

SELECTED FOR REVIEW

Reviewers: Barbara D. Day
Lillian Zachary
Laura L. Dittmann
Constance Kamii
Milly Cowles

Nutrition and Intellectual Growth in Children. Washington, D.C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1969. 63 pp.

Nursery School Portfolio. Washington, D.C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1969. 16 leaflets.

Foundations of Elementary Education. J. Murray Lee. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1969. 146 pp.

Curricula for the Seventies, Early Childhood Through Early Adolescence. Joe L. Frost and G. Thomas Rowland. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969. 454 pp.

The New Elementary School Curriculum. William Vernon Hicks, W. Robert Houston, Bruce D. Cheney, and Richard L. Marquard. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1970. 384 pp.

—Reviewed by BARBARA D. DAY, Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and President, North Carolina Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

These five volumes form a compendium of information regarding different aspects of the educational development of a young

child through early adolescence and many forces impinging on this development. *Nutrition and Intellectual Growth in Children* is concerned with the child before he leaves his home environment for outside instruction and the relationship of nutrition to his physical and mental growth; *Nursery School Portfolio* emphasizes the "why" and "how" of nursery school education for all children; *Foundations of Elementary Education* provides a relatively cursory overview of educational foundations; in *Curricula for the Seventies*, the typical elementary school boundaries are extended to include early childhood and into adolescence, with emphasis on reformation of the existing elementary school curriculum; and *The New Elementary School Curriculum* is a revised edition reflecting modifications of various areas of the curriculum as they relate to teaching and teacher preparation.

The problem of malnutrition affects the lives of two-thirds of the world's population. Treatment for malnutrition is simply good food, yet the approach to solving the problem is very complex. Critical efforts are needed from people in many disciplines—education represents a major one.

ACEI's publication, *Nutrition and Intellectual Growth in Children*, is a collection of

individualized instruction

These six filmstrips from the Association for Educational Communications & Technology have been used successfully in many inservice training programs for education personnel. Dealing with six different aspects of individualized instruction, the filmstrips are illustrated with photographs taken on location in schools where individualized programs have been implemented.

Case study brochures, available with the filmstrip sets, each describe one institution's involvement in an individualized instruction project. The 46 separate brochures include both elementary and secondary levels, in all types of school districts. The **Administrator's Manual**, also included in the complete package, gives details and "how-to" advice.

Filmstrips/Audiotapes. \$10.00 each.

(Filmstrips: 35mm, approx. 60 frames each.
Audiotapes: 7½ips, monaural, reel-to-reel, approx. 20 minutes each.)

Its Nature and Effects. (078-02518)

Its Objectives and Evaluative Procedures. (078-02510)

Diagnostic and Instructional Procedures. (078-02506)

Its Materials and Their Use. (078-02512)

Its Problems and Some Solutions. (078-02504)

Recommendations for Implementation. (078-02508)

Complete package. Includes manual and case studies. \$77.50. (078-02520)

Order from: Publications Sales, NEA, 1201 16th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036. All orders must be prepaid except those on official authorized purchase orders. Billed orders will have postage and handling charges added.

reports from various malnutrition studies. Hunger in America is explored in the Citizens' Board of Inquiry report affirming the presence of poor diets in one-fifth of America's homes. Two hundred fifty-six counties are identified as greatly distressed "hunger areas," and attacks are made on the inadequacies of such food programs as the National School Lunch Program.

Several research reports ascertain the psychological effects of malnutrition on children in their early years. Attention is directed to the interests, concerns, and indignation of society in getting the problems solved.

This publication, presenting a staggering revelation of an acute problem with suggestions for remediation, is suggested for parents and school, community, and health personnel.

Another ACEI publication, *Nursery School Portfolio*, was developed by a coterie of educators long respected for their contributions to good programs for young children. It consists of a collection of 16 articles

dealing with various aspects of the nursery school. Directed toward, and by this reviewer recommended for, prospective nursery school teachers, supervisors, administrators, and parents, this volume supports nursery education for all children in the United States. Information dealing with starting a nursery school, and with the roles of various members of the nursery school team, is presented. This book also includes suggestions for helping nursery school teachers improve their evaluative abilities and report individual progress, and for organizing and planning a typical day in the nursery school. Also treated are concept development, discipline, and a good environment for learning. All articles are treated carefully and perceptively, yet presented in capsule form.

Foundations of Elementary Education is designed to "help one become familiar with what must be learned about the teaching profession and to help the prospective teacher decide whether he is uniquely suited to the work." Topics treated in this volume are

appropriate for usage in foundations of education or introduction to education courses. This publication presents an overview of the unique problems of the elementary school today; the nature of the child and his total development; and the role of the child and the teacher in the teaching-learning process. A condensed version of *Elementary Education Today and Tomorrow*, 1967, it has been updated somewhat relative to information regarding the changing elementary school, curriculum and organization, and controversial issues in education. It should be realized that this volume represents a "selective distillation" rather than a comprehensive treatment of the various areas of elementary education.

The critical nature and the power that the teacher of young children has in shaping the formative years of human development are succinctly and comprehensively emphasized in *Curricula for the Seventies, Early Childhood Through Early Adolescence*. Frost and Rowland's cosmic view of the teacher of the seventies includes a behavioral scientist, a sensitive person knowledgeable in human development, social sciences, and curriculum development—one who is a model for imitation, a diagnostician, and a setter of expectations.

The authors cite works of such persons as Piaget, Bruner, Gagné, Ausubel, Glaser, and others to add credence and understanding to many "methods of teaching."

Treated briefly are various school organizational patterns focusing on the arrangement and utilization of staff, facilities, equipment, and supplies in ways described by the authors as "most conducive to meeting children's instructional needs in the most economical way possible."

Chapters on curriculum areas give a contemporary description of the developments in each field, but one optimistically reacts to a pervading theme which places stress on individual development rather than curriculum development.

The text is recommended for undergraduate and graduate level curriculum courses and for in-service programs for teachers, administrators, and supervisors.

Designed for advanced undergraduate and, in part, for graduate students in elementary education, *The New Elementary School Curriculum* introduces the beginning teacher to Composite Schools, USA, or many different kinds of elementary schools. Presenting an "opened door" view of the total elementary school, including its organization and content, the book adequately treats curriculum foundations in the elementary school, recent trends in curriculum development, and social, historical, and philosophical foundations of the curriculum.

Curriculum areas are presented, with current curriculum projects and their unique features and relationships to teaching identified. The science section of the textbook is more comprehensive than the sections on other curriculum areas and places significance on "activity" learning, which seems inconsistent with seemingly "formal" suggestions found in other areas.

This text represents a scholarly contribution and includes much essential information needed in a general elementary school curriculum textbook. It, however, lacks emphasis upon an integrated curriculum and the relationship of the child's living-learning environment to curriculum planning and development. □

Reading and the Elementary School Child: Selected Readings on Programs and Practices. *Virgil M. Howes and Helen Fisher Darrow.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968. 424 pp.

Teaching Reading in the Elementary School. *Ida E. Morrison.* New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1968. 616 pp.

The Language-Experience Approach to the Teaching of Reading. *Russell G. Stauffer.* New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1970. 301 pp.

—Reviewed by LILLIAN ZACHARY, Associate Professor of Education, University of Maryland, College Park.

These three books comprise an interesting cluster of perspectives. All three can

be of possible value to undergraduate students in methods courses and to experienced teachers.

The two books by Morrison and by Stauffer have similarity in their intention of describing procedures for reading instruction, but those procedures are quite different. Each book presents an organization or approach to reading instruction in which the author believes very enthusiastically; Morrison's is the "balanced developmental program" which depends on basals, a small initial sight vocabulary before the introduction of word attack skills (other than context clues), flexible use of group instruction, and little individualization as such, although much adaptation to needs of individuals within the groups is implied. Stauffer's book concerns the language experience approach, which he sees as being highly individualized, yet also having a place at times for group instruction. The two authors thus pursue entirely different directions, but both intend to help children develop into mature, independent readers who make flexible use of reading skills.

The sensation of meeting the familiar persisted throughout the reading of much of the book by Morrison. The reviewer finally realized that many of the procedures were those she had met quite a few years ago in undergraduate methods courses and had attempted, although with much less organization and effectiveness, to put into practice during her early teaching experience. It should be emphasized that while the use of basal readers, parallel stories, and matching sentences and words may not be the very latest thing, these procedures are not necessarily thus suspect. There is much in this description of the "balanced program" which may be more effective when carried out well than some of the "new" approaches taught without organization and awareness of objectives and directions.

Morrison presents much that could be of value to someone interested in the basal reader approach, because the procedures are simply and clearly described. For example, it is easy to follow the processes by which there is introduction to critical reading,

scanning, and purposeful oral and silent reading in early levels of reading performance. Apart from consideration of the approach, there is an unusually clear picture of the way a teacher considers and classifies specific behaviors of children as indications of their readiness levels.

This reviewer would wish for additional flexibility in types of reading material recommended and more treatment of the possible values of individualized reading. It also seems possible that some word attack skills could be introduced earlier, at least through auditory experiences, without interfering with the structure carefully planned to avoid word-by-word reading.

Stauffer's book is an extremely enthusiastic description of his variation of the language experience approach, which in reality is a combination of approaches and organizations. In addition to using the children's own dictation and writing as a basis for individualized instruction, there is also group instruction, much attention to word attack skills, and deliberate emphasis on study skills and on effective techniques for reading informational material. Critical reading is taught through group reading and discussion. In addition, the procedures for using the approach are specified for the benefit of a reader unfamiliar with the process.

It is obvious, as the procedures are described for first grade and later levels, that Stauffer does not expect all reading instruction to be based on the child's own writing. Equally obvious is his awareness of the necessity for experiences which provide early foundation for the more complex reading skills.

A distinctive point is his emphasis on the part played in reading instruction by the school library, which should hold true for any approach.

This reviewer was disturbed by the amount of subjective evaluation in some of the descriptions of results from using the language experience approach, even though such bias can be understood by anyone who holds a point of view with enthusiasm. While the author makes several references to the research evidence placed in the appendix,

some of the enthusiastically sweeping statements in the remainder of the book would profit from more objectivity. They tend to detract from the potential values of the procedure as otherwise described.

The compilation edited by Howes and Darrow contains articles on various facets of elementary reading instruction which have been published in professional publications within the past ten or twelve years. The articles include background information, some research findings, and sometimes conflicting viewpoints on reading topics under current discussion. The introductory statements which preface the collection of articles under each topic are useful in focusing attention on the aspects of the issue involved. The reviewer has found the volume useful as a source of supplemental information for an undergraduate methods course. □

Baby Learning Through Baby Play: A Parent's Guide for the First Two Years. *Ira J. Gordon.* New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1970. 121 pp.

—Reviewed by LAURA L. DITTMANN, Associate Professor of Education, Institute for Child Study, University of Maryland, College Park.

Infant stimulation is in fashion today, as applied to the kind of interaction which should transpire between parent or caretaker and baby, whether in a home, an institution, day care center, or other setting. This book translates the abstract term, stimulation, into the games and play activities through which the parent or caretaker can arouse the mind of a child.

Believing that it is a myth that middle class parents know how to educate their young children, and that lower class parents do not, Dr. Gordon addresses his book to a general audience—the average lay reader or nursery caretaker. He has pulled together the lore of the nursery, the age-old games parents have always played with their babies—peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake—and has added a few ideas of his own.

The activities begin for the youngest,

around 2 or 3 months of age (rattle games, vocalization play, and enticing the baby to find his toe), and move forward in roughly chronological array. Suggestions are made for the child of sitting or "lap" stage, the creeper and moving about stage, the stage of standing and toddling (sorting things, water play, action songs), and finally for the older toddler (blocks, pencil play, finger painting on the refrigerator, and beginning imagination and pretend games).

Disclaiming that his suggestions are a curriculum to be followed, Gordon insists that the play should be fun—for both parent and child—should increase the confidence of both, and should add to their pleasure in each other's company. The object is not mastery of isolated information or skills, but a joy in investigation, in feeling of mastery over events, and in instilling an approach to the world as something to be dealt with.

There is a curious incongruity in the volume between the reading level at which the book is written and the illustrations, which are over-large and a bit too cute. They do a disservice to the casual browser who may not pause long enough to take in Gordon's sound educational approach. □

The Mechanisms of Perception. *Jean Piaget.* New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1969. 480 pp.

Piaget: A Practical Consideration. *G. A. Helmore.* Long Island City, New York: Pergamon Press, 1969. 73 pp.

The Teaching of Young Children. *Molly Brearley, editor.* New York: Schocken Books, Inc., 1970. 208 pp.

—Reviewed by CONSTANCE KAMII, Curriculum Director, Early Education Program, Ypsilanti Public Schools, Michigan.

Although the three books are all related to Piaget's theory, each one is quite different. *The Mechanisms of Perception* was written by Piaget for psychologists and epistemologists. The other two books were written by other people for teachers and teachers in training.

Piaget: A Practical Consideration is

probably the most concise introduction to what Piaget's theory can offer to elementary teachers. The main part of the book discusses six examples that show the child's development in geometry from about six to twelve years of age. Chapters 4 and 5, plus Appendix 1, are well worth reading carefully to understand how differently the child reacts, as he grows older, to tasks involving the measurement of lengths, angles, and surfaces; the division of a surface into equal parts; and the location of a point inside a rectangle. The data are based on replications of Piaget's experiments in England.

The book would be more useful if it gave teaching methods based on Piaget's insights. Nevertheless, the teacher who has read these 40 pages and Chapter 6 (giving general principles of teaching) will probably not teach elementary geometry in the same way as he did before.

Although the first chapter is helpful in understanding the biographical background behind Piaget's theory, the second chapter summarizing the theory is too detailed to be meaningful and is sometimes misleading. For example, the author starts correctly by saying that Piaget views higher psychological functions as growing out of biological mechanisms. He goes on, unfortunately, to say that Piaget developed a doctrine of maturation. Maturation in a biological sense plays a very small part in Piaget's theory.

The Mechanisms of Perception is not a "typical" Piaget book. While his other works deal with everyday content, such as numbers, space, flowers, water, and dramatic play, this book deals with artificial laboratory content, such as the relative length of two parallel lines or two sides of a rectangle. Therefore, while the book is a monumental work on perception, the technical discussion, tables, and formulas are not likely to be of interest to teachers.

What is of interest is Part III, in which Piaget discusses the role of perception in the acquisition of knowledge. Using a developmental approach to research, he demonstrates that in certain stimulus situations, perceptual illusions and errors *decrease* as the child grows older, while they *increase* in

other situations. These findings are interpreted as showing that perception is under the influence of cognitive mechanisms which develop as the child grows older. Since these mechanisms correct certain perceptual impressions and overcorrect others, errors sometimes increase with age. In other words, cognitive mechanisms always transform, or add things to, sensory data. Piaget thus refutes the traditional belief that perception, or sensory information, is the ultimate source of *all* knowledge.

The educational implication of this refutation is that teaching cannot simply proceed from perception to language and thinking, since the "information" the child derives from objects differs according to his level of cognitive development. A five-year-old and a ten-year-old do not derive the same "information" from the same object. Therefore, we must let children think with objects for a long time, rather than making them deal only with pictures and words.

Anyone who is doubtful or curious about this conclusion will find the book convincing. However, as the book is long, technical, detailed, and difficult, the reader will do well to read at least another book by Piaget first, such as *The Child's Conception of Number*, which also deals with the relationship between cognition and perception.

The title of the third book, *The Teaching of Young Children: Some Applications of Piaget's Learning Theory*, suggests a book containing principles and methods of teaching based on Piaget's theory. Those who expect to find such content will be disappointed. The volume describes well how the young child thinks and feels between the ages of about three and eight, but says little about how to teach him.

Although Piaget's theory can be recognized throughout the book, it is not clear where other educators leave off and Piaget begins. People interested in finding out what new principles and methods of teaching Piaget's theory has to offer will not find them in this book. In fact, the entire book gives the impression that the authors allude to Piaget's theory to support and supplement the beliefs they already had about education

before discovering Piaget. The aims of the book are said to be: (a) "to give an outline of the main considerations we feel should be taken into account when planning the education of young children," and (b) "to describe good practice as we have seen it, as examples of the application of these principles." The application of Piaget's theory to teaching was thus not the main intention of the authors.

While the book thus seems to lack theoretical clarity and depth, I hasten to say that, in my opinion, the authors grasped well the essence of Piaget's learning theory. In reading the seven main chapters of the book on science, art, literature, movement, mathematics, music, and morality, I applaud the absence of the teaching of Piagetian tasks. (Other recent books by similar titles advocate such teaching.) *The Teaching of Young Children* seems in harmony with Piaget's position that intelligence develops as an integrated whole structure rather than as a collection of separate "skills" that can transfer to other situations. It also seems in harmony with Piaget's belief that the child develops his intelligence by using it actively on his own initiative, and not by merely responding to the teacher's questions and suggestions. □

Current Research in Early Childhood Education: A Compilation and Analysis for Program Planners. *Annie L. Butler.* Washington, D.C.: American Association of Elementary-Kindergarten-Nursery Educators, 1970. 193 pp.

—Reviewed by MILLY COWLES, Professor of Education, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

When one views the research efforts in early childhood education and development, particularly if one wants to keep up with the massive amount of information available, this volume by Annie Butler must not be overlooked. She has made a noble attempt to describe the "current scene." She has delineated the philosophical conflicts and various other difficulties that are encountered in drawing substantial conclusions in the entire area.

Moderately extensive reviews are presented. These cover the studies in several areas, such as: (a) intellectual growth research; (b) later school research; (c) teacher role; (d) potency of models; (e) early stimulation; and (f) parent involvement.

Perhaps the strongest portion of the book is the author's concluding chapter. In this chapter she has drawn a very careful analysis of the diversity in the kinds of and findings in current research. Dr. Butler does not skirt the facts as to the obvious lack of sufficient data at present. In this crucial period, educators are faced with persuasive salesmen, curriculum packages, and overzealous proponents of a particular model. We would hope that all decision makers in early childhood education will digest and reflect thoughtfully upon the informed statements in this volume relating to our present dilemmas.

A major missing ingredient is any discussion of the psychological theories that have influenced choices that researchers make, particularly discussions as to what is known about how children learn. Although the author cautions the reader that the selection, of necessity, reflects her personal bias, it is most refreshing to note that every attempt appears to have been made to include a sampling of all types of available research studies.

Missing too is any in-depth mention of basic guidelines used to select the studies or to guide a reader. There is some doubt that even the ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education has compiled all sufficient research; therefore, a caution must be extended that research may be available that is not included in this volume (and, in fact, this caution is stated by the author).

The American Association of Elementary-Kindergarten-Nursery Educators (EKNE) and the author have provided in this volume a much needed resource. This reviewer highly recommends it, with an admonition that its companion should now be on the drawing board for tomorrow. Or, in other words, more than a year's research is now history that was not included in the present work. □

Copyright © 1971 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.