



**Ackerman, Richard H. & Maslin-Ostrowski, Pat (2002) *The Wounded Leader: How Real Leadership Emerges in Times of Crisis*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.**

For this reviewer, *The Wounded Leader* was a difficult book to stop reading. The readability results in part from the authors' "case story" approach, an intervention they have pioneered. The case story combines elements of the traditional case study with storytelling. Wounded leaders tell, in their own words, about painful, career-threatening situations. In the case story approach, the role of the person, or facilitator, hearing the story is not to offer advice, but to ask the probing questions that help the person discover his or her own answers. Thus, asking the right questions becomes a key element of healing.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part sets the stage by describing tensions and situations that can leave a leader vulnerable, and by describing the meanings of wounding found in mythology and medicine. The second part is devoted to nine wounded leaders telling their own stories, and these stories are compellingly and vividly told. One superintendent recounts being forced to choose between upholding a court order to desegregate and the wishes of a school board headed by a man who can only be described as villainous. Another dedicated principal fights to improve test scores, only to find that even heroic efforts could not make the scores rise high enough or fast enough to satisfy her supervisor or colleagues. Another principal tells of her inability to prevent a student from entering a life of crime and, more importantly, her lack of power to prevent his inflicting violence on other students. The stories are both unforgettable and moving, but they are not stories with traditional happy endings. Even though the authors claim that the book is "ultimately optimistic," most readers will find the situations described to be discouraging and sobering. The last part of the book explores the questions raised by the stories, discusses some of the lessons that were revealed, and offers suggestions as a "cure" for leadership. There are no easy answers, however, and the authors end by concluding that real leadership is a "very personal matter." The source of optimism is the potential for transformation and growth.

The *Wounded Leader* is not, however, just highly a readable book. It is also a fine scholarly work, resulting from the authors' ongoing research agenda. A series of four phenomenological studies and their interpretations and reflections on the findings of these studies form the basis of this well-documented and thoroughly researched book.

All libraries serving current or aspiring school administrators should

own *The Wounded Leader*. It is a powerful book, and it may well become a classic.

Pages: **143** Price: **\$28.00** ISBN: **0-7879-6110-8**

**Reviewed by Sharon Naylor, Illinois State University**

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**Brown, Dave F. (2002) *Becoming a Successful Urban Teacher*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.**

*Becoming a Successful Urban Teacher* is an excellent resource for any teacher who is thinking of working in an urban environment. The author gives an honest, objective overview of the urban school environment. Through the voices of teachers who have established successful urban classrooms, we see how it is possible to develop these inclusive and productive environments. These classrooms allow diverse populations to succeed by allowing for relevant, flexible, communication and work processes. Brown gives the book a linear structure that helps in exploring the complexities of culturally responsive teaching. He first discusses the reasons why one might want to teach in an urban school and then he relates how selected teachers have adapted their teaching for the urban environment.

Chapter Two asks prospective urban teachers to examine their cultural influences and points out that the urban classroom does not reflect the majority culture. In reflecting on traditional practice teachers are encouraged to recognize that their urban students' learning needs are very different than those of suburban or rural students. Learning in an urban classroom looks very different than learning does in a more traditional setting. Brown states that, "Significant change will occur only when your reflection on these issues helps you to see that what you believe about school culture is a limited view of how schools should operate." (p. 17)

Chapters Four through Nine give detailed explanations of how all aspects of teaching need to be examined for cultural relevancy. Brown addresses how curriculum, instruction, assessment, educational standards and evaluation need to be modified for the urban classroom. Chapter Ten looks at the necessity of developing a support network of fellow teachers, parents and administrators. Each chapter gives practical advice on the development and implementation of culturally relevant lessons and concludes with a list of further references.

The major strength of this book is Brown's use of real-life examples to examine how teachers have reflected on the realities and inequities of the student's outside world. There is an understanding that the majority of teachers who will be teaching in these schools are unfamiliar with the cultures of their urban students. It is vital that teachers unfamiliar with these diverse cultures realize that they can not teach effectively

without understanding how these cultures affect their students. The concluding chapter returns the focus to the prospective urban teacher's ability to examine their own preconceptions, attitudes, and cultural beliefs and how these affect their teaching. Brown brings the process of reflection full circle and in doing so has given an invaluable orientation to the urban school environment.

Pages: 261 Price: \$23.00 ISBN: 0-32500-361-0

Reviewed by Laura Koltutsky, University of Houston

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**Cazden, Courtney B. (2001) *Classroom Discourse: The Language of Teaching and Learning*. 2nd edition. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.**

Education is a social, interactive process in which language and communication skills play an important role. Effective teaching, dependent on effective communication, is critical to establishing the intellectual common ground between teacher and student that cultivates classroom discourse. Consequently, the language of teaching is an essential component of the learning process for both teachers and students.

In the first edition of *Classroom Discourse*, Cazden, Professor of Education Emerita at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and an international specialist in child language and education, seeks to answer the following questions:

- How do patterns of language use affect what counts as "knowledge," and what occurs as learning?
- How do these patterns affect the equality, or inequality, of students' educational opportunities?
- What communication competence do these patterns presume and/or foster? (p. 3)

The second edition, building on the research, concepts, and practice presented in the first, provides teachers and researchers with discussion articulating the complex social and intellectual issues that have impacted education. "Significant changes in the nature of the workplace and of civil society" (p. 4) as well as race, ethnicity, religion, and the conceptions of knowledge and learning have shifted the teaching emphasis from "products, facts or procedures to be learned by heart" (p. 5) to those that build on the development of higher order thinking skills. Cazden has done a masterful job of detailing the challenges for teachers and indicating techniques and strategies for addressing these issues and implementing changes in ways that benefit teachers and students.

Specific chapters explore wonderful transcripts of student

conversations divulged in "sharing time," excerpts from traditional and nontraditional lessons with discussion of the dimensions of structural and functional differences, descriptions of classroom discourse and related relevant topics, working with peers and computers, and equity and cultural issues and concerns.

The author presents a diverse variety of ideas, theories, analytical strategies, and empirical research representing many perspectives and viewpoints. Readers will appreciate the rich repertoire of relevant literature selected by the author based on "the importance of how the researchers did their research and what they found, their prominence in professional dialogues, and their position and perspectives as members of underrepresented groups" (p. 7). A list of references, and subject and name indexes complete the book. For those teachers and researchers interested in classroom discourse, this book is not to be missed. The discussions, research, and classroom applications give the reader a solid view of the diversity of classroom communication and the impact discourse plays on teaching and the learning environment.

Pages: **216** Price: **\$23.50** ISBN: **0-325-00378-5/2001(paper)**

**Reviewed by: Francine M. DeFranco, University of Connecticut**

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**Michaels, Judith Rowe (2001) *Dancing with Words: Helping Students Love Language through Authentic Vocabulary Instruction*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.**

Judith Michaels, a published poet and teacher, shows teachers how to transform high school vocabulary and language learning from mere memorization into a life-long love of language. Her book is filled with questions to contemplate and examples for teaching vocabulary in context, often repeating entire classroom discussions and liberally using student writing. Michaels provides a wide range of ideas for integrating language learning into lessons about novels, poetry, Shakespeare, newspapers, slang or grammar. This book will be of interest to writers as well as English teachers of all ages, and will inspire all who read it to contemplate words and their meanings. Michaels includes annotated bibliographies at the end of each chapter and an annotated reading list for further study at the end of the book.

Pages: **164** Price: **\$19.95** ISBN: **0-8141-1051-7**

**Reviewed by Kathy Irwin, University of Michigan-Dearborn**

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**Opitz, Michael F. & Ford, Michael P. (2001) *Reaching***

***Readers: Flexible & Innovative Strategies for Guided Reading.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.**

Michael Opitz, from the University of Northern Colorado, is the author of several books on teaching strategies for primary/elementary reading teachers. In *Reaching Readers* he teams up with University of Wisconsin author Michael Ford to offer reading teachers a highly practical and example-laden book on how to implement guided reading as a teaching strategy. Opitz and Ford have both written before on classroom grouping practices, so it is not surprising that their suggestions for the successful use of guided reading as a teaching tool are supported with extensive advice about and examples of student groups in classrooms and how to manage them. Opitz and Ford emphasize that knowing how to create classroom groups that work with your teaching strategies, and then knowing how to manage those groups are two skills critical to the successful introduction and practice of guided reading in your reading classroom.

Fortunately for the reader, Opitz and Ford not only explain the reasons why various group sizes and types work best for different teaching purposes, but they also provide many realistic classroom scenarios, set in classrooms from Grade 1 to Grade 6, to clarify and illustrate their comments. The text is presented in five chapters that move from an overview of the practice and purpose of guided reading to chapters that focus on assessment and groups, the range and selection of appropriate texts, and then the nine guided reading instructional scenarios. The final chapter offers the authors' experience and advice on the organization and management of guided reading in a busy classroom. The inclusion of ten examples of classroom literacy centers with details about how reading teachers use the centers to promote reading improvement offers readers concrete methods of preparing for guided reading time with one small group while other students work without direct teacher intervention.

The authors urge teachers to take their sub-title to heart, and to recognize that guided reading is a teaching practice that can be used in innovative ways in various classroom settings to meet multiple student needs. The authors caution against the view that guided reading is a limited practice meant to be used only in particular grades in particular ways. If it makes sense to use guided reading in your Grade 6 classroom, these authors urge you to go ahead and adapt the practice to your needs. Reading teachers will find this book to be useful for reasons well beyond its focus on guided reading. The chapters on both grouping and on the classroom management of small groups will be of interest to all elementary teachers. Extensive appendices include all the forms and children's literature referred to in the text, as well as professional readings and reading assessment procedures.

Pages: **174** Price: **\$17.00** ISBN: **0-325-00358-0**

**Reviewed by Brenda Reed, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario**

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**Peterson, Kent D. & Deal, Terrence (2002) *The Shaping School Culture Fieldbook*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.**

This brief follow-up companion to Terrence Deal's and Kent Peterson's national bestseller, *Shaping School Culture: The Heart of Leadership* provides insight into fostering a successful school environment through exploring its culture. The *Shaping School Culture Fieldbook* is divided into two parts.

Part one is devoted to examining the primary components of school culture and to the function of leaders in school culture. The focus is on distinguishing positive cultures from toxic cultures. Toxic cultures and subcultures create negative school environments and impinge on the efficiency and morale of co-workers. Practical examples gleaned from model schools assist in illustrating the concept of positive school cultures.

Part two outlines the process for leaders to cultivate a positive culture. The key components discussed are examining, reflecting, and assessing previous successful and unsuccessful events that have shaped culture in their schools. The final and most crucial component is executing a plan of action.

The individual and group activities interspersed throughout the book are useful. From reading and implementing these exercises, leaders are afforded the opportunity to engage in careful thought, consideration, and reflection about their existing school culture. In addition to these activities, a concise listing of references and a useful index increase the value of this book.

The book is a worthwhile expenditure. Highly recommended for school administrators, teachers, and education students.

Pages: **140** Price: **\$29.00** ISBN: **0-7879-5680-5**

**Reviewed by Janell R. Carter, Wilkes University**



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