



Booth, David & Barton, Bob. (2000). *Story Works: How Teachers Can Use Shared Stories in the New Curriculum*. Markham, ON: Pembroke Publishers. Published in the United States by Stenhouse.

In *Story Works*, Booth and Barton reflect on forty years of using stories with children and adults. Although there isn't anything really new in this book, it does a good job of explaining why and how stories and/or literature can be used in the classroom to develop language and thinking skills. The first several chapters discuss theoretically and philosophically why stories of all types need to be incorporated into the Language Arts curriculum. By stories the authors mean those told "by" the students as well as those read or told "to" them. In many instances the authors seem to use the terms "stories" and "literature" interchangeably. Thus the book reminds one of a literature methods book.

The later chapters become more practical discussing how the authors used various stories in their classrooms. They also discuss how to engage the students in responding to the stories. However, there is little discussion about assessment. Since this is written in a reflective style, the reader does have to read the material thoroughly to fully understand what the authors did in the class. There are no quick, step-by-step activities. However, the list of recommended stories is extensive.

Although very similar to Linda Wason-Ellam's *Start with Story* (Heinemann, 1996), *Story Works* discusses some of the newer influences on Language Arts such as technology. It would be a good addition to any education collection.

Pages: 160 Price: \$18.95 ISBN: 1-55138-125-1

Reviewed by Judy Walker, University of North Carolina, Charlotte

Heathorn, Stephen. (2000). *For Home, Country, and Race: Constructing Gender, Class and Englishness in the Elementary School, 1880-1914*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Heathorn offers a very readable recasting of his doctoral dissertation, which luckily has retained enough detailed examinations of classroom practice to delight the more casual reader. He examines the content of

instruction for children of the working classes and traces its progression from an emphasis on imparting good character; such as a work ethic, or acceptance of the class structure of English society; to a more worldly sense of Englishness as a superior race with responsibilities for bringing civilization around the globe. He looks in some detail at the content of elementary level readers, often written by academics, which cast other parts of the empire as alien to varying degrees, but always inferior.

At the same time they were fostering an expanding sense of national identity, the schools were expanding curriculum to include more vocational and subject specific instruction beyond basic reading and figures. This expansion led to gender divisions moving down the age and class ranges. Women needed to excel in the domestic arts in order to raise the superior citizens that would lead the way in the British Empire. Boys needed to be manly and aggressive in order to keep the less civilized elements of the Empire in their proper place. All needed to be willing to support the important work of their nation on the world stage by excelling in their assigned roles.

Heathorn does a good job of pointing out not just the details of the schools' nationalistic curriculum, but also the contradictions it engendered, especially for lower class students whose chances of visiting foreign lands or playing a powerful role in building or maintaining the Empire were low. His conclusion makes it clear why studies such as this one are important: "classroom constructions of the ideas of the nation were ultimately successful enough to induce millions of working-class men and women to willingly sacrifice their lives and loved ones to the demands of the nation-state in the cataclysmic clash of rival nationalisms that erupted in 1914." (p. 218) It is not reasonable to argue that the schools singlehandedly evoke patriotic fervor, but Heathorn makes clear that they have an important role.

Pages: **300** Price: **\$50.00 Canadian** ISBN: **0-8020-4436-0**

Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University

Johnson, Paul (2000) *Making Books: Over 30 Practical Book-Making Projects for Children*. Markham, ON: **Pembroke Publishers. Published in the United States by **Stenhouse**.**

This is more an arts and crafts book than it is a language arts book. As the subtitle indicates there are over 30 hands-on book-making projects for children, most of them variations on a few designs. These are mostly pop-up, lift-the-flap and accordion-style books. Written directions and illustrations are relatively clear and easy to follow

considering the amount of folding and cutting involved in some of the projects. Projects are broken down by age levels: 5-6; 6-7; 7-8; 8-9; 9-10, and 10-11.

Although the book does not discuss the writing process at all, it will be helpful to teachers [and children] who are bored with the more traditional ways to physically create a book. Some of the projects are very clever. This would be a good companion to Susan Gaylord's *Multicultural Books to Make and Share*, which includes different book designs from around the world. *Making Books* would serve well in a school library media center and/or a public library.

Pages: **64** Price: **\$14.95** ISBN: **1-55138-127-3**

Reviewed by Judy Walker, University of North Carolina, Charlotte

Tovani, Cris. (2000). *I Read It, But I Don't Get It: Comprehension Strategies for Adolescent Readers*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.

One of the teaching strategies Cris Tovani encourages is "modeling." She encourages teachers to let struggling students see what good readers do by sharing their own thought processes as they read. In *I Read It, But I Don't Get It*, Tovani invites others into her own classroom and allows them to model the practices of a master teacher. By the end of the book, readers will feel that they know both Cris Tovani and the many students that she mentions by name. There is no doubt that Tovani is a practicing teacher. When reading the first chapter, "Fake Reading," Torvani's teenagers, slumped in their chairs, discussing how they manage to fake out their teachers, unfortunately ring all too true.

A "What Works" section included in each of the last seven chapters offers suggestions that can be used in the classroom, and there is an appendix with reproducible materials. But this is not just a book of teaching activities; Tovani explains current theories of comprehension instruction, and she offers no quick fixes. A great deal is demanded of both teacher and student. Teachers must help students recognize when they are "stuck" and help them develop strategies for getting "unstuck." Nor does the teacher's job end with helping students simply understand the text. Students must also be guided in making inferences and relating what they read to other subjects and to their lives. Tovani's suggestions can be used in a variety of content areas and grade levels (6-12). Since finding reading strategies for the content area teacher is difficult, this book will be particularly valuable.

Perhaps most importantly, however, it is obvious that Tovani loves teaching and cares greatly about her students. Her sense of purpose and her belief in the importance of what she is doing shine through and will

inspire other teachers. This highly readable book has a wealth of information and is a good choice for all types of libraries and teacher resource centers.

Pages: **140** Price: **\$18.50** ISBN: **1-57110-089-X**

Reviewed by Sharon Naylor, Illinois State University



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