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ABSTRACT

These proceedings are published primarily for the purpose of helping teachers to improve their reading instruction. The contents include "Official Program"; "I Wish Children Literature" by Lee Bennett Hopkins, which discusses the importance of providing children with good reading materials; "Black English and Reading" by Ronald W. Bruton, which examines dialect interference from both a structural and a functional standpoint and reaches conclusions based on current literature in education and linguistics; "A Strategy for Developing Fluency in Intermediate Vocabulary" by Loran Braught, which suggests some techniques for teaching vocabulary; "Individualizing Language through Creative Beginnings" by Raynelda B. White, which discusses the structure and initiation of an individualized language program for pre-first grade children; "Mathematics as a Language" by William J. Linville, which looks at the integration of language with mathematics; "The Poem as Play, Puzzle, Performance" by James S. Mullican, which discusses poetry in the secondary classroom; "S.C.O.O.P.--Learning Centers Encourage Reading for Living" by Marilyn Brummett and Caroline Cass, which discusses the use of learning centers to develop individualized instruction; and "To Kiss a Frog" by Helen Coe, which discusses the development of the total child. (WR)

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Proceedings

of the

1974

Fourth Annual

Reading Conference

June 13-14

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LIVING LANGUAGE THROUGH CREATIVE READING

CURRICULUM RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION,

INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

TERRE HAUTE

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School of Education, Indiana State University

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David T. Turney — Charles D. Hopkins
Dean, School of Education — Director

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The material for this bulletin was organized by:

David C. Waterman

Professor of Education
Indiana State University

Vanita M. Gibbs

Professor of Education
Indiana State University

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PREFACE

The publication of these proceedings of the Fourth Annual Reading Conference marks a time when the teaching of reading is being given much attention. Four years ago the first reading conference was started at Indiana State University, coinciding with the Right-to-Read Program. During this time we have seen concern for the improvement of reading instruction increase, while new programs have been developed in many colleges to meet the challenges of this decade.

One purpose of our conference was to help teachers improve their reading instruction. These proceedings are published primarily with that intent in mind. In them we hope teachers will find a variety of ideas to stimulate their own thinking about teaching reading. Since the participants in our reading conference cannot attend all of the sessions, the proceedings offer teachers a chance to explore the ideas presented in the sessions they missed, as well as a chance to review the content of ideas in those sessions they could attend.

Those readers who could not attend the conference will find, within these pages, ideas well worth considering in the teaching of reading. The articles stand alone. Most of our authors are either teachers of teachers of reading, or classroom teachers engaged in teaching reading. Their professional competencies are impressive, and the suggestions they offer can enhance any teacher's competencies in teaching reading. Their only purpose is to help others in a most exciting profession, and they have given willingly of their time to this end.

We are pleased that each of the previous proceedings has been included in the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, and abstracts of these are printed in *Reading in Education*. With the exception of the First Proceedings, *Teaching Reading Through Children's Literature*, copies of the former proceedings are available from the Curriculum Research and Development Center at Indiana State University for $1.00 per copy.

As co-chairman of the conference, we wish to express our appreciation to the staff of the Department of Elementary Education for their assistance and encouragement in making the Fourth Annual Reading Conference a reality. We also invite our readers, whether they are students, teachers, or just interested in teaching reading, to our Fifth Annual Reading Conference which will be held during the summer of 1975.

Vanita Gibbs
David C. Waterman

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LIVING LANGUAGE THROUGH CREATIVE READING

PROGRAM OF FOURTH ANNUAL READING CONFERENCE

THURSDAY, June 13, 1974

9:30-11:00 a.m. - Hulman Civic University Center - Room C

Presiding:
David C. Waterman, Conference Co-chairman

Welcome:
Harriet D. Darrow, Dean
Summer Sessions and Academic Services
Indiana State University

David T. Turney, Dean
School of Education
Indiana State University

Introduction of Speaker:
Vanita Gibbs
Conference Co-chairman

Speaker:
Lee Bennett Hopkins
Consultant, Scholastic Magazines
"I Wish Children Literature"

1:30-2:20 p.m. - Room A

Ronald W. Bruton
"Black English and Reading"

- Room B

Loran Braught
"A Strategy for Developing Fluency
in Intermediate Vocabulary"

- Room E

Raynelda White
"Individualizing Languag Through
Creative Beginnings"

2:30-3:20 p.m. - Room A

William Linville
"Mathematics as a Language"

- Room B

James S. Mullican
"The Poem as Play, Puzzle, Performance"

- Room D

Marilyn Brummett, Caroline Cass
"S.C.O.O.P.—Learning Centers
Encourage Reading for Living"

FRIDAY, June 14, 1974

9:30-11:00 a.m. - Room C

Introduction of Speaker:
Loran Braught, Director
of Reading Workshop

Speaker:
Helen M. Coe
Educational Consultant
Des Moines, Iowa
"To Kiss a Frog"

Professors David Waterman and Vanita Gibbs
with Speaker Lee Bennett Hopkins

The important thing is not so much that every child should be taught as that every child should be given the wish to learn.

John Lubbock

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I WISH CHILDREN LITERATURE

Lee Bennett Hopkins

If I had three wishes I'd give two away and keep only one. 'Cause I wish—I wish children literature [illegible]. I'm very greedy and I strongly believe genies [illegible] should work overtime once in a while, 'cause my wish is manifold.

Part of my wish is the obvious one. That children be surrounded with books—hardcover books, paperback books—many kinds of high-quality reading materials of high-quality in the [illegible] world. Children should know—or at least we must help them to know—when their literature is of high quality.

We don't give our children cheap, inferior food to eat, we don't give them cheap, inferior [illegible], but all too often when it comes to children's literature, I see too many examples, particularly in homes, and unfortunately in some classrooms where cheap, inferior books are around in [illegible] and [illegible].

I wish children literature in their home lives. I wish all our teachings [illegible] into homes to make parents of the children we teach aware of new important books for children [illegible].

In far too many homes there is a void of books; in others, children's reading lists are [illegible] to the supermarket [illegible] or F. W. Woolworth [illegible].

One recent complaint I hear time and time again is how terribly expensive books are today. This complaint [illegible] me to the quick! Expensive? The average children's book since 1974 costs between four and six dollars. If we break that down to get [illegible] we see it's a pittance compared to anything else today. On a recent visit to a toy discount store [illegible] items [illegible] and some 'Em, [illegible] toward the ten-dollar range.

Take a look a month or so after Christmas or birthdays and see where those toys are. Parts are missing, things are broken, batteries need replacing, and more important, children get quickly tired of the gadgets and things and often have more fun playing with the boxes they come in than in the materials themselves.

Take a look at [illegible]! There are people think nothing of plopping down five dollars or more each and every week for a carton of momentary pleasure. A pair of seats to a local movie house easily [illegible] six [illegible] but as often as twelve to twenty times a year.

Yet I hear about those book prices. How many parents or how many of us have bought as many children's books this year as we have cartons of cigarettes or movie tickets or a host of other things we indulge in day-after-day, month-after-month? Too often we starve children's minds by budgeting in the wrong places.

I recently was asked by a very intelligent mother if I knew a good version of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* for her to read to her eight-year old. I immediately replied, "Yes. The most beautiful edition in the world is the recent Caldecott Honor Book translated from the original Grimm version by Randall Jarrell, with magnificent illustrations by Nancy Ekholm Burkert (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)."

She thanked me for the suggestion! Several days later when I next spoke to her and asked if she got the book, she told me she went to Scribner's bookstore on Fifth Avenue in New York, saw the book, but just couldn't see spending $5.95 for a children's volume. Instead, she sashayed into a 5-&-10¢ store and found *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* for twenty-five cents; a Walt Disney presentation published by Western Publishing Company.

"After all," she told me, "Snow White is Snow White."

But ah and ugh and drats! Nothing is sacred today. Snow White just isn't the same Snow White. Feeling the two books causes one to know there is a mighty difference. And oh the difference in language! The Disney version begins:

> Once upon a time, long ago, there lived a lovely princess called Snow White.
>
> Her hair was black as ebony. Her lips were as red as a new rose. Her skin was as white as snow.

The Jarrell translation sets a different kind of stage:

> Once it was the middle of winter, and the snowflakes fell from the sky like feathers. At a window with a frame of ebony a queen sat and sewed. And as she sewed and looked out at the snow she pricked her finger with the needle, and three drops of blood fell in the snow. And in the white snow the red looked so beautiful that she thought to herself: "If only I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as the wood in the wooden frame."

It's like wanting to vacation in Paris and London and ending up for a two-week stay at the Ramada Inn in Terre Haute. There is a difference!

Paperbacks are one answer to rising costs. It would be much better if children owned an inexpensive edition of Maurice Sendak's Caldecott Award-winning *Where the Wild Things Are* (Scholastic Book Services), or Arnold Lobel's surprise Newbery Honor Book, *Frog and Toad Together*

(Scholastic Book Services), than three poorly illustrated, cheaply produced, and often poorly written with such titles as *Diddle Doodle Duckling* or *Mimi, The Merry-Go-Round Horse*!

My *Snow White* . . . , the Jarrell/Burkert edition, will be with me until the day I die. I rather doubt that the Disney version will have cause to stay in any child's or adult's home library that long.

Speaking of libraries, what about our school and public library systems? You'll rarely find such slosh in any library—no matter how short of funds they are!

I wish every child in America could get *Cricket* magazine. Published by Open Court, this is one of the most beautiful magazines in the world for children. The artwork, stories, poems—all top quality—all done by masters in the field of children's literature—Maurice Sendak, Lloyd Alexander, Jean Craighead George, Myra Cohn Livingston—grace each and every issue. It's only ten dollars for a year's subscription—or its free for children to peruse if it's in their library.

I wish so many classroom experiences with children and their literature.

I wish all children could get to know that books are more than pages stitched between bindings.

I wish children could get to know about authors of their books. I'm totally convinced that when girls and boys get to know something about authors that books become so much more meaningful.

A young, male, graduate student of mine at New York's City College, working with slow fourth grade readers set up a Dr. Seuss corner in his classroom. Writing to Random House, Seuss' publisher, brought much exciting, colorful material. Seuss-books galore were displayed for the children to pick and choose from. Mini-discussions evolved about the difference between his earlier stories and his more recent commercial-type books.

Information about the author was shared, culled from my own *Books Are By People* (Citation Press):

. that he was born in Springfield, Massachusetts

. that he is alive and well and living in an observation tower in California

. that his first book, *And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street* (Vanguard Press) was rejected twenty-nine times before it was published

. that when I asked him, "What is rhyme?," he replied, "Rhyme? A rhyme is something without which I would probably be in the dry-cleaning business."

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Of course it doesn't have to be a Dr. Seuss corner; it can be an Ezra Jack Keats corner, or Ruth Krauss or Roald Dahl or Langston Hughes—or anybody!

What fun it is for children to know that William H. Armstrong, author of *Sounder* (Harper and Row), raises sheep; that Madeleine L'Engle, author of *A Wrinkle in Time* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), was once an actress; that Virginia Hamilton, author of *The Planet of Junior Brown* (Macmillan), almost gave up a writing career to become an athletic instructor or a singer or an anything other than a writer of books for children; that Ezra Jack Keats made his way in life from a waiter in a Greenwich Village beanery to a visit by special invitation from the Shah of Iran to his palace.

I wish that children get to know books and book-people early in their lives. What's so hard about remembering an author's name? Believe me when a second-grader, like one who recently approached me in a reading-literature-oriented classroom, tugged at my sleeve and asked me, "Don't you think Mercer Mayer draws like Maurice Sendak?"—my friends, you just know there is a good fairy working somewhere!

I hope I helped somewhat to satisfy this wish by doing two volumes of author-interviews: the aforementioned *Books Are By People* and the recent *More Books By More People* (Citation Press). To do this project I interviewed a total of 169 authors and illustrators.

Although these books were written for adults I'm constantly amazed at the letters I receive from children. A third grade child wrote me a long letter, at least it's long for a third-grader:

Dear Mr. Hopkins:

Our teacher brought your book to school and shared it with us. We got so interested in it that we wanted to know more about people who wrote books. *Books Are By People* is so interesting that we like it so much we forget math. We like your book for finding out secrets. Charles Schulz must be dead because he's not in it. Do you know Joseph Hopkins? He is my music teacher. We take good care of your book when we read it. We washed our hands of it.

I was quite surprised recently to receive a very long letter from a fifth-grade girl. Although the letter was five pages long she really only wrote me two sentences! The letter began:

Dear Mr. Hopkins:

More Books By More People is the best book in the world next to *A Wrinkle In Time*. I enjoyed reading about

Arnold Adoff
Lloyd Alexander
William Armstrong
Natalie Babbitt . . .

and then went on to list each of the sixty-five authors that I included in the book. Her letter ended:

. . . E. B. White
Maia Wojciechowska
Elizabeth Yates
Appendix and
Index

I have received many letters from teachers and librarians, too, who have reported many exciting projects that stemmed from the use of these volumes.

In Las Vegas, Nevada, a teacher and librarian began a project of having upper-grade children write to their favorite authors. Children wrote, authors wrote back, the letters were Xeroxed and mounted in large scrap books. These will be kept in the school library for generations of forthcoming children to enjoy forever. History was made for the price of postage stamps, and what this did for the children would take me at least an hour to report on.

But I wish every child the experience of writing to, and receiving an answer back from, an author. If the children in the desert sands of Nevada can have such rich experiences, why can't the children of the city, of the country, or of Indiana?

Pens and pencils easily become magic wands to fulfill this part of my wish. To send a letter to any author all the child has to do is address it to the author, in care of the publishing house. You'll have to caution girls and boys to be a bit patient, however, because weeks or months might go by before a child gets a reply back. Letters sent to publishers must be forwarded to the author's home; then the author must reply. All this takes time. And sometimes children may not receive a reply back. Authors are terribly busy people. Authors are people. But more times than not they do write back to children. And sometimes publishers will send children material about the authors to whom they write. Often this is enough to satisfy youngsters.

I'd like to share just two more simple techniques that have been successfully tried in classrooms; two ideas I have included in *Let Them Be Themselves* (Citation Press).

The idea of mapping books can be introduced by placing a world map on a bulletin board. As children read favorite books, they make out index cards listing the book, author, their name, and perhaps a few sentences about the book. The card is then placed on the bulletin-board with a string attached to the actual place where the story took place. For example, a child reading *Julie of the Wolves* by Jean Craighead George (Harper and Row) would pinpoint Alaska and San Francisco; for *Sounder* by William H. Armstrong (Harper and Row) the card would lead to Louisiana; for *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats (Viking) a card would lead to any place where it snows because there isn't any place mentioned in *The Snowy Day!*

Of course projects can stem from this too. What about children who just can't find Oz or Wonderland or Lloyd Alexander's Prydain on any type of map. Well, perhaps they can make their own map. What is Oz or Wonderland or Prydain like to them? Or to a group of students, all of whom have read the same book?

An "Instant Reaction Card File" is another easy project to initiate. Children can be encouraged to record on index cards their instant reactions to books read. These cards can then be filed in a small box, and can, at a glance, tell the teacher the types of books the children are reading and how many books they have completed. In this way over-structured book reports can be avoided, and the time usually spent on the preparation of them can be used for more creative ways of sharing literature. The samples below show two children's instant reactions:

> I read *Straight Hair, Curly Hair* and I liked it because I never knew anything about hair and I was amazed to find out all the things you can do with hair and I did them. And I know why my hair is curly, not straight, now.
>
> Third-grader

* * *

> *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller is the most beautiful book I have ever read. Even when I think about Helen's life, I get goose-flesh bumps. I loved the book and I loved the way it was written. I am going to read it again this summer.
>
> Sixth-grader

What more could be said or how much better could they have expressed themselves if the children who wrote the above had worked—even additional minutes—on these reports?

I wish children poetry. *Now* poetry, *their* poetry, the poetry of today, poetry of tomorrow; poetry that flows free in classrooms, coming in an out of their lives everyday—or at least most everydays—as naturally as breathing!

There are many places within the day's lessons where a poem fits snugly. It might precede a mathematics lesson where Carl Sandburg's delightful poem "Arithmetic" is shared which begins: "Arithmetic is where numbers fly like pigeons in and out of your head" (in *Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle and Other Modern Verse*, Scholastic Book

Services, edited by Stephen Dunning, et al.). It might be a space poem to tie in with current events; or it might be a poem just to bring a little laughter into the day such as Kaye Starbird's "Eat-It-All-Elaine," about a girl who spends the summer in a camp in Maine and eats such tasty tidbits as Kleenex, buttercups, and stinkbugs, too (in *Time To Shout: Poems For You*, Scholastic Book Services, edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins and Misha Arenstein).

I wish children poetry like this. I wish them serious poetry, too, such as Gwendolyn Brooks' tender poem about the death of a goldfish, "Skipper" (in *Me! A Book of Poems*, Seabury Press, selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins) or "Dreams" by Langston Hughes (in *Don't You Turn Back: Poems By Langston Hughes*, Knopf, compiled by Lee Bennett Hopkins).

All of this—and so much more—is the theme of your conference. All of this and so much more is "Living Language Through Creative Reading."

Oh, how I wish children literature.

I wish that all children may—

wonder, wander,

tumble, tremble,

drink, dream,

winter-spring,

summer-fall,

with, through and amongst books.

I wish children literature.

I wish them—and you—live happily everafter. For if they do, and if you do—then, and only then will my wish come true.

BLACK ENGLISH AND READING

Ronald W. Bruton

Imagine for a moment that Velma has just been assigned to your classroom. Velma has come from Memphis, Tennessee, and is black. During the first school day she says nothing at all and you think she may be "non-verbal." But after school she stays to share some potato chips and a cola in order to get acquainted. In less-formal surroundings she begins to talk about her friend, Elaine; in full, rich Black English:

> . . . She (Elaine) thank she can beat up errbody. She can do anything any boy can do: play marbles, clamb trees. One day we was locked out of de house. And you know how high dem--de second--upstairs is. She clambed, she clambed upstairs and opened our door for us. She open--, She openen ne door half way and she clumbed up on the knob, and got on top the door; and she clambed on up dere and got in ne window and came downstairs and opened our door for us . . . (Transcription by Morris, 1970)

You find her language very hard to understand at first. And you also wonder how her language, her dialect, affects her other language arts skills, especially reading.

The purpose of this paper is to answer a part of that larger question: Does dialect variation interfere with learning to read? And, if so, how? The article examines dialect interference from both a structural and a functional standpoint and reaches conclusions based on current literature in education and linguistics. As a means of focus, aspects of "Black English," or "Negro Non-standard English," are used for examples. This selection was made because Black English is perhaps the more widespread, most divergent, and (to some teachers) most upsetting dialect encountered in the schools. Black English is also of special interest because of increased concern over equality of educational opportunity, especially for Black children.

Structural Interference

Until recently, many teachers commonly believed that Black English involved *unnecessary* repetition, *awkward* arrangements, *inconsistent* use of tense, and *careless* omissions. (Shuy, 1968) According to Shuy, this attitude was often shared by scholars who failed to distinguish between language differences and value judgments about those differences. More recent research, by socio-linguists such as Shuy, Baratz, and Labov, has shown that these views are unwarranted. Black English is not a mutilated version of Standard English but a separate variety with internally consistent rules. These rules create predictable differences between Black English and Standard English in phonological, morphological, and grammatical features. Some examples may be useful for illustration.

Labov (1969) calls the following predictable phonological variations between Black English and Standard English to the attention of teachers:

1. R-lessness, especially at the end of words. This results in words like "ca'" instead of "car," "Pa'is" instead of "Paris," "Ca'ol" instead of "Carol," and "a'(w)" instead of "are."

2. L-lessness results in "to'" instead of "toll," "he'p" instead of "help," and "too'" instead of "tool."

3. Simplification of consonant clusters, "pas'" instead of "past," "hol'" instead of "hold," and "men'" instead of "mend."

4. Weakening of final consonants produces "boo" instead of "boot," "roa'" instead of "road," and "fee'" instead of "feed."

This printed list of variations seems to imply that Black English does involve "careless omissions." This is not so. Since speech is the most basic medium of communication, and not print, it is more realistic to say that the elements we think of as missing simply do not exist in Black English. Black English and Standard English are varieties of the same language and have very similar words. But many of the counterpart words in Black English simply have fewer phonological features. Labov points out that this difference creates a much larger set of homonyms for speakers of Black English. The difference does not mean that Black English is an inferior means of communication.

Black English and Standard English also differ in grammatical and syntactic features. One example is found in the uninflected verb following third person, singular nouns. Hagerman and Saario (1969) present this regular, consistent difference in the following form:

S-E	B-E	S-E	B-E	S-E	B-E
I do	I do	I have	I have	I run	I run
You do	You do	You have	You have	You run	You run
He does	*He do*	*He has*	*He have*	*He runs*	*He run*
We do	We do	We have	We have	We run	We run
They do	They do	They have	They have	They run	They run

In this example, Standard English appears to be illogical. The Black English pattern appears to be much more sensible and certainly conveys as much information as the Standard English equivalent. In this sense, it is typical of many of the differences between dialects. Most dialect variation occurs on the redundant features of the language. Therefore, speakers of Black English and Standard English can usually understand one another.

There are other ways in which Black English differs from Standard English. One of these is intonation. Goodman (1965) reports that teachers complain of an inability to understand divergent speakers when they first work with them. Later, they "tune in." This points to a largely unexplored aspect of dialect difference--para-language. Para-language, or meta-linguistic, factors include tempo, pitch, stress, and many other similar features. These factors intensify the apparent difference between Black English and Standard English.

The examples given are minimal. Labov states, "It would not be difficult to fill many pages with lists of grammatical rules which differentiate Negro speech patterns . . ." (1971, p. 206) The essential message comes through, Black English is not an inferior, illogical form of Standard English. It is a variety of English which is internally consistent and equally powerful to Standard English.

Contrary to logical expectations, there is little evidence that dialect alone creates problems in learning to read. (Hagerman and Saario, 1969) Children seem to bridge the gap between the written language, based on Standard English, and their own expression in Black English with surprising facility. Translation often occurs almost instantaneously, even when the differences are grammatical. It is common for a black child to see Standard English sentences in print and read them in Black English.

Text: Gloria has a toothbrush.
Child: "Gloria have a toothbrush." (Hagerman and Saario)

Text: Mary jumps up and down.
Child: "Mary jump up and down."

Text: John asked if Mary wore a coat.
Child: "John asked did Mary wear a coat." (Shuy, 1968)

Torrey (1970) says that translation of this kind is a common phenomenon among speakers of other dialects. Again, structural interference has not been shown to be a problem even though authorities believe it may well be. (Labov, 1969, Hagerman and Saario, 1969)

Functional Interference

Functional interference, stemming from the attitudes, beliefs, and actions that people make in response to dialect variation, is often a much more serious problem for the child in school. Labov (1971) points out that intolerance of divergent speech forms is characteristic of middle-class women in New York. It is reasonable to believe that this same intolerance of divergent speech is common among middle-class women in public schools as well. Ingrained attitudes may influence the response a teacher makes to a child's oral reading. Labov gives this example:

Child: (sees) He passed by them both.
(reads) He pass' by bof' uh dem.

Teacher: No, it isn't, "He pass' by bof' uh dem."
It's, "He passed by them both." (p. 207)

The child may be completely mystified because both forms mean the same thing to him. He may only know that what he said was inadequate.

The teacher's underlying belief, that Black English is an inferior dialect, has led her to make a serious blunder. The child's dialect is, as McDavid reminds us, "one of his most intimate possessions." (1966, p. 6) It is an essential part of the child's identity. When the teacher notifies the child that his dialect is unacceptable, she unwittingly rejects the child. This is doubly serious in kindergarten and first grade because at this age the teacher is a kind of substitute mother, a vitally important person in the child's emotional life. Destructive interaction, of the type just described, may influence the child's self-concept and his attitude toward school.

Black English has other important functions in the life of the child. It is a means of expressing membership in a peer group and in the Black culture as a whole. To the child's peers, dialect communicates whether one is likely to become a friend, what one's social status is, and signifies personal attitudes. In addition, Blacks often associate dialect with their historical status. (Torrey, 1970)

Labov has noted that when children move from one dialect region to another, they do not retain the dialect of their parents. They adopt the dialect of their peers. This indicates that peer influence is covert, but very strong. Labov believes that Black English, in particular, signifies personal characteristics valued by other children such as masculinity, toughness, homespun common sense, and friendliness. (1971, p. 196) It seems obvious that teachers who discourage the use of Black English do not know what they are asking of the child. Neither do they realize the strength of the social norms they are combatting.

The teacher's beliefs about Black English may have other serious consequences. First, it may reduce the teacher's estimate of the child's intelligence. Jacobsen and Rosenthal (1968) have shown the effect such reduced expectations can have on pupil achievement. Second, the teacher may place the child in the slowest reading group. Since the initial grouping procedure has a tendency to become permanent, this can be the beginning of a long, covert, and largely unconscious tracking system. (Hickerson, 1966)

The Black Child and Standard English

The foregoing discussion does not mean that the child should never be taught to speak Standard English in school. It simply means that the school should not attempt to eradicate his Black English dialect, especially in conjunction with beginning reading instruction.

Eventually, the child will need to learn Standard English for a number of reasons. First, it is the prestige dialect. As things now stand, it will be necessary for the black child to be fluent in Standard English to gain access to many desirable jobs. Second, Standard English is the basis of the written language. A good working knowledge of Standard English will help the child avoid written forms that are socially stigmatized. And third, if the child learns Standard English, he has an operational choice of which he will use. If he knows only Black English, he has no real choice.

Facility in Standard English may be desirable for more exalted reasons. Just as language functions to solidify groups, it also functions to divide groups. Loban refers to this in a story about the old Danish nobility who "spoke French to each other, German to their wives, and Danish to their dogs." (1966) Language can be used to create and maintain social distance. Torrey (1971) believes that the linguistic divisions and the racial isolation of blacks and whites in the United States are related. If she is right, a shared dialect and a new appreciation (on the part of whites) may serve to reduce racial animosities and tensions.

Implications for Practice

Linguists and psychologists are near unanimity on two points. First, at the primary level, the child should be clearly notified his language is acceptable and good. The teacher must learn to understand children who speak divergent varieties of English and to respond to the content of their speech. Second, to minimize any possibility of structural interference, instructional procedures, methods, and materials must be adapted to the language of the child. This is in direct contrast to the effort to change the child, by requiring him to learn Standard English, to meet the requirements of existing instructional methods.

Here are three ways to adapt instruction to the child's dialect. First, the teacher may use the language-experience approach to beginning reading. When using this alternative, the teacher must accept the child's language and record it in print with minimum changes. This leads to some very difficult decisions on how to represent phonological variation. Second, the teacher may use traditional materials and accept the translations to Black English the child makes as he reads. Third, materials written in Black English may be used in order to achieve the best possible match of print for the child. Program developers at the Education Study Center in Washington, D.C., have developed alternate forms of the same reader.

Black English Reader	Standard English Reader
Here go Ollie.	This is Ollie.
Ollie have a big family.	Ollie has a big family.
He have three sisters.	He has three sisters.
A sister name Brenda . . .	A sister named Brenda . . .

(in Cazden, 1972, p. 159)

All three alternatives share one feature. They do not require the child to learn Standard English in order to learn to read. Neither do they contain an inherent negative message about Black English.

Loban recommends that the child be involved in oral language lessons that call his attention to the differences between Black English and Standard English. The child should be encouraged, but never forced, to say things in both ways. During these lessons, children should also learn a few things *about* dialect. They should learn that there are many different ways of saying the same thing, that dialect is an enjoyable feature of language, and that certain situations call for specific kinds of dialect. These lessons should occupy an important place in the language arts program in the intermediate grades. (Loban, 1968)

At the junior high school level, the child should learn the linguistic "facts of life"—the "awful truth." Again, not that Black English is bad. Simply that there are people "out there" who don't know very much about language and will penalize speakers of a perfectly good alternate dialect. The child must learn the advantages of being bi-dialectal since Standard English is the first requirement of higher education, admission to the degree-elite, and of a desirable job. At this point, oral-aural lessons in Standard English should continue in earnest.

The ultimate goal would be for the student to have educational, social, and occupational options. As an adult, he may ultimately speak the prestige dialect, flavored with some enjoyable Black English variations, while on the job. He might then switch to Black English whenever the social surroundings were appropriate. At best, he would not be bi-dialectal, but bi-cultural—at ease in both worlds.

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A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING FLUENCY IN INTERMEDIATE VOCABULARY

Loran Braught

Fluency simply means the production of more. It seems entirely reasonable to assume that if there are more available choices of words from which to select, there will be a better chance of finding a "precisely correct" word for each need. The reader who can bring a wider selection of comprehended words to the printed page has considerable advantage in communicating with an author. Vocabulary is generally recognized as the key variable in reading comprehension,[1] and a bigger vocabulary provides the foundation for richer communications in language.

The current emphasis in the study of language development is now on the acquisition of language as a system rather than a compilation of isolated terms, definitions, and rules. Development of an affluent vocabulary should also emphasize a systematic approach. Most teachers agree that a fluent vocabulary is a significant asset to comprehension in reading and devote considerable effort to vocabulary development. Fewer teachers have developed systems or patterns for vocabulary development, and fewer yet teach those patterns to their students. This is not intended to be a criticism of teachers; most teachers would gladly teach better if they knew how.

One of the most important ideas to become accepted over the past few years is that language is not learned in isolated fragments. Language is best learned in total situations. Teaching strategies for developing effective language by use of a total or gestalt method are not easily translated into systematic instruction of vocabulary development. There probably is no one best strategy for teaching anything because students present a great variety of learning pattern needs. This known diversity among student readiness levels requires an even greater array of alternatives in teaching strategies for every needed skill. The strategy proposed here can offer one more alternative for developing effective vocabulary, particularly for students who can demonstrate some degree of reading ability. Before explaining the strategy in some detail, it may be helpful to offer some rationale for its utility.

Piagetian views on language imply that the love of ideas stimulates and modifies language, rather than vice versa. Mainly, language serves to translate what is already understood. This suggests that the most valuable source of language comes from the students

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[1] George R. Klare. *The Measurement of Readability* (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1963).

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themselves, rather than from prescribed word lists, for example. Words offered by others, particularly in oral form (because oral vocabulary is generally much larger than reading vocabulary), stimulate associations with comprehended experiences when presented in a meaningful context. New interpretations of vocabulary words are steadily derived as new experiences and insights can be assimilated for association with previous comprehensions. The role of the teacher under these conditions of learning is to provide students with patterns for associating old comprehensions with new interpretations or new experiences.

Teachers generally agree that knowledge of words without comprehension is difficult, if not impossible, to apply. From studies by cognitive learning we have some information about the processes which tend to produce comprehension. Comprehension is apparently enhanced by activities of translation, interpretation, and extrapolation of known experiences.[2] The practicing teacher might well ask, "From where do these known experiences in vocabulary come?" A practical response could be that "it isn't that important to know" the etiology of anyone's vocabulary. It could suffice to know that most children at the age of six already have a comprehended vocabulary of over 17,000 words and at least 7,000 derivatives.[3] Recognizing that each child has not likely learned the exact same list of words, the exchange of these words among students (even at age six) is certain to produce a far greater vocabulary than this already impressive quantity. The concern for the practicing teacher is not so much one of introducing new vocabulary as it is of utilizing this great resource already available. Obviously, informal conversation opportunities is one approach, and all teachers have heard of the kindergarten drag-and-brag activities. Random exchange of ideas and vocabulary for expressing those ideas tends to be too slow for matching the learning capacities of most students. Also, students do not learn from random experiences those patterns for attacking problems efficiently. The knowledge-loaded world of our young students demands skills in organizing the search for solving problems. They are not so concerned with what to think as how to think. Teachers can no longer be the sage on the stage but must shift roles to become the guide on the side. Students can no longer be content with accumulation of isolated facts and vocabulary, they need concepts for effectively solving problems and communicating.[4] The trick needed by the practicing teacher to develop vocabulary is to provide students with activities which will help them organize their exploding ideas and let them practice patterns which can solve a great number of needs, present and future. The ideas stimulate language, which in turn tends to trigger more ideas that produce more language; and the cycle goes on, ad infinitum.

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[2] Benjamin Bloom, et al., *The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: Cognitive Domain* (New York: McKay Co., 1956).

[3] Robert H. Seashore, "The Importance of Vocabulary in Learning Language Skills," *Elementary English Journal*, 25 (March, 1948), 137-152.

[4] J. S. Bruner, *The Process of Education* (New York: Random House, 1963).

Another well-known principle of learning is that knowledge should begin from experience with concrete, clearly discriminated specifics. It is time to leave the theoretical and provide some concrete examples of what all of this means to developing fluency in vocabulary. However, it may be well worth the reader's time to review these theoretical propositions after completing the article.

Suppose the entire class of students is asked to close their eyes and envision, for one minute, everything they can conjure about chairs. After the sixty seconds have passed, the teacher solicits all the words students can collectively produce about the parts of chairs, which the teacher writes on the chalkboard as fast as they can take turns and she can write. The words are likely to include "leg," "arm," "back," "glider," "screw," "glue," "brace," "slat," "rung," "seat," "cloth," "leather," "button," etc. The teacher keeps writing, with two important rules in mind about fluency drills:

1. Don't edit, just record.
2. Expect an eventual lull-period and wait it out, slightly.

Within a very few seconds the chalkboard will be filled with an amazing number of words for parts of chairs. At least someone considered each word as representing a part of some kind of chair. The expected lull-period will arrive; the teacher will wait for those remaining few contributions which are tugged from the very bottom of the vocabulary barrel present.

When the students and the teacher just can't seem to wait longer for one more word to pop out, the teacher writes a new word at the top of the chalkboard and underlines it. The teacher writes the word "or" (if students are familiar with the term, the teacher could write "synonyms") and invites the students to offer more words which mean about the same as the words for "parts" already recorded. Once again, students let fly with a barrage of words to be rapidly scribbled on the board by the teacher. Still the teacher offers no censorship of any contributed word and doesn't allow students to edit the donations of others. The lull-period comes and after a few lagging additions, the teacher closes the door on synonyms.

In an effort to help students focus on the system being applied, the teacher asks if anyone has an idea for another "topic." Perhaps someone suggests a topic of "opposites" (antonyms) and the teacher requests any antonym for the first word on the list for parts, then for the first word on the list for synonyms, etc. Down the lists goes the focus of eyes and minds, finally to the end of the line. Then the lull-period returns; a few belabored offerings from the more persistent among the group, and done.

Already the number of words before the class far surpasses any possible quantity that could have been produced by even the most verbal of the assembly, including the teacher. Very few truly new words are among the columns under the three "topics." Some words are used in new ways for a few of the students, and some may even be genuinely new words to one or two of those present. The most obvious addition is the almost staggering number of words collected. One more thing might be obvious if carefully observed; those words that were snuck in under the wire after the lull-period began seem to be among the more unique, clever, creative contributions. Those late-comer words often stimulated a whole series of ideas for a classification which was considered a dead issue only seconds before.

Of course, more classifications or "topics" could be used and again the students would be off to the races. Classifications such as "shapes," "uses," "materials," "measurements," etc., could have been used had there been more time, as pointed out by the weary-fingered teacher. The game simply had to be called due to time. The fluency game must always be terminated because it is never completed.

Now comes the task of evaluation. The teacher asks the class how they wish to evaluate all of the words they have amassed. This too is approached systematically. Misspelled words are corrected (and the teacher is likely to find a few whether recorded by teacher or students), redundancies are eliminated, the class may even decide that some words were actually inappropriate for their classification on some basis. "Spelling," "redundancies," and "inappropriate" become topics used for the evaluation classifications.

Once the corrected lists are completed, they serve as ready stimuli for creative writing, discussion of spelling patterns, samples for improving penmanship, etc. The teacher has a multitude of materials for diagnostic instruction, particularly if students use their assembled words for individual purposes, such as creative writing.

Another example for the strategy of developing vocabulary fluency through stimulation of classifications would begin with a simple sentence, such as "The boy went to the store." The teacher could call attention to any of the words in the sentence. If "boy" is selected, the teacher might suggest a classification like "alternatives" and request the class to offer ideas (words) for things that might go to the store instead of the boy. Some of the offerings would be "way out" perhaps, but many would be entirely feasible. Feasible or not, the teacher would record each suggestion without censure and prepare for the lull-period experience. If the teacher suggests a second classification of "kind" (adjectives) and guides the students to propose words which identify what kind of boy this is that went to the store, another list will quickly develop before their eyes. What other classifications could be suggested for this fluency drill? "How did the boy go to the store?" (verbs and adverbs). "What kind of store is this?" (more adjectives). What other possibilities for classifications could be used?

Fluency drills need not be limited to the development of single-word ideas; they can be used to increase ideas for phrases, sentences, or whole stories. When used in context or relation to some idea already known, the words represent complete ideas anyway. However, if there is a desire to develop fluency of more complete verbal ideas the teacher might project a slide picture of two people talking. After observing the picture for a brief period, the teacher could ask students to offer possibilities of who these characters are, where they are, what they are doing, what they are going to do, what will happen after they do it, etc.

The product of the fluency drill doesn't always have to be "real" words, either. If the teacher wanted students to practice their phonics skills, the game could be aimed at seeing how many different spellings that obey phonics rules could be developed for any given word. The classifications would be represented by each of the phonics rules known to the students as applied to that word. Unless position rules are required, the students could support the spelling of "ghoti" as an eligible representation for the word "fish." After all, the "f-sound" is spelled "gh" in words like "enough," etc. Under that classification, "ph" could have been used for "f" also, as could "ff." To follow the pattern of fluency drill learning, students would have to work together in teams or at least pairs. Collective effort is an essential ingredient of fluency drills, at least until students really get the hang of the concept. As pointed out by Donoghue,[5] "The process of vocabulary building involves sensory perception of an object (or the attributes of an object) or perception is added to new ones; the composite is then associated with familiar words or with words written or uttered by another person."

Fluency drills do not tend to be quiet classroom activities; they usually require verbal interaction and often occur in highly motivated situations. Teachers who reject overt student participations won't like or use fluency drills more than once. As pointed out so succinctly by Stewig, "The key to vocabulary growth, as with so many areas in language arts, is the teacher's own interests."[6] Teachers who are comfortable with the hum (sometimes a roar) of dynamic young minds at their business in the learning-factory they call their classroom may find it necessary to remind fluency drill beginners that there are others in the building, but they will likely have favorable results.

Teaching children to use their minds is, to some educators, the basic function of the teacher. Teaching was perhaps a more reasonable occupation when the curriculum was focused on teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic. In many of today's classrooms, these subjects are merely important tools for thinking and the real curriculum all day long is "teaching for thinking."[7] In such classrooms, even the questions asked by teachers are geared to systematically developing thinking.[8]

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[5] Mildred R. Donoghue , *The Child and the English Language Arts* (Dubuque, Iowa: W. C. Brown, 1971), p. 361.

[6] J. W. Stewig , *Exploring Language with Children* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill Co., 1974), p. 359.

Regardless of the strategy applied by the teacher, vocabulary building requires constant attention and time in the classroom. Every day some time should be taken for discussion of words used or needed for the communication of ideas. It seems somewhat expedient, however, to apply this time to practicing patterns (using vocabulary) which will guide students to a continual development of vocabulary long after they leave the classroom. This is not to imply that there is no value in teaching dictionary skills or any of the many specific skills traditionally associated with vocabulary development. Knowledge is still the fundamental attribute for all higher levels of thinking, but it is merely the first of several steps. Unfortunately, some students are seldom given the opportunity or the patterns for using the knowledge they have already collected.

Speaking of collecting knowledge, a list of resources which many teachers have found useful for ideas in developing vocabulary is added as an appendix. Like the ideas offered here on fluency drills, these good ideas are not really original, at least not completely original. They were developed by using systematic patterns for the most part, mixed with a bit of experience and lots of fun with students. Feel free to use them all as needed, with as much fluency as success will tolerate.

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[7] Raths, et al, *Teaching for Thinking* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill Co., 1967).

[8] Norris M. Sanders, *Classroom Questions: What Kinds?* (New York: Harper and Row Co., 1966).

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INDIVIDUALIZING LANGUAGE THROUGH CREATIVE BEGINNINGS

Raynelda B. White

Why?

"Should pre-first grade children read?" At Greenbriar Elementary School, Washington Township, Indianapolis, Indiana, I am Unit Leader for an ungraded kindergarten, first and second grade unit with approximately 140 children, four teachers, and two paid instructional aides. As I surveyed the pre-school interview results from the 53 kindergarten children enrolled in my two classes, I found six children who were reading fluently, seven who were reading some words, twenty-seven who were in various advanced pre-reading stages, and thirteen children who would need a more thorough readiness program. Today I want to share with you the program I developed—our "Creative Beginnings."

I have explained *why* we had a need for an individualized early reading program. Next I will explain *how* we structured the program and *what* we did to make it fun and creative.

How?

The pre-reading inventory grew from talking informally with the individual kindergarten child visiting the classroom on his first day of school. Each child toured the room with his mother, then was scheduled for a fifteen minute interval with the teacher. From this visit, I developed a procedure for testing the child's awareness and knowledge of:

1. Colors
2. Counting (Rote)
3. Numeral Identification
4. Set Recognition
5. Alphabet Recognition

Children who knew all the alphabet—upper and lower case—were checked for knowledge of beginning sounds. Also included was a picture the child drew, and explained, for the teacher. This gave some indication of the child's fine motor control as well as speech patterns and interests. (This procedure was expanded by a curriculum committee and is explained in the Washington Township *Kindergarten Compendium*.[1])

Now a structure was needed for implementing individual learning needs. *Getting Ready to Read*,[2] Houghton Mifflin's pre-reading skills program, had formerly been used with all children and now was used with some of the children working with consonant sounds. This program introduces letters of the alphabet in four groups of six or seven letters. These groups are:

Group 1 - G M F O I D and g m f o i d
Group 2 - B W S E A T and b w s e a t
Group 3 - P C N Z K J U and p c n z k j u
Group 4 - H R L X Y Q V and h r l x y q v

Flash cards were used with the children to discover their knowledge of the alphabet. Usually the first letter of the child's name was shown first, followed by jumbled letters of his name. One group of children was identified—those who knew few, if any, letters. These children were assigned games and activities for developing shape discrimination, including letter shapes. Gradually, two or three letters were introduced, again from the child's name, and these were learned before attempting to learn others.

A second group of children recognized some of the letters. They were drilled daily on one group of letters, progressing from Group 1 through Group 4. The numbers of children within the groups changed, but until nearly the end of the year there was someone in each alphabet group.

If the child could not match sounds and identify the appropriate letter, he was grouped for instruction using the same progression of sounds as previously described for identifying letters, except that at this point only consonant sounds were taught. He first worked with "M" and "D" sounds. Then he worked with "G" and "F," proceeding through the groups as:

Group 1 - M G F D
Group 2 - B S W T
Group 3 - P N J K and C
Group 4 - H L R Y

With the readers, vocabulary was grouped much the same as alphabet and sounds. Words were grouped to be learned—first for sections of books, progressing through the entire book. Word cards printed in colors were cued to the pre-primers—red, blue and green.

Record keeping played an important role in the individualizing process. The teacher's main record—day to day—was the five-inch by eight-inch index card with the child's name on it. The skill group, the book name and page, troublesome vocabulary, and comments were listed and dated. When Binary cards were used, they were simply punched with the child sharing that milestone. Skewering the cards for grouping was simple and effective, but frequently classroom help was utilized—parent volunteers or older classmates from the same or other units within Greenbriar. Rather than relinquish each individual's card, a list of children working on a skill was kept with the materials at the learning center.

Other record-keeping instruments included sign-up calendars for volunteer help, grid sheets with names and skills to be checked off as they were accomplished, and "I Did It . . ." sheets. When a student completed a task, he colored the square by his name on this form.

What?

Every day children worked individually or in small groups, independently, on their diagnosed skill needs. The reading program structure had been explained to them, and they helped to set their own rate--some skills would be learned this year and some next year.

Workshops had been held for informing volunteer parent and student aides concerning the structure of the program. They were encouraged to use a variety of materials when they assisted in the classroom. Flash-cards could be a check to see which letters really needed more work; then these could be written with fingers in wet sand trays, written on the chalkboard, written on paper, or they might be used in feeling games. "Beautiful blindfolds" were made from felt with elastic at the back for easy accessibility. Wooden and beaded letters (again from the group of letters the child was learning) would be felt and guessed. Matching games with upper and lower case letters were also popular--especially a set added at Halloweentime that was shaped like bats!

Children who were working on sound generalization--this skill overlapped both the groups of children learning alphabet and the children learning words--could play sound matching games. There were some with boards and spinners, some made from cardboard in various shapes and played by turning over a pair that began with the same sound. With the readers matching games were also used for more advanced reading skills such as blends, digraphs, and identifying short and long vowel sounds.

For teaching vocabulary, usually the pre-primer itself was the incentive. They liked to read--frequently! They read to their friends; they read to a first or second grade reading partner; and they read to everyone who walked into the room! Additional vocabulary practice was gained from playing board games--"racetracks" that utilized their own collection of tiny cars moving around a track of pre-primer words. They also enjoyed "Bingo" games that utilized the same words.

Within the room shelf space was limited, and much of the equipment was housed within desks, labeled accordingly, or on tables. Cardboard boxes covered with brightly colored butcher paper became flexible, movable learning centers. They could be used as easels simply by sticking straight pins into them, and they had four surfaces. Smaller boxes could sit on tables or desks, and larger ones were simply placed on the floor.

The color center (a large box) remained a popular center all year. One side had large crayons with the color words printed on them. A second side had a clown with eight balloons. Each balloon had a number from one to eight, referring to the color of the balloon. The third side had a color chart again with the words printed beneath the colored shapes. The fourth side displayed work the child could choose to do. With each unit of study, color by word and color by number papers were placed in a box on top of the color center box. Also on top of this center was the "key"--a manila folder with the picture of a big key on it. Inside this was a correctly colored picture. After the child finished his project, he could check to see if he had correctly matched the color words or numbers and check the "I Did This . . ." sheet.

Plays and puppet shows were important to us, and we gave several. The children verbalized the parts, cast themselves, and then made their "costumes." These were usually based upon paper bags—either for puppets or face masks. In our plays we made up our own parts, but when we did "The Little Red Hen" the children read the parts from their Scott, Foresman reader, *Ready to Roll*.[3] Spoken language became written language as non-readers took part in the play. They learned to recognize speech balloons designating their parts—"Not I," "I will," etc. This was taped to be used as a read-along activity or a child-initiated puppet activity.

Why teach early reading? Because many children already demonstrate pre-reading skills; many are already reading.

How? By using an orderly system that the children can know and share, by using convenient and concise record-keeping systems, by using all the student, parent and aide help available, and by encouraging classmates to help each other we can work on many skills at many levels of abilities.

What can we do tomorrow? Hopefully, something more exciting and creative than today!

NOTES

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MATHEMATICS AS A LANGUAGE

William J. Linville

As we work with boys and girls in the elementary grades we find that a major portion of our time is spent in helping them develop the language skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The insightful teacher does not merely set aside specific periods of the day for the development of these skills, but tries to use all of the day's activities to foster language development. One area which deserves some special consideration with respect to the integration of language with another area is mathematics.

Since mathematics is essentially a study of relationships, we might think of the ways in which we describe these relationships, quantitative and spacial, as using a special kind of language; the language of mathematics. As we view this special language and consider its uses, perhaps it would be wise to examine the ways in which the language of mathematics and a descriptive language, such as English, are similar and different. If it were possible for us to capitalize on the similarities and be alert to the areas of difference, then our teaching task and the subsequent learning would be more meaningful.

If we were to compare the language of mathematics with other languages, perhaps one striking difference which becomes immediately apparent is the absence of words in mathematics which have different meanings. When a child uses the glossary in his basal reader or his dictionary, he is confronted with a variety of meanings for any particular word. In using a descriptive language this is, of course, necessary. The language which is used to communicate ideas about relationships in mathematics, however, must be more precise. It needs to be as concise as possible, and may not be redundant. When a mathematical term is used by an elementary teacher, working with a group of children, the term should mean the same as when it was used by last year's teacher and the same as when it will be used by next year's teacher. While it is true that the language of mathematics, like other languages, is based upon agreements which are arbitrary, once a term is given a meaning, the meaning must be used with consistency. Not doing so results in confusion on the part of the learner. We must, for example, recognize the difference between the terms "equal" and "equivalent" and use them correctly. Early work with sets causes us to look with children at sets which have the same members and refer to the sets as equal. We then compare sets which can be placed in one-to-one correspondence with each other and refer to them as equivalent sets. The fifth-grade teacher should not refer to "equal angles" when the sixth-grade teacher speaks of angles which are "congruent." Precision and consistency are of paramount importance.

Similarly, the terms which we use every day in the mathematics of the elementary school should be used in a way which promotes exactness and consistency. As examples, consider the terms "addend" and "sum." While we have for some time helped children generalize that an addend added to an addend yields a sum, we have failed to use the same terms when teaching subtraction. By helping children to see that an addend taken from a sum yields an addend, we are being consistent in our use of the terms and helping to illustrate the relationship which exists between the operations of addition and subtraction. Using terms such as minuend, subtrahend, and difference are of little help in showing this relationship. A similar case can be made for the use of the terms "factor" and "product" in both multiplication and division. If pupils have discovered that a factor times a factor yields a product, then a product divided by a factor can yield a factor. This is far more beneficial to the pupil in establishing the relationship between the operations of multiplication and division than using factor and product for multiplication followed by quotient, divisor, and dividend for division. Prior to the advent of the newer mathematics programs for the elementary school, this problem was compounded by the use of multiplier, multiplicand, and product for multiplication. Again, consistency of usage is important if the language of mathematics is to be meaningful.

In a like manner, the elementary teacher should be alert to difficulties encountered when words may have one meaning in mathematics and a different connotation when found in a story. Set, line, base, and face are but a few examples of words which may mean very different things. Also, we should be aware of the changing function of words used in mathematics when prefixes and suffixes are added. While the child may know the word "divide," he may not be familiar with words such as division, divisor, dividend, divisible, and divisibility. Do not assume that knowledge of the basic word implies knowledge of the variations.

As the child begins to read, we provide many kinds of activities which encourage the left-to-right progression. Early work with number sentences should reinforce this. When a child has discovered that the joining of a set of three and a set of one gives us a set of four, he has produced one of the basic facts in the set of related facts for four. The sentence for this fact should be written in the horizontal form of $3 + 1 = 4$. We must be aware, however, that we face a special kind of challenge when we must soon help the children use other patterns of eye movement as they read the language of mathematics. After using the left-to-right progression, the child must then learn a top-to-bottom progression in the case of

$$\begin{array}{r}3\\+1\\\hline 4\end{array}.$$

Notice, too, the different eye movements that are required by examples such as

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$$5 + \frac{2}{3} ;\ 3\overline{)17} ;\ 4^2 ;$$

and with later forms of the language.

A point that should also be made at this juncture concerns the relationship of reading speed in reading a story to reading speed with respect to the language of mathematics. Too often, we assume that a good reader must necessarily be a fast reader. Even if this was the case, real difficulty can be encountered by the child who tries to use the reading speed he uses in reading stories to the reading of mathematics. The elementary teacher must be constantly aware of the fact that the reading a child does in mathematics requires detailed and careful attention. The rate used for this type of reading may, in fact, be quite slow. It is not at all uncommon for rereading to be necessary.

As the child reads in mathematics, there are skills which are being developed in the regular reading time which can be put to good use. If a class has had experience in reading paragraphs and finding the main idea of the paragraph, there can be some carryover when reading verbal or "story" problems. In this case, we want children to extract the pertinent information from the verbal problem and organize it in a way which enables them to solve the problem. Quite often this involves writing a number sentence using the pertinent information. If pupils have learned that a sentence using words must convey a complete thought, the same basic idea can be used in the writing of number sentences. Usually, the child is exposed to sentences in mathematics in three basic forms. A number sentence may be of the form $2 + 3 = 5$. In this case, the sentence is a *true sentence*. The sentence $2 + 3 = 6$ is a perfectly good sentence, but happens to be a *false sentence*. In taking the pertinent information from a verbal problem and writing it in the form of a sentence, it will probably be in the form $2 + 3 = \square$, or the form of an *open sentence*. The task at hand, then, is to write the open sentence and then make a true sentence of it.

Along with learning to read and write number sentences comes the need to understand the meanings of operation symbols used in the number sentences and the punctuation of the sentences. Early exposure to the symbol for addition (+) has been accompanied by the verbalization of the symbol as "plus." Not only is plus not a part of the child's vocabulary, but the term does not imply what the operation of addition does. When the number sentence $2 + 3 = 5$ is read as "two plus three equals five" the verbalization offers little in the way of explaining what is happening. If, instead, the sentence was read as "two *add* three is five" the operation is more clearly illustrated, using language with which the child is probably already familiar. Realizing that this is a potential trouble spot, the elementary teacher may then wish to interpret the subtraction symbol (−) as "take away" in early work rather than the more traditional "minus."

While the symbol for multiplication (x) is standardly referred to as "times," the teacher may wish to consider substituting the term "of." The division symbol ($\div$), the most troublesome of the operation symbols for children, may be better understood if children realize that the two dots represent the members of a division problem. Thus, $6 \div 2$ may be written as

$$\frac{6}{2},$$

in which the numerals are used in place of the dots. This can provide a good background for work in fractions which will come later, especially when an improper fraction must be renamed as a whole or mixed number.

The way in which punctuation marks are used in a sentence written in the English language may affect significantly the meaning of the sentence. Consider the following examples:

1. "The president of the class," said Mr. Arnold, "was most dependable."
2. The president of the class said, "Mr. Arnold was most dependable."

While the words of the two examples are the same, the differing punctuation causes a considerable change in the meaning. In the language of mathematics, consider these examples:

1. $(40 - 18) + 2 = \square$
2. $40 - (18 + 2) = \square$

Here, the numerals as well as the operation symbols are the same in the two sentences. Because of the difference in punctuation, the first number sentence names the number 24. The second number sentence, however, names the number 20. Attention should also be given to use of the comma, the bracket, and other forms of punctuation which are necessary for the language of mathematics. As is true of English, the proper use of the punctuation mark is crucial.

Perhaps, in the final analysis, a major portion of our task as elementary teachers lies in making ourselves more aware of the similarities and differences which exist between *all* areas of study which make up the total elementary curriculum. If we can capitalize on the points of similarity and be on guard for the differences which may turn out otherwise to be trouble spots, we will make the teaching task and the learning task more meaningful and more enjoyable.

THE POEM AS PLAY, PUZZLE, PERFORMANCE

James S. Mullican

I like the theme for this year's reading conference, Living Language Through Creative Reading, since it implies a concept of reading I very much approve of. This concept is particularly applicable to the reading of poetry. Creating meaning is a cooperative enterprise between the author and the reader. Reading poetry should not be a passive reception of a message written by an author. As a famous movie mogul once said, "If you have a message, send a telegram."

Reading poetry is an active enterprise, in which a reader creates meaning using the instrument of symbols on a page. The realized poem is more like a house built, using a set of plans drawn by an architect. It is like a music performed by a musician from a musical score. The architect's plans, the musical score, the written poem are only partly completed works of art until they are made real by the performer's art. In the case of poetry that art is the art of reading. I suggest, then, that the reader's art is the performer's art and that two modes of this art are the poem as play and the poem as puzzle.

I came upon the poem as play in an unlikely way, a way that I doubt that anyone attending this conference would advocate. When I was in the seventh grade I had a hardnosed teacher who believed in having students memorize poetry. So far so good. But memorizing poetry was not elective with her. Everyone in the class *had* to memorize many lines each week. Those who failed to do so felt her wrath on the end of a fifteen-inch ruler. I can't think of any technique more unlikely to lead to a love of poetry, but with me it worked. I can envision some of my former classmates who might now refuse to read light verse in a daily newspaper; but I became a teacher of English.

In reciting poetry aloud, I could savor the words in my mouth and almost feel their forms. I could hear their rhythm and rhyme. Since a story line was helpful in memorizing, I chose narrative poetry whenever possible. To cheer up what was too often a dreary task, I chose humorous poetry whenever it was available. I still remember some of the poems I memorized and recited: "The Cremation of Sam McGee," "A Ballad of John Silver," "Robinson Crusoe's Story," "A Lady in Distress."

In my nine years as a high-school teacher, my notion that poetry as play leads to a love of poetry was reinforced as I read and recited from memory narrative and humorous poems. I found that students like stories and wit in verse. They were also appreciative of the

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performance of reciting poems from memory. Frequently I chose poems from popular magazines, so that they could hear poems they could understand. Corollary to my performance was an invitation to students to bring in their own favorites for recitation and reading.

I was careful *not* to place these poems in a "unit." These are poems not for study, but for enjoyment. I've found that it works much better to have periodic poetry days, in which students and teacher bring in some of their favorites and share them with the others.

What do students learn from this exercise? They learn what they knew as children but have forgotten--that poetry is music, with its rhyme and rhythm. They learn that one important purpose of poetry is entertainment. They learn that poetry doesn't necessarily have profound meanings to be plumbed only by teachers, that poetry can be uncomplicated and fun as well.

At the opposite pole is poetry as puzzle. There are also poems difficult to read, poems so condensed and rich in meaning that they contain much ambiguity. Students believe that these poems have "deep" meanings that only teachers and other adult wise people can fathom. Meanings seem mysterious and almost mystical.

These poems are best approached as puzzles, and meaning is only one element to be "solved." The reader searches out *how* the author has created music *and* meaning, how he has captured an experience in words for the enjoyment and enrichment of others. The reader figures out the sometimes convoluted syntax and the obscure but precise vocabulary of a poem. The reader discovers the drama hidden and condensed in some poems and fleshes out that drama in his imagination.

But instead of going on *about* poetry, let us look at one poem, "Nancy," by Richard Peck, and see how it illustrates poetry as play, puzzle, performance.

Nancy[1]

Trying hard to look hard,
You balance with one ankle turning under,
Your eyes, sloping off your face,
Wanting only the chosen word overheard.

I wonder at your clothes:
The expensive skirt,
The leather boots,
Clinging to your calves,
Plinths for thighs from sculpture.

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[1] Reprinted by permission of *Saturday Review/World* and the author.

Hearing the little moan
Behind your voice,
The little tug that signals:
"I am communicating with the enemy."

I wait with prideful patience,
For I have heard you after every class—
What is it? Twenty times this term?
And each time my patience seems more
marvelous to me.

Speaking of relevance, explaining where
I went wrong,
Showing me the existential skull beneath
my skin-deep philosophy,
Wanting me only to know that I have
failed you,
Have driven you to the barricades.

My mind wanders among your threats of
anarchy,
Blood in the streets. The tenacity of you!
Every day sullen; every day burning
With borrowed fire.

Are we making love, you and I,
Across this fumed-oak desk?
You who would bridge the generation
gap
With human chains of the immolated
underprivlieged.

In the faculty meeting, someone
rose, saying:
*Ladies and gentlemen, we are
confronted with
The first generation that was
picked up
Everytime it cried.*

And from this tyranny of solicitude
I send you back, beloved,
To the barricades
In your expensive skirt.

—Richard Peck, *Saturday Review,*
June [illegible], 1969, p. 6.

The method of reading I use with a class is to write the poem on the board stanza at a time. Students then comment *without* having the benefit of what is to follow; thus they must concentrate on the word before them and not rush ahead, in speed-reading fashion, to see how the poem turns out. Alongside each stanza I write students' comments. Each student also keeps his or her record of comments. Students are encouraged to go back and correct comments in the light of succeeding stanzas.

There are a number of matters to puzzle over in the poem: Who is speaking? How old is Nancy? What has happened before the experience narrated in the poem? Does the speaker in the poem share the opinion of "someone" in the next-to-last stanza? What is the speaker's final attitude toward Nancy? Is the opinion of the speaker similar to the opinion of the author of the poem? What is the meaning of "plinths," "existential," "immolated," "barricades?" Why were these words selected? Who are "the immolated underprivileged" in the poem, and what is "borrowed fire?" What did Nancy look like when her eyes were "sloping" off her face? Who precisely is the "enemy" in stanza three? What is the significance of the colon in stanza two and the dash in stanza four?

After students puzzle out the drama taking place in the poem and speculate on the attitudes of the author, the speaker, and Nancy, they are ready to play around with the poem and perform it. After they have "torn the poem apart" in analyzing it, they can put it back together with an oral interpretation of the entire poem.

One method of performance that I have found quite successful with high-school honors students is improvisation. I ask one student to assume that he is simultaneously the author of the poem and the speaker in the poem. He has sent in this poem about a particular girl in his class to the *Saturday Review*. Another student assumes the role of the girl, who is very angry about being written about and, as she sees it, publicly ridiculed. These two students improvise the scene as the girl enters the teacher's office to protest.

Students thus feel the drama of the poem from the inside and identify with the characters. They puzzle out the problems in the poem and experience the poem as play (in a double sense!). And finally, they *perform* the poem and, we hope, come to understand that the written poem, like the musical score, is only half completed. To exist fully, the poem requires a sensitive reader, who will read it actively and creatively.

S.C.O.O.P.--LEARNING CENTERS ENCOURAGE READING FOR LIVING

Marilyn Brummett
and
Caroline Cass

Were you ever a blackbird? If you're reading this, you probably weren't, but you more than likely remember those who were--the students who couldn't read and were so obviously labeled that the rest of the world also knew they couldn't read. Hopefully, today, there are no more blackbirds, or bluebirds or robins in most classrooms. Innovations in education have moved beyond the distasteful grouping, which bares a child's inadequacies, to methods which adopt a more personal technique--valuing each child for what he has to offer, by capitalizing on his strong points, and providing a springboard from which he can grow in all areas of language arts.

The "process" of individualization appears, at the least, a formidable, if not portentous undertaking, and it can become less threatening only if we stop referring to it as *something to be done* to students and begin regarding it as *a way to thinking* about learning and learners. Truly, it demands of us the best that we are and have to offer in terms of knowledge of content and method, organization, instructional strategies, and understanding of the nature and behavior of learning and the learning process.[1]

More significant is the intimate, personal demand it places upon us as human beings. For with the commitment to "individualize" we have designed to grant to the learner the *right* to individuality. We have released him from the shackles he sustained as a mere receiver of information and performer of assigned tasks. Suddenly, we have accorded to him the freedom to initiate, to respond, to choose, to create, to direct, and along with these lofty concessions, the right to ask unsettling questions, to come up with disturbing answers, to doubt the worth of cherished practices, to consider "unthinkable alternatives."[2]

With these monumental challenges in evidence, some of the faculty of the Indiana State University Laboratory School chose to introduce consumer and career education into selected classrooms, selecting the title, *State's Consumer and Occupational Orientation Program,* immediately becoming known as S.C.O.O.P.

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[1] Imogene Forte and Joy Mackenzie, *Nooks, Crannies and Corners* (Nashville, Tennessee: Incentive Publication, Inc., 1972), pp. 3-4.

[2] Ibid.

The purpose of this particular content area seemed two-fold; to introduce young children to the worlds of consumerism and careers, and to continue the parent involvement between the school and home which had been so thoroughly initiated during the early childhood years through nursery and kindergarten programs.

Second grade teachers in S.C.O.O.P. felt that learning centers would develop and facilitate the most desirable kinds of learning experiences for the program. The intent was to help prepare children for living in the real world. Learning centers seemed to provide just the right kind of springboard for this premise.

The development and use of learning centers is only one method for individualizing instruction. Centers provide a beginning point but are not intended to be the only type of individualized instruction. Learning centers become the vehicle for moving students away from teacher-dominated learning experiences toward student-selected learning activities. Learning centers organize and direct learning experiences for students by allowing freedom while providing structure.[3]

The following steps were established for a successful learning center:

1. Determine the learning concept.
2. Determine the sub-concept.
3. Develop the generalizations.
4. Determine the skills to be developed.
5. Establish needed physical characteristics.
6. Determine tools and materials needed.
7. Develop an evaluation technique.
8. Determine prescription.

The learning center may be in any physical area, either inside the classroom or in the hall, where purposeful learning takes place. It can occur in an old, traditionally constructed building or in more modern, open area classrooms.

The characteristics and design of the center will vary greatly in order to provide the kinds of content, materials, and space designated by the activity. The learning center may accommodate as many as six children or as few as one.

The center should be designed to meet the multi-level needs of all the children who use it—every child should meet with success at the tasks presented. This is accomplished by color coding, arterisks, stars, or other specific markings which indicate how much each child is to attempt.

The learning center should be tempting and fun. (Don't be afraid to enjoy language arts!) An element of suspense often challenges a child to tackle something that is otherwise rather humdrum.

Upon completion of the tasks in the learning centers, an evaluation must take place. The following should prove to be an effective means for review:

1. Did the children have a feeling of [illegible] in their [illegible] situation?
2. Did it meet the stated goals?
3. Did it reach the child's interests?
4. Were the physical characteristics conducive to good learning?
5. Were the tools and materials adequate and easily obtainable and in place at the center?
6. Were any written directions clearly stated?
7. Were the materials returned to their proper places and the center clean-up procedures followed?
8. Was the evaluation immediate?
9. Was the feedback and prescription of sequential [illegible]?
10. Was it any fun?
11. Would you utilize this center again?
12. What revisions are necessary?

Armed with these facts, characteristics, and evaluations, [illegible] directors proceeded to construct their program.

Seven Worlds were established to introduce various consumer and career concepts. They were the World of Food, the World of Shelter, the World of Clothing, the World of [illegible], the World of Communication, the World of Money, and the World of Leisure, and blocks of time were allocated to each world depending on the emphasis desired.

The first step was determining how many centers could be managed with minimal help. The home economics teacher was to take a group of multi-age students every day in the foods lab for instruction in home economics related activities pertaining to the current unit.

Ten centers were selected which would accommodate fifty children. This included the home economics lab, two mathematics centers, an independent reading center, a reading center, a creative writing center, a language arts center, an audio-visual center, a [illegible] center, and an original center.

Consideration of alternatives, decision making and value judgments were the underlying principles of this program. Prior to entering centers, children were [illegible], and then [illegible] EVERYONE. They [illegible] upon to do so. Consequently, the first task was to introduce the idea of "signing up" for a center. There were only two stipulations—the type of center determined the number of children at one time and [illegible] beginning of the year for most children involved in the program; however, as the year advanced, teachers were extremely pleased with the progress shown in making decisions and accepting the consequences.

One question was raised by our colleagues about children cheating at a center—we required it! Students can learn to work cooperatively. Pairing a strong student with a weak student has obvious implications; pairing older weak students with younger students benefits both; when two weak students work together, a leader will emerge from that pair, so at least one benefits. Helping each other and then correcting errors on the spot is a beneficial reinforcement technique.

Realizing these individual differences do exist, the directors of S.C.O.O.P. have attempted to provide a variety of challenging experiences for children who are limited in their learning abilities—hence the name "Bitty Scoopers." This title was coined to distinguish these children for the benefit of planning sessions and lecturing purposes. These children were not distinguished in any manner in the peer group.

In preparation of activities for the Bitty Scoopers, the directors' primary concerns were for these children to feel daily a measure of success. It is far more important at this learning stage to have a good feeling about one's self than to experience failure. Although these children were able to participate to some degree in listening activities and to follow limited oral directions, they were constantly frustrated at decoding the printed page and expressing themselves through written communication.

• Some learning centers were designed with these limitations in mind. In some centers directions were recorded by means of a Language Master or cassette tapes. Another center featured teacher-made pictures that were large and simply drawn which related to current topics and aided a child in developing small muscle control. Noncommercial board games which required little or no reading proved to be an effective center for these children. Creative expressions were fostered through the puppet center. Make-believe TV screens encouraged role-playing. Listening skills and learning concepts were developed from songs and rhythms on sing-along tapes. More difficult concepts were developed through centers in which these children listened to informative reading by an adult. The ABC center, where the children produced simple products for sale, also provided the Bitty Scooper with many opportunities for success.

The ABC Company (A Brummett Class Company) was a very popular arts and crafts center. Here, the children produced saleable items for the S.C.O.O.P. Co-op Store. Written instructions in a step-by-step process were charted and needed materials were placed on the table. Sometimes a finished product was shown as a sample. The older or more adept children helped the less mature read the directions and then proceeded to manufacture the article. Sometimes they elected to make the article on an assembly line process (discovering some people did one particular job better than others) and at other times they each made the total object. They would ask another child not working at the ABC Center to pass inspection on the items. If they didn't pass, they were discarded or remade! The products made by the children were placed in the Co-op Store, which was open for business each Thursday afternoon. The children had to decide the monetary worth of the products and mark the price on display tags. The store proved to be a good learning experience in many ways. The children could see the many occupations involved in running a store, the importance of correctly displaying products, and reasonable pricing. Many times the children could see the price on a certain article was not in line with the customer's buying power. Sometimes items would not sell if they were not displayed in easily accessible spots. Play dough proved a fun item to make and was one of the most popular items in the store.

In order to introduce the children to the wage earning processes and proper banking procedures, the State S.C.O.O.P. Bank was established. Two cashiers manned the bank window and two tellers wrote paychecks; for upon completion of the task at each center, S.C.O.O.P.'ers were paid one dollar by check. These were cashed for a SNOOPY dollar designed by a fellow colleague. Information on how to fill out deposit slips, checks, and pass books was given at a mathematics center.

SNOOPY dollars were deposited in a savings account which accumulated during the year. A real auction was held the last month of school which enabled the children to spend their hard-earned money--some had saved as much as one hundred and eighty-nine dollars. What an exciting experience for second graders!

From this writing it should be apparent, that those involved in S.C.O.O.P. at the Laboratory School are trying to develop a more sensitive and meaningful approach to helping children develop many needed skills and gain worthwhile socioeconomic understandings. Hopefully, cooperative experiences as described in the S.C.O.O.P. program will be practical lessons in living that will have positive and lasting influences upon the children participating and help them to be better able to cope with the "real world."

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[illegible] with Helen M. Coe

[illegible]

Helen M. Coe

TO KISS A FROG

Helen Coe

> *Ever feel like a frog? Frogs feel slow, low, ugly, puffy, drooped, pooped. I know. One told me. The frog feeling comes when you want to be bright but feel dumb, when you want to share but are selfish, when you want to be thankful but feel resentment, when you want to be great but are small, when you want to care but are indifferent.*
>
> *Yes, at one time or another each of us has found himself on a lily pad floating down the great river of life. Frightened and disgusted, we are too froggish to budge. Once upon a time there was a frog. But he really wasn't a frog. He was a prince who looked and felt like a frog. A wicked witch had cast a spell on him. Only the kiss of a beautiful maiden could save him. But since when do cute chicks kiss frogs? So there he sat, unkissed prince in frog form. But miracles happen. One day a beautiful maiden grabbed him up and gave him a big smack. Crash! Boom! Zap!! There he was, a handsome prince. And you know the rest. They lived happily ever after. So what is the task of the educator? To kiss frogs, of course.*[1]

This parable may seem to you to be far afield from an annual reading conference but it focuses sharply on my concerns as an educator. How can I help a child feel bright instead of dumb? How can I get at the crux of his resentment, and facilitate his being thankful? How do I tap the greatness in each one so that he doesn't feel small and indifferent? How do I help him become a caring person rather than indifferent? Or to use Leon Lessinger's phrase, how can I help every kid become a winner?[2] Finally what can I do to kiss some frogs?

One enlightener along the way has been Dr. Calvin Taylor, professor of psychology at the University of Utah. He advocates that we as teachers become talent developers, fostering varieties of talents in our students instead of being concerned with only the academic talent. In this way, otherwise hidden talents will not be wasted. Each student nurturing as many talents as he can will have more chances of being above average in at least one talent area. If students are seen only in light of their academic achievement, they will be lined up from top to bottom and are likely to stay there, seldom breaking the mold. There will be those above average, and those below. As Dr. Taylor has said, "There's a big difference between experiencing failure (as in a multiple talent approach) and being labeled a failure if one doesn't quite measure up academically."

One possible grouping of talents includes academic, creative (productive thinking), planning, communication, forecasting, and decision making. Many more could be added to the list. A description of each talent follows along with a suggested classroom strategy for tapping that talent.

Academic Talent: Those abilities required to perform well on standardised achievement and I.Q. tests. According to Dr. Taylor, this ability represents less than 1/12 of one's mental potential.

Schools do a good job of tapping this talent already.

Creative Talent (productive thinking): The ability to go beyond; putting together seemingly unrelated information to come up with new solutions, new ways of expressing ideas; creative production.

This talent might be fostered through brainstorm activities—thinking of possibles, what-if kinds of situations. An accepting climate is especially important in this kind of activity, and the following guidelines for brainstorming, if kept in mind, should further production of ideas.

a. criticism is ruled out
b. free wheeling is welcomed
c. quantity is wanted
d. combination and improvement are sought

A class of students brainstorm all of the possible reasons for the cause of this phenomenon (an open-ended picture with an unknown element in it).

Planning Talent: Effective planning involves elaboration which considers details concerning operation; sensitivity to problems which need consideration; and organization of materials, time and manpower.

Using the list of brainstromed ideas concerned with the picture, students could then compose a limerick using the following pattern or others:

What is a limerick, Mother?
It's a form of rhymed verse, my brother.
In which lines 1 and 2
Rhyme with 5 When it's through
And 3 and 4 rhyme with each other

Students get opportunities to plan, too, when each is allowed to organise his school day—to determine what he will study when. One teacher's students became so enthusiastic about planning that they began to plan their after-school time, and eventually their weekends.

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One mother became quite distraught because she never got to sleep in on Saturday morning as she had before her daughter had become a planner. The plan was that "Mom cooks breakfast for me on Saturday morning at 8:00"!

Communication Talent: Communication is the cornerstone of human interaction. Effective communication involves word fluency, expressional fluency, and associational fluency. Since there are so many barriers to communication, i.e., cultures, mores, individual goals, national goals, etc., effective communication skills become very important to sensitive understanding.

The focus exercise involves a triad of students each of whom chooses one of a group of questions to which he wants to respond. A possible grouping of topics could include:

1. something you've made with your own hands
2. a shrewd purchase you've made
3. a conversation in which you held nothing back
4. something you've learned recently
5. something that's happened in your family recently

The focus person talks about one topic which interests him while the others in his group listen to him, support and accept him, and perhaps use questions to help him elaborate.

It is the focus person's one chance to shine. In some instances, the only chance he has all day. After he finishes, another member of the group becomes the focus person. Each member gets a chance to talk. Later triads introduce themselves to each other. No one introduces himself. In this way it is fun to hear how well people listened, or didn't listen.

Forecasting Talent: Forecasting events, in the next instant or in the distant future requires conceptual foresight penetration or minute analyzation of related criteria, and social awareness. Any prediction or evaluation of future events calls upon forecasting talent.

Fortunately or unfortunately, stories are good forecasting events. Given the nucleus of a story, children are asked to get a character in and out of scrapes. This requires good listening on the part of the students, and exercises forecasting talents as children produce divergent ideas as to what would constitute first a fortunate situation, then an unfortunate experience, a fortunate, an unfortunate, etc.

Decision Making Talent: Making decisions involves discussing the situation, outlining many alternatives to the problem, giving weight to arguments presented, coming to a conclusion, and being able to defend logically the decision.

> Rank orders provide situations for students to employ decision-making talents. Values are clarified and heightened as students, for instance, decide which person they respect the least—the one who wants to quit smoking, and doesn't do anything about it, the one who pretends to know something, and doesn't, or the one who fails to clear snow off his rear windshield.
>
> Each person first decides individually then discusses his decision with a small group. The idea is not to win another over to your side, but to gain some awareness of the gray area, and some understanding of a differing point of view.

Perhaps with the multiple talent approach used in the classroom, each student will be allowed, and aided in developing more fully, his own uniqueness, and begin to feel great instead of small, and more able to care for another since someone cared for him.

The following quote from Dr. Carl Rogers fits neatly into the multiple talent philosophy, I believe:

> I have come to think that one of the most satisfying experiences I know and also one of the most growth-promoting experiences for the other person is just fully to appreciate this individual in the same way that I appreciate a sunset. People are just as wonderful as sunsets if I can just let them be. In fact, perhaps the reason we can truly appreciate a sunset is that we cannot control it. When I look at a sunset as I did the other evening, I don't find myself saying soften the orange a little on the right hand corner, and put in a bit more purple along the base, and use a little more pink in the cloud colors! I don't do that. I don't try to control a sunset. I watch it with awe as it unfolds. I like myself best when I can experience my staff member, my son, my daughter, in this same way, appreciating the unfolding of a life. . . . A person who is loved appreciatively, not possessively, blooms, and develops his own unique self. The person who loves nonpossessively is himself enriched.[3]

NOTES

1. [illegible] (Waco, Texas: Word Books, Publishers, [illegible]), p. [illegible].

2. Leon Lessinger, *Every Kid a Winner* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970).

3. Carl Rogers, "Learning for a Changing World," in [illegible], ed., *Proceedings of the First [illegible] Conference* ([illegible] International Reading Association, 1973), p. [illegible].