forth from the child
Creative beauty, true.

Adams, Bess Porter, "Butter To My Bread, Poetry By and For Children," *About Books and Children*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1953.

Adams emphasizes that poetry is not a mysterious, difficult study far removed from daily life and average human understanding; it is the verbal expression of the thoughts and emotions common to all people. It is a recording in beautiful language of human joys, longings, and experiences. The author presents a classification of poetry and suggestions for presentation. Appendix B provides classified bibliographies of interest to parents, teachers, and children.

Abernathy, Helen, and Earlene Burgett, "Let's Write a Poem," *Elementary English* (February, 1962), 39:119-128.

Because little children are eager to express themselves, the authors have used poetry as a very satisfactory method of developing creativity while providing an opportunity for expression. As children need a definite reason for writing down their thoughts, it was suggested that printing a class newspaper might provide the need. Given the encouragement, vocabulary, direction to write about the things with which they are familiar, appreciation of work well done, and a reason for writing, Abernathy and Burgett conclude that teachers face unlimited horizons in creative poetry writing.

Arnold, Freida, "A Creative Writing Activity," *Elementary English* (May, 1961), 38:298-300.

The art of writing lies not only in having something to say, but in knowing how to say it. The author believes that, in addition to loosening tongues, it is necessary to develop conciseness. In a creative writing activity Arnold suggests that reading of compositions for discussion and evaluation evokes wonderful comments and invaluable observations.

Arnstein, Flora J., *Adventure Into Poetry*, Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 1951.

Any teacher can set the tone in the classroom. If his dis-

position is to search out the positive values in the poems and to build upon them, the class will take his cue. Much can be done by indirection to develop critical standards in the students. According to Arnstein, attention directed to the successful handling of a professional poet's material will help the student notice the means of achieving such effects.

Carlson, Ruth Kearney, "Stimulating Creativity in Children and Youth," *Elementary English* (March, 1961), 38:165-169.

Creativity in language implies originality, individuality, and an absence of stereotyped thinking. It implies a freshness of vision, a versatility, and a novel viewpoint. Furthermore, Carlson believes that creativity implies more than freedom and spontaneity; it means more than this exuberance; it needs skills and standards. Ways of stimulating creativity in children and youth are presented, and a definite technique for interpretation of poetry is suggested.

Duffy, Gerald G., "Children Do Enjoy Poetry," *Elementary English* (October, 1961) 38:422-424.

Children at the sixth grade level know very little about poetry other than hearsay gathered from older friends. When asked, children will say they don't like poetry because it means memorizing something. When pressed further, they will label poetry dull, with the boys emphatically declaring that poems are for sissies. The author states that both of these obstacles must be overcome, and suggestions for procedures are given. Duffy's philosophy is: "Any method is satisfactory as long as children are being encouraged to read poetry on their own."

Friend, Mimi, "Developing a Unit in Writing Poetry," *Elementary English* (February, 1960), 37:102-104.

Writing poetry presents to students a new dimension in the use of words. It awakens dormant senses, bringing to the writer new awareness of himself and his environment. Friend stresses that enthusiastic guidance and encouragement can lead students to new worlds of expression and new freedom of thought. Perhaps much of our failure in motivating children in this direction,

she suggests, is due to a misunderstanding on our part of the meaning of this art form. If you think of poetry as something to be enjoyed, a pleasant stretching of the imagination and sharpening of the senses, you are ready to start a poetry writing unit with your class. The author emphasizes that no one can be taught to write a poem, but as a teacher you can remove the blindfold of prejudice and misconceptions, and hope for the best.

Gould, Florence E., "Creative Expression Through Poetry," *Elementary English* (November, 1949), 26:391-393.

As a young teacher, the author was so driven with the necessity of teaching the fundamentals, the three R's, that she completely ignored the possibilities of poetry and creative writing. Nowhere in her training had this subject been given emphasis. Gould states that expression through music and art is recognized but the field of poetry which is the natural outlet for children's imaginative and creative powers is frequently neglected.

Groff, Patrick J., "Children's Poetry of Harry Behn," *Elementary English* (November, 1960), 37:411-446.

While children's poets disagree on the exact nature of their poetry, they seem to agree that it should contain certain identifiable elements such as rhythm, sound, sense and suggestion. Groff also believes that a poem's effect is a cumulative one, that is, the nature of the whole poem determines its parts, while at the same time allowance is made that to a degree the reverse is necessary. Children's poets as well as others attempt to make their readers and listeners see what they have seen, hear what they have heard, think what they have thought, and feel what they have felt. Harry Behn writes of the thoughts of young children, of nature, of fairies and other imaginary folk, and creates some entertaining nonsense verse. With one or two exceptions his poems are short enough to create a single impression. Behn gives some "sensible cautions" as to what to avoid in writing children's literature such as: "The cute and sentimental palmed off as childlike, words of one syllable . . . empty of magic or meaning, and writing that so stresses meaning as to be preachy."

Gunderson, Ethel, "All from One Poem," *Elementary English* (November, 1960), 37:449-450.

The teacher, Gunderson says, who enjoys poetry and who has seen how poetry can make a child's life fuller and richer is sure to provide time and place for it in her daily program. The writer gives the children much poetry mainly to provide the children with the pleasure derived from the poems and to give them a feeling of how to read poetry. Poetry helps children to "get going" artistically. The children should become familiar with 70 to 80 poems during the school year. Many children memorize parts of or entire poems, but no stress should be made on memorization. Each day the teacher should begin by reading a poem. They should not only read the poems, they should live them as well by acting them, illustrating them, singing them, making up their own tunes and by dancing. Each month the favorite poem for the month should be chosen, and the teacher should try to find the reasons for their choice. Realizing that a teacher's own feeling and attitude of joy toward poetry is "caught" by most children, she should herself delve deeply and widely into the field of poetry in order that poetry, to her pupils, may "sing its way into their hearts."

Hardy, Hilda, "The Child, A Creator," *Elementary English* (November, 1961), 38:491-493.

Every child is born with the power to create. Self expression can come from the child at any age, so says Hardy, if he is stimulated to feel the urge to give it utterance. If teachers can stimulate the child in some way to see the world about him—things, people, events—freshly and clearly, they will help to enrich every day in the child's life. The teacher needs only to be conscious of the fact that the creative abilities are within the child and that she must provide an atmosphere in which the child will have a chance to work.

Jacobs, Leland B., "Poetry Books for Poetry Reading," *The Reading Teacher* (October, 1959), 33:45-47.

Some general guide lines for selecting a book of poems are suggested by the author: (1) Is the book appealing in appear-

ance? (2) Are the illustrations appropriate in mood, style, in use of details for ideas and feelings as expressed in the poems? (3) Are poems arranged on the pages so that their uniqueness as creations is conveyed to the readers? (4) Are the poems presented in such an order and sequence that the book has about it a sense of rightness, continuity, and a flow of interrelated meaning? Jacobs reports that there are many poetry collections from which to choose and each collection has its own strengths and weaknesses. Every compiler is directed by his own values, preferences and tastes. A list of books suggested by the author includes anthologies, specialized collections, and individual poet works. Schools should supply enough poetry books so that every teacher and every child may find his way to those poems which hold for him treasures for the taking.

Kazlov, Gertrude, "Poetry to Teach By," *Elementary English* (January, 1962), 39:7-10.

By confining poetry to the language arts portion of the school day, Kazlov believes we do our young people a disservice. Language arts is its "home" in the curriculum; but it can be taken to arithmetic, science, and social studies. The student who has a conviction that poetry is not for him may be taken unaware when it is introduced in a new context and may find that it does have something to say. In the beginning the initiative must be the teacher's. The poems should be read casually, incidentally, and as personal favorites suggested by what is currently being studied.

Lachman, Florence, "Writing a Group Poem," *Elementary English* (May, 1957), 34:319.

"Let's write a poem and learn it as a choral recitation for an original assembly program" was suggested by the author to her class. A few themes were presented with "The Vikings" getting most approval mainly because the class had been hearing and reading about the Vikings as the earliest explorers. The class under the teacher's instruction outlined the points to be covered, and then the class wrote two stanzas a day. Suggestions for whole lines or phrases or individual words came from nearly

every child. Dictionaries were consulted, meter clapped out, lines read, changed and reread. The stanzas were then copied into notebooks. A chart of the whole poem was made when it was completed. Both the writing and presentation of the poem were rewarding experiences to the children. Facts about the Vikings were firmly impressed on even the slowest learner in the class.

Ryan, Calvin T., "The Poet, The Child, The Teacher," *Elementary English* (April, 1959), 36:237-239.

Observations show that every normal child loves poetry until some adult kills that love. Ryan states that it isn't always the teacher that is the murderer as most of us have had help from "prosy-minded" parents. The important thing for teachers of children is not to intrude between the child and the poet. She is dealing with three very much alive objects—the poet, the child, and herself. Poetry time should be fun time not only for the children but for the teacher who loves it, senses its value for the children, and takes pride in their accomplishments.

Smith, Sally True, "Why Teach Poetry," *Elementary English* (January, 1961), 38:27.

The author places the basic value of poetry on its symbolic control of environment. Science gives us information about the world. Poetry releases meanings about the world. Poetry observes nature closely, but it does much more than this. Through diction, structure and imagery, poetry releases underlying meanings about the world in which man lives. It provides a new and more vital way of looking at things. Poetry reflects culture. Its tone and structure reflect a search for values, a feeling of cultural disunity, and removal from traditionally accepted standards. It is an emotional expression of the times. Poetry using verbal symbols in the most tightly conceived way is an important and lasting means of environmental control and cultural understanding.

Thornley, Gwendella, "Reading Poetry to Children," *Elementary English* (November, 1962), 39:691-697.

To read poetry pleasantly, spontaneously, directly, and sincerely without artificial ornament or test-like questions afterwards may require considerable self-restraint on the part of the teacher. Thornley believes that reading this way is the only way to read and the surest way of keeping poetry where it belongs, in the child's heart as something genuinely true and a part of his real life experiences. It is the teacher's duty and pleasure to help the child correlate a poem with his own experiences, to help him re-create the imagery and feel a genuine, emotional response to the selection.

Wrigg, William, "Approaching Poetry Through Records," *Education* (May, 1962), 82:555-557.

Teachers of English on elementary, secondary, or even the college level are often worried over the paucity of time devoted to poetry in their classes. The reasons for this are many. A great number of teachers, Wrigg feels, are unable to inspire a genuine appreciation of poetry. It is also noted that class time given to poetry was producing little results. Furthermore he believes that in approaching poetry rarely does the heart of the problem lie with the subject matter but with the way it is presented. Making use of poetry records represent a marked improvement over certain methods which are all too frequently relied upon. Wrigg stated that achieving a genuine appreciation of poetry is never easy, even when the most effective methods are at one's command.

EIGHTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION

May 1-4, 1963

Hotel Fontainebleu, Miami Beach, Florida

THEME: *READING AS AN INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITY*

MICHIGAN PEOPLE ON THE PROGRAM

Homer L. J. Carter, Western Michigan University

William Durr, Michigan State University

C. C. Fries, University of Michigan

Harry T. Hahn, Oakland County Board of Education

Gwen Horsman, Detroit Public Schools

Mary Jean Kiuwe, Detroit Public Schools

Muriel Potter Langman, Eastern Michigan University

Donald Lloyd, Wayne State University

Pierce McCleod, Southfield Public Schools

Dorothy J. McGinnis, Western Michigan University

James Reed, Wayne State University

Dodd Roberts, Oakland County Schools

Harry Robinson, Muskegon Heights Public Schools

Diana Umstaddt, Saginaw Public Schools

Gertrude Whipple, Detroit Public Schools

You are invited to attend

THE 1963 SUMMER DEMONSTRATIONS IN READING

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan

THEME: *BETTER READERS FOR OUR TIMES*

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>
Thursday, June 20	A Creative Approach to Reading (Elementary Level)
Tuesday, June 25	Some Practical Methods for Determining Readiness for Reading (Primary Level)
Thursday, June 27	Vocabulary Development (Elementary Level)
Tuesday, July 2	An Individualized Approach to Critical Reading (Primary Level)
Tuesday, July 9	Making the Most of Directed Reading (Junior High Level)
Thursday, July 11	Making Use of Structural Analysis (Secondary Level)
Tuesday, July 16	Determining Some Factors Underlying Reading Achievement (Elementary Level)
Thursday, July 18	Some Informal Means of Evaluating Pupil Progress in Reading (Elementary Level)
Tuesday, July 23	Helping Parents Understand the Reading Performance of Their Child (Demonstration consists of an interview with father, mother, teacher, and counselor)

100—*rh*

Place: Room 311, Wood Hall, West Campus

Time: 1:10 p.m.

Participants: Eleanor Buelke
Blanche O. Bush
Homer L. J. Carter
Emeline J. McCowen
Dorothy J. McGinnis
Esther D. Schroeder
Sara R. Swickard

For further information, write to:

Homer L. J. Carter, Director
Psycho-Educational Clinic
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan

These demonstrations are made available to parents and teachers.

