



Adams, Marilyn Jager, Foorman, Barbara R, et al. (1997). *Phonemic Awareness in Young Children: A Classroom Curriculum*. Baltimore, MD : Paul H. Brookes.

Phonemic awareness refers to hearing and decoding spoken sounds rather than the more familiar written representations of sounds learned in phonics. Studies show that children who are attuned to listening to the different sounds that form words have an easier time learning to read and write. The book takes a very successful program developed by Lundberg, Frost and Peterson (1988) for use in Sweden and Denmark and translates it for use with the English language. This requires more than a literal translation, since word sound correlations, such as rhyme, are often the whole point of the exercises. The authors have tested this curriculum in a number of schools and modified it for American children. There are many (50+) activities presented here, all intended to be used in frequent short bursts of practice. Many take the form of games. Most activity is teacher directed and individual, although often performed in groups. Taken as a whole the program presents a good exploration of the phonemic issues of the English language, which could be useful for teachers even if they chose not to utilize the curriculum.

Pages: **180** Price: **\$24.95** ISBN: **1-55766-321-1**

Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University

Daniels, Harvey & Bizar, Marilyn. (1998). *Methods that Matter: Six Structures for Best Practice Classrooms*. York, ME : Stenhouse.

The authors assert that research has shown very specifically what constitutes "best practice." While the characteristics of "best practice" are many, there are six methods that teachers can integrate into their teaching to move the classroom closer to this ideal. These methods are Integrative Units, Small Group Activities, Representing-to-Learn, Classroom Workshops, Authentic Experiences, and Reflective Assessment. Cautioning the reader that how these methods are implemented is very important, the authors then offer an overview of proper implementation criteria, a list of references for additional reading, some variations on the theme, and two or three step-by-step examples of successful implementation.

Acknowledging their own development in "best practices" over the course of almost a decade, the authors also offer a checklist/index of grade level and subject coverage for the examples in the text, encouraging readers to start small and grow their improved practices gradually. Perhaps because of long experience, there are no false promises of transformative instant makeovers, or easy implementation. This book is not just for beginners, teachers who have made some progress in

transforming their teaching will find useful information and a helpful organization that may clarify their thinking and facilitate further progress.

Pages: **259** Price: **\$19.50** ISBN: **1-57110-082-2**

Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University

Gopaul-McNicol, Sharon-ann & Thomas-Presswood, Tania. (1997). *Working With Linguistically and Culturally Different Children: Innovative Clinical and Educational Approaches*. Needham Heights, MA : Allyn & Bacon.

This book tries to cover a lot of ground. It looks at minority ethnic group differences and discusses how these differences affect response within the educational or therapeutic setting. Many points are made quickly with little contextual information to aid the reader in assimilation. The discussion of best practices is a bit better, with some extensive examples and longer explanatory material in some sections. The organization provides little more than a checklist of possible problems in the early chapters. Suggestions for dealing with ethnic minority children are presented in later chapters. Early in the book there are many areas where the reader is left to wonder how an issue that has been raised could be dealt with effectively.

The book has an excellent bibliography and a wealth of references throughout the text. It would serve well as an introduction to the topic of working with minority children, but it does not go into enough depth on most topics to stand alone. The concept of a bio-ecological approach, which forms the basis of the book's claim to innovation, is an excellent, if onerous idea. It calls on professionals to go into the child's home and social life to observe him or her within the context of the operant culture.

Pages: **227** Price: **\$46.95** ISBN: **0-205-19986-0**

Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University

Herrell, Adrienne L. & Fowler, Joel P. Jr. (1998). *Camcorder in the Classroom: Using the Videocamera to Enliven Curriculum*. Upper Saddle River, NJ : Prentice-Hall.

Aimed at the total novice this book hopes to get teachers up at the camera and actively involving their students in scripting and filming their work. The first chapter focuses on the basics, camera moves, vocabulary, basic shot composition. Subsequent chapters each discuss a different subject area as they also suggest gradually more advanced camera work. There are chapters on language arts, science and mathematics, social sciences, and physical education, visual and performing arts.

Most how-to-do-it books make the activity discussed look overwhelming simply

by the process of discussing it step-by-step. Readers of Herrell and Fowler's book will find themselves encouraged by the authors' confident attitude and energized by their obvious enthusiasm. There are many great suggestions here that make active learning almost as easy as lights, camera, action.

Pages: **198** Price: **\$27.00** ISBN: **0-13-591280-6**

Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University



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