

# News Notes

## Programs and Practices

BOB L. TAYLOR AND ROBERT C. MCKEAN

### Glossing to Improve Reading Comprehension

Reading instruction with exclusive emphasis on reading skills is inadequate, many teachers and researchers have concluded. Children read with poor understanding in spite of mastery of specific skills such as decoding.

Researchers at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research have developed modern applications of a technique for improving comprehension that goes as far back as medieval times. The technique is called *glossing*. It uses notes and comments in the margin to direct attention to places in the text where the reader can improve comprehension by applying specific strategies.

As a result of the research, a paper on glossing has been published that gives its fundamental principles but is not a simple how-to-do-it guide. The paper gives teachers enough background to prepare formal gloss in situations when the time and effort are justified and makes them aware of the value of gloss.

Copies of "A Technique for Improving the Understanding of Expository Text: Gloss" are available for \$13 each (including shipping) from the Wisconsin Center for Education Research Document Service, 1025 W. Johnson St., Madison, WI 53706.

### Teenage Mothers Aren't Prepared

According to a five-year study, teenage mothers expect too little, too late from their newborn babies. They underestimate the infants' cognitive and social needs and abilities while tending to the infants' physical needs. While nearly all of the 98 mothers in the study decided to keep and rear their children, at an average age of 16.5 years, the mothers were still growing up themselves and lacked sufficient knowledge of child development and parenting.

They often overlooked their babies'

curiosity or exploratory behavior and misinterpreted their babies' attempts to engage them in play. While the teenage mothers took good care of their babies physically, they rarely talked to or played with them.

The emotional support a mother received from her own family was more important than financial support in fostering positive parent-infant bonds. Where this emotional support was lacking, the teenage mothers were least likely to talk to or play with their babies.

It was found that teachers, counselors, and school nurses were supportive in helping the mothers cope and continue their own education. The study concluded that teenage mothers need information about the processes of mental development and training in how to observe and respond to signs of their babies' growth.

For more information: Family Programs Department, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, 600 N. River St., Ypsilanti, MI 48197.

### Learning About Aging

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District in Massachusetts has developed a project that integrates education about aging with the general curriculum for all students (K-12) and promotes opportunities for contact between people of different ages. The project offers its services and products to other communities interested in education on aging. Services include teacher training, consultation, and curriculum materials for teachers and learners.

Recent studies show that American young people tend to have negative and stereotyped views of the aging process and of older people, are ill-informed about aging, and take a dim view of their own futures as aging persons. They need to learn that people at all ages can enjoy healthy, active, and fulfilling lives if they adopt early a lifestyle that combines good habits of mental and physical health with planning for their future.

Project activities are designed to achieve the following:

1. Raise teacher consciousness of the need for education about aging
2. Provide teachers with knowledge about aging

3. Help teachers develop plans for teaching about aging
4. Provide opportunities for intergenerational cooperation and interaction
5. Foster more positive attitudes among young people toward aging and older people
6. Increase understanding of young people about the aging process and related social issues
7. Help young people prepare for their future as aging individuals in an aging society.

For additional information: Fran Pratt, Director, TLA Project, McCarthey-Towne School, Acton, MA 01720. Phone: (617) 263-9503.

### Project Combines Social Studies and Communication Skills

While studying colonial North America, Ohio students construct replicas of the fort at Jamestown, a southern plantation, a New England village, a Middle Colony farm, a French fur trader's outpost, a Mexican hacienda, or a Spanish mission. Kate Meek and Jerry Hayes, teachers in Harmon School, Aurora, Ohio, have combined English and social studies in a hands-on approach to this historical period.

To accurately build the models, students must research the colony settlement. They then build models using paste, paint, clay, pastels, markers, crayons, pencils, and papier-mâché, or forage the outdoors for mud, grass, twigs, rocks, and other materials.

The colony project is used to spice up sixth grade social studies and English. "Student interest and involvement with the topics are greatly enhanced this way," say the teachers, and a colony fair is held at the end of the classroom activity.

Social studies and English communication skills both are incorporated into the project. Before building their models, each team creates a charter of government for their colony based on careful research. In addition, students write letters home explaining life in the colony, a newspaper, a notice for a slave auction, or a shopping list for supplies needed by the colony. "The combination of written work and the physical presence of the colony collectively pro-

vide an accurate portrayal of the nature of life in that colony."

Further information is available from Kate Meek or Jerry Hayes, Sixth Grade Teachers, Harmon School, Aurora, OH 44202.

### Indiana Students Study Marine Ecology

Some Indiana students swim with sea turtles and barracuda and chase crabs on beaches in the Florida Keys—if they're lucky enough to take part in the marine and aquatic science education programs available in eight Indiana school districts.

For example, students at Munster High School may enroll in an Environmental Science Project. They first study the physical and biological characteristics of Indiana's lakeshore, including a two-day field trip. They also study the history of human settlements on the lakeshore, land use patterns through the years, and current environmental issues. Then they apply the same inquiry approaches to a salt water area—South Florida and the Keys—amassing considerable information prior to a ten-day trip scheduled during spring vacation. Students write a research paper comparing fresh water and salt water areas ecologically, geologically, culturally, and sociologically with recommendations con-

cerning the future of these locations. More than 80 students applied for the 24 class positions.

A noncredit program in marine biology, including a trip to Florida, is offered at Homestead High School in Fort Wayne. A summer school credit course in environmental education includes two weeks in Maine and Nova Scotia where students observe marine life, whaling, and fishing.

For more information: John Edington, Munster High School; Ronald Divilbiss, Leo Junior-Senior High School; or Jay Hammel, Homestead High School, c/o Jerry Colglazier, Science Consultant, Human Services, Room 229, State House, Indianapolis, IN 46204.

### Hispanic Reading Scores Improving

Nine-year-old Hispanics made twice the gains in reading made by all nine-year-olds between 1975 and 1980, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The gain by these Hispanic students was important even if they were still reading below national levels. In 1980, nine-year-old Hispanic students averaged 60.3 percent correct while the national reading achievement average at age nine was 67.9 percent.

Another encouraging finding was that Hispanic students attending school in

big cities (population of 200,000) made substantial improvements during the second half of the 70s. The nine-year-olds' achievement increased by 8.4 percent and the overall performance of the 13- and 17-year-olds showed an upward trend.

The reading scores of older Hispanic students did not change significantly between 1975 and 1980; this was also true for all teenagers across the country.

NAEP made a special study of Hispanic students based on 1,500 out of 24,000 cases in the 1975 and 1980 reading assessments. Those who speak no English and those who drop out of school were not included in these assessments.

Three types of reading skills were assessed: (1) literal comprehension—the ability to identify single words, phrases, or facts; (2) inferential comprehension—the ability to infer a meaning not explicitly stated; and (3) reference skills—the ability to use reference materials such as a dictionary or an index.

For more information: "Performance of Hispanic Students in Two National Assessments of Reading," #SY-HR-50, a 16-page paper, can be ordered from the Education Commission of the States, 1860 Lincoln St., Denver, CO 80295, for \$1.

## Learning Styles

RITA DUNN AND NANCY RECKINGER

### Cultural Bias Model of Styles

The field of anthropology offers a cultural bias model to explain differences in how people perceive and manage their needs and resources.

The cultural bias model, according to anthropologists Mary Douglas, a professor at Northwestern University, and Michael Thompson who works in England and Austria, is built upon three dimensions of cultural space that result in five categories of people. The three dimen-

sions are (1) the degree of a person's social involvement, from individualized to collectivized; (2) the degree of socially imposed prescription a person follows, from egalitarian to hierarchical; and (3) whether the person manipulates others or is manipulated by others.

The five types that result are:

A. Individualist, egalitarian, manipulative. The entrepreneur. Has weak group ties and wants minimum control from any kind of government. Strategy is to increase resources to keep up with wages. A risk taker and a dynamic doer. Short-range goals. Independent and pragmatic.

B. Group oriented, strong hierarchical imposed prescription, manipulative. The hierarchist. Fond of rules and regulations. Strategy is to maximize re-

sources collectively. Balances long- and short-range goals. Primary goal is to maintain the hierarchy and his or her position in it. In constant conflict with "A" types; manipulates other types.

C. Strongly group oriented, egalitarian, manipulated. Survivalists. Deeply concerned with the human dimension. Long-range goals. Looking for ways to increase humanism. Idealistic.

D. Individualist in a strongly prescribed society who is manipulated. Has "A" type values but is unable to manage either wants or resources. Strategy is survival by relying on Lady Luck. Unable to participate in own life decisions, no matter how much he or she might want to.

E. Individualist, no prescription, and neither manipulates people nor is

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