



The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin

International Journal for Professional Educators

Winter 2011 • Volume 77-2

Morality in Education

The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin

Editorial Board

Sigrún Klara Hannesdóttir, Ph.D., 2010-2014
 Professor Emerita of Library and Information Studies
 University of Iceland
 Reykjavík, Iceland

Beverly J. Irby, Ed.D., 2010-2014
 Associate Dean, Graduate Programs
 College of Education, Sam Houston State University
 Texas State University System
 Regents' Professor
 Huntsville, TX

Janice Novello, Ph.D., 2008-2012
 Doctoral Dissertation Advisor
 University of Phoenix
 Phoenix, Arizona

Sandra L. Shillingstad, Ed.D., 2008-2012
 Associate Professor
 University of Nebraska at Omaha
 Omaha, Nebraska

Judith Merz, Ed.D., Editor
 Doctoral Advisor, Educational Leadership
 Nova Southeastern University
 Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

The *Bulletin*, the official journal of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, promotes professional and personal growth of members through publication of their writings.

The *Bulletin* invites materials appropriate to the Society's Purposes: position papers, applied and/or data-based research, and other articles on announced themes or other topics of interest to educators; letters to the editor; viewpoints; book reviews; annotated bibliographies; poetry; and graphic arts.

Prose manuscripts for the *Bulletin*, a refereed journal, are reviewed by the Editorial Board and the Society editorial staff. Selection is based on relevance of the topics addressed, accuracy and validity, contribution to the professional literature, originality, quality of writing, and adherence to Submission Guidelines (see page 83). Editorial Board members evaluate each submission's focus, organization, development, readability, and accessibility to the general audience of *Bulletin* readers. Due to the diversity of the *Bulletin* audience, material of a religious, political, or patriotic nature is not suitable for publication.

Please send publication materials to bulletin@dkg.org or to *Bulletin* Editorial Staff, The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, P.O. Box 1589, Austin, TX 78767-1589.

The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin (ISSN 0011-8044; USPS 715-850; IPM 0302295) is published quarterly each year by The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, 416 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas. Mailing address: P.O. Box 1589, Austin, TX 78767-1589. Periodicals Postage paid at Austin, Texas. Subscription, U.S. \$20 per year; single copies, \$5 each. International dues include subscription to *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*. Views expressed do not necessarily agree with positions taken by The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*
 P.O. Box 1589, Austin, TX 78767-1589

The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin

Winter 2011 • Volume 77-2

Published by the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International

*The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International
promotes professional and personal growth of women
educators and excellence in education.*

Call for Submissions	5
Editorial	6
On the Theme	
Affective Assessment: The Missing Piece of the Educational Reform Puzzle <i>By Ramona A. Hall</i>	7
Using Children’s and Young Adult Literature in Teaching Acceptance and Understanding of Individual Differences <i>By Karen W. Gavigan and Stephanie Kurtts</i>	11
Learning Life Lessons through Literature <i>By Marcia C. Stewart</i>	17
Annotated Bibliography of Materials for Spirituality in the Classroom: Fostering Social and Emotional Learning and Developing Moral Schools <i>By Elizabeth DeGaynor and Barbara Day</i>	21
Illuminating Pathways through Rigor, Respect, Relevance, and Relationships: Scaffolding Cross-Generational Understandings <i>By Merry Boggs and Susan Szabo</i>	27
Workplace Bullying: Costly and Preventable <i>By Terry L. Wiedmer</i>	35
Teacher as Bully: Knowingly or Unintentionally Harming Students <i>By Ruth Sylvester</i>	42
Interview	
Doing the Right Thing for Special Education Students: An Interview with Practitioner Diane Rawley <i>Conducted by Dr. Janice M. Novello</i>	46
Book Review	
Learning Styles Research: What Really Works A Review of <i>Differentiating Instruction for At-Risk Students: What to Do and How to Do It</i> <i>By Audrey Cohan</i>	49

Articles

Preparing and Supporting Teachers for 21st Century Expectations through Universal Design for Learning

By Laura H. King, Jennifer B. Williams, and Sandra H. Warren 51

Viewpoint: How Can College Students Cope with Learning Disabilities?

By Michele J. Adam and Judith J. Pula 56

“Oh! That Reminds Me...”: Motivating Memoir Manuscripts

By Diana Ott Wright..... 60

Practices and Partnerships in Preschool Literacy

By Lisa M. Dimling, Rick A. Worch, Mary M. Murray, Richard Oldrieve, Susan Peet, Ruben Viramontez Anguiano, Leslie A. Straka, and Deborah G. Wooldridge 71

Poetry 80

Submission Guidelines 83

Submission Grid 84

Call for Submissions

Members are encouraged to submit manuscripts for consideration by the *Bulletin* Editorial Board. *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin* accepts Action Research, Qualitative Research, Quantitative Research, Annotated Bibliographies, Program Descriptions, Position Papers, Book Reviews, Viewpoints, Graphic Arts, Letters to the Editor, and Poetry for **print** issues (spring, fall) and **online** issues (summer, winter). Manuscripts should be focused, well organized, effectively developed, concise, and appropriate for *Bulletin* readers. The style should be direct, clear, readable, and free from gender, political, patriotic, or religious bias. For more detailed information, please refer to the Submission Guidelines on page 83 and the Submission Grid on page 84. Listed below are the suggested themes of upcoming issues.

Summer 2011 (77-4) Competition / Competitiveness (Online)

(Postmark deadline is March 1, 2011)

Merit Pay • Global Competitiveness • Awards/Rewards • Standards •
High-stakes Assessments • Ranking/Grading Schools • Grading •
Accountability • Scholarships • Academic vs. Extracurricular •
Sustainability of Public Schools • Leadership

Fall 2011 (78-1) Lifelong Learning (Print)

(Postmark deadline is June 1, 2011)

Professional Development • Elder Hostel • Self-directed Learning • Leadership •
Networking • Online Opportunities • Returning to School • Personal Balance •
Brain-based Research • Career Changes • Alternative Certifications • Mentoring •
Writing for Publication • Conference Attendance • International Networking

Winter 2012 (78-2) Diverse Learners (Online)

(Postmark deadline is September 1, 2011)

Immigrant • Special Needs • Twice-exceptional Children • Home Schooling •
Differentiated Learners • At-risk • Disadvantaged • Alternative Schools •
Guidance and Counseling • Media-savvy Youth • Readiness and Resilience •
Generational Styles (GenX, Millennials, Indigo Children, etc.) •
Comparative Educational Practices Around the World

Submit all materials to:

***Bulletin* Editorial Staff**

bulletin@dkg.org

From the Editor

As this issue of the *Bulletin* goes to press, a controversial documentary about education, *Waiting for Superman* (Paramount, 2010), is in movie theaters, launching a discussion about the alleged failures of the U.S. public educational system. Interestingly, filmmaker Davis Guggenheim frames the critique through the stories of five students struggling to obtain the best education possible, thus putting a face to those who are waiting for someone to “save them” from weak educational systems. Although his suggestion that charter schools and education reformers may be the “Superman” waiting in the wings is arguable, Guggenheim’s focus on the students’ lens is right on target. Ultimately, educators need to be concerned about *doing the right things* for the young people in their classrooms and schools—and at its heart, such right-minded action perhaps best defines this issue’s theme of *morality in education*.

Well-intentioned bureaucratic reform efforts in the United States and elsewhere often emphasize *doing things right* by imposing rules and requiring excessive documentation of efforts and results, but the real morality in education ultimately lies in *doing the right thing* for students...and in helping them learn to do the right thing as well. As the articles in this issue attest, many superwomen in Delta Kappa Gamma are already thinking about and pursuing the hard work of shaping not just the minds but also the hearts of young people. Like mild-mannered Clark Kent, Superman’s alter-ego, these educators quietly and persistently go about the daily tasks of interacting with students, challenging them to grow and develop into productive adults. Like Kent, their heroic dedication and performance may go largely unheralded—but they continue to do what they believe is right in order to make a difference in the lives of students.

This issue provides a rich tapestry of thinking about morality in education. Several authors discuss programs that allow young people to examine their assumptions and behaviors directly or to experience and resolve moral dilemmas vicariously through literature. These authors provide resources for readers that include not only program descriptions and annotated bibliographies but also a webliography! Other writers focus on how to create environments that contribute to moral schools. Readers will be challenged to think beyond the usual discussion of student-to-student bullying to consider schools as possible sites for workplace bullying—and even to consider ways that teachers may purposely or inadvertently bully young people! In sum, this issue provides considerable food for thought on the complex and multifaceted theme of morality in education...and on the superwomen in DKG who are *doing the right thing* for children around the world.

Readers may note several changes in the appearance of this issue of the *Bulletin* as the editorial board strives to enhance the image of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society’s journal. Thanks go to Camille Kuntz, graphic design specialist, and Linda Eller, information services administrator, for their research and vision in providing new formats.

Judith R. Merz, Ed.D.
Editor

Affective Assessment: The Missing Piece of the Educational Reform Puzzle

By Ramona A. Hall

The cognitive and affective domains are inseparable. One is incomplete without the other. Proper, ongoing assessment of the affective domain—students' attitudes, values, dispositions, and ethical perspectives—is essential in any efforts to improve academic achievement and the quality of the educational experience provided. Unfortunately, the practice of routinely assessing learners' affective constructs is all too often lacking. This article highlights the significance and absolute necessity of regular affective assessment and the ways in which data obtained through such assessments may be used to refresh and recapture learners.

High-stakes standardized testing, school report cards, and stiff sanctions for failing to meet the target are just a few of many indications that an educational reform movement is currently underway. In fact, the reformation of K-12 education seems to exist in a perpetual state rather than as a realized goal. For decades, those groups and individuals responsible for reforming the educational system have sought and tested numerous potential solutions to educational woes, trying combinations of strategies in an approach akin to that of putting together a puzzle. However, finding the right pieces to complete the picture of reform remains a challenge.

For centuries, educators have known about the three domains of learner behavior: the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. As part of a heavy emphasis on accountability and reform, attention seems to turn to the cognitive domain almost exclusively. Most classroom teachers do not devote their attention directly to their students' affective constructs, and an even greater number of teachers fail to assess them (Popham, 2011). However, it is entirely conceivable that potentially the largest piece of the puzzle to which educators, educational leaders, and legislators seek a solution remains dormant. What is often forgotten is the fact that the cognitive and affective domains go hand-in-hand; they do not and should not function independently but should complement and complete one another. Although increasing what students know and are able to do is primary, their content-related attitudes, values, beliefs, and dispositions—the affective domain—are *at least* equally significant. Popham (2011) even goes so far to say that “affective variables are often more significant than cognitive variables” (p. 230).

The Missing Piece

Affective assessment entails measuring students' attitudes, interests, or values. Sometimes referred to as *dispositional assessment*, it is conducted in an effort to discover students' usual or typical inclinations. In contrast to cognitive and performance assessment, affective

assessment does not measure the content that learners know or the skills they are able to perform. What it measures instead are students' dispositions (Popham, 2011).

Something happens affectively between the time children enter school and the time they exit as graduates. Many first graders who so anxiously await every opportunity to participate in class and please their teacher transform some years later into students who are disengaged from the educational process. The level of interest in learning and the desire to excel academically generally seem to diminish over time, and it is disturbing to read multiple studies of high school drop-outs who indicate that a major reason for their decision to leave school was an inability to see relevance in the curriculum. Routine affective assessment that is embedded in the curriculum and appropriately administered can make all the difference. Such assessment is a finger on the pulse of learners' attitudes about the relevance and importance of the content they are to learn as well as their content-related ethical perspectives. It also keeps a constant watch on students' beliefs concerning their own ability to meet educational objectives and standards. As such, affective assessment provides ongoing opportunities for educators to identify students who may potentially fall through the cracks of the educational system as a direct result of their affective constructs.

Stiggins (2005) perhaps captured the importance and role of the affective domain best when he stated,

Motivation and desire represent the very foundation of learning. If students don't want to learn, there will be no learning. If they feel unable to learn, there will be no learning. Desire and motivation are not academic achievement characteristics. They are affective characteristics. (pp. 199-200)

Popham (2011) further explained the importance of the affective domain by clarifying its connection to future behavior. He stated,

The reason such affective variables as students' attitudes, interests, and values are important to us is that those variables typically influence future behavior. The reason we want to promote positive attitudes toward learning is because students who have positive attitudes toward learning today will be inclined to pursue learning in the future. The affective status of students lets us see how students are predisposed to behave subsequently. (p. 233)

Because the cognitive and affective domains are so closely connected, focusing on cognitive constructs to the exclusion of affective constructs can mean choosing to provide an incomplete educational experience. For example, a Spanish teacher should not be satisfied having a student complete a class with an advanced knowledge of the culture and excellent speaking, reading, writing and comprehension skills, but with little to no value for the language or respect for cultural diversity. Similarly, students exiting an accounting class have not received a complete educational experience if they are able to record transactions and produce financial statements expertly but have little to no respect for the accounting profession or the ethical standards that govern it. Likewise, students entering an English class with outstanding writing skills, but



Dr. Ramona A. Hall is an Associate Professor in the Department of Education at Cameron University in Lawton, OK. She teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in educational assessment along with graduate-level research and curriculum courses. Prior to coming to higher education, Dr. Hall taught elementary and high school Spanish as well as business education. She is a member of Beta Eta Chapter, OK, and currently serves as First Vice President. rhall@cameron.edu

believing they are awful writers, are not likely to apply fully or value their abilities. Only through assessment of the affective domain can educators obtain the information they need about learners' attitudes, values, dispositions, and ethical perspectives.

Finding and Connecting the Missing Piece

Affective assessment can occur at any time the educator so chooses and thinks appropriate; however, to obtain data that are most useful and meaningful, one should conduct assessments regularly. Relying on only one affective assessment for the entire duration of a course, the educator is unable to see if and how positive changes in the affective domain are taking place, and there is no opportunity to respond to those findings in a timely manner. The key is *ongoing* assessment, which could mean assessment before and after each chapter, each unit, or each grading period. Timing is at the discretion of the educator.

Affective assessment is by no means a summative assessment. It should never result in a grade in a grade book. Like all other types of assessments, affective assessment should be used

for instructional decision making and with the intent of fostering the positive change in disposition that is desired.

...We assess dispositions in the hope of finding positive, productive attitudes, values, sense of academic self, or interest in particular topics so we can take advantage of these—build on them—to promote greater achievement gains. But if our assessments reveal negative feelings, then we are obliged to strive for educational experiences that will result in the positive dispositions we hope for. (Stiggins, 2005, p. 204)

Consider the following example: An elementary reading teacher decides to conduct affective assessments throughout the school year with a group of students who are beginning readers. One assessment is designed to monitor the class members' attitudes toward reading and their self-esteem concerning their ability to read. The first assessment indicates that the students, as a whole, generally despise the idea of reading; however, assessments during the next several months indicate gradual but certain improvement in their attitudes and self-perceptions. Then the teacher suddenly discovers a drastic drop in these levels of improvement. These data should spur the teacher to reflect on what was taught, how it was taught, and any other influential factors that occurred since the last positive affective assessment. As a result of such evaluations, the teacher is in a much better position to modify instruction or identify areas that may warrant revisiting.

As another example, a foreign language teacher may discover through affective assessment that students in a class have very little confidence in their ability to speak the language because they believe that doing so makes them sound, look, and feel awkward. The teacher is now aware of the need to forgo group speaking exercises and class skits in exchange for more individual or one-on-one exercises until confidence is built. These scenarios are just two of many possible examples of how affective assessment may be conducted and used.

Instruments

A number of instruments may be used for conducting affective assessment. Hopkins

“ Affective assessment, frequently neglected in practice, is quite possibly the one missing piece of the puzzle when it comes to educational reform. ”

(1998) indicated that Likert, rating, and semantic differential scales, as well as self-report inventories, self-esteem inventories, Q-Sort instruments, questionnaires, and adjective checklists are all acceptable tools for collecting affective assessment data. Whichever type of instrument is employed, users should remember a few important guidelines so as to produce the most valid results possible. For example, the entire data collection process should be completely anonymous. Anonymity greatly increases the chances of obtaining honest responses. Students must know that they are not to place their names or any other identifying information on the instruments they complete. Rather than collecting responses by hand, the educator is encouraged to use a ballot box in which students may place the responses themselves. This method eliminates any ability to link responses to specific individuals based upon the row or order in which they sit. Similarly, for any tool requiring a written response, students should be encouraged to type their responses instead of writing them by hand.

One may wonder how affective assessment data can be used to modify instructional design when the data are collected anonymously. Because of the nature of what is being assessed, the potential exists for some students to respond dishonestly or simply not to take the assessment seriously. Reviewing aggregated data helps to mitigate the effects of the few who may distort their responses. Therefore, group-focused inferences are entirely appropriate and most feasible for making instructional decisions for the class.

Although educators will find that a number of instruments that assess a wide variety of affective constructs already exist, some educators may wish to create their own. When creating an affective assessment tool, perhaps the most important thing one should remember is to word the statements carefully so that the desired response or behavior is less obvious. For example, rather than have students agree or disagree with the statement *I like to read*, ask them how many books they have read just for fun over the summer break. Students could also be asked to place cards containing the words *read*, *study*, *write*, and *conduct an experiment* in order of preference. Although no assessment tool is perfectly valid and reliable, adhering to these measures will help improve the quality of the findings as well as the decisions being made based on those findings (Mertler, 2003).

Summary

Affective assessment, frequently neglected in practice, is quite possibly the one missing piece of the puzzle when it comes to educational reform. Armed with data about students' affective status, educators are in a much better position to provide a *complete* educational experience that is clearly relevant and of interest to learners. Simply stated, affective assessment is worthy of the time and effort it requires, and without it, the educational experience is incomplete.

References

- Hopkins, K. D. (1998). *Educational and psychological measurement and evaluation*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Mertler, C. A. (2003). *Classroom assessment: A practical guide for educators*. Los Angeles, CA: Pyczak Publishing.
- Popham, W. J. (2011). *Classroom Assessment: What teachers need to know*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Stiggins, R. J. (2005). *Student-involved assessment for learning*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Using Children's and Young Adult Literature in Teaching Acceptance and Understanding of Individual Differences

By Karen W. Gavigan and Stephanie Kurttz

*B*ibliotherapy is a strategy that uses literature to help the reader develop empathy and an understanding of diversity. This article presents examples of two higher education programs that are effectively using bibliotherapy to help future teachers and librarians understand disabilities through children's and young adult literature. The authors suggest strategies for implementing bibliotherapy sessions with K-12 students and provide a bibliography and a webliography of suggested resources.

Introduction

Bibliotherapy is a method of using literature to help students understand themselves and cope with problems relevant to their personal situations and developmental needs (Herbert & Kent, 2000). As teachers work in increasingly diversified classes, bibliotherapy can be a valuable instructional tool for creating an inclusive classroom. Examining disabilities through children's and young adult literature is one way to facilitate students' understanding and acceptance of individual differences. For years, teachers and librarians have used bibliotherapy as a strategy for addressing the healthy social and emotional development of individuals with disabilities and for helping those without disabilities to understand the issues associated with children and youth with special needs (Kurttz & Gavigan, 2008; Pardeck, 1994). Teaching future educators how to implement bibliotherapy sessions effectively can help them develop an empathy and understanding of disabilities as they prepare to meet the individual needs of children in their libraries and classrooms.

Using Bibliotherapy Strategies with Teacher and Library Candidates

Currently, educators of future teachers and librarians at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) and the University of South Carolina (USC) use bibliotherapy strategies in their professional programs. General and special education teacher candidates, as well as future librarians, are learning to select and use quality children's and young adult literature to implement inclusive instructional practices. Through assigned readings, discussions, and Web sites, these future educators are developing the skills needed to facilitate bibliotherapy strategies with children and adolescents. Descriptions of these two unique programs are provided below.

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

As part of the program for teacher candidates in special education at UNCG, the teacher candidates review pieces of children's and young adult literature that address issues associated with disabilities. This approach helps them learn how to teach empathy and the understanding of diversity. First, the teacher candidates are provided with an extensive bibliography of titles, from which they select a children's or young adult book that addresses issues associated with individuals with disabilities. Then they complete a review of the selected book by answering the following questions: *How are individuals with disabilities portrayed? Are they pathetic, sad, to be pitied? Are they seen as heroic, succeeding against all odds? Or are the characters realistically represented? How are relationships with nondisabled peers or adults described? What could children or youth learn from reading this book?* Finally, the teacher candidates write a reflection paper that summarizes the book, answers the guiding questions, and indicates whether or not they think the book is appropriate for helping children learn about individuals with disabilities. The assignment also helps them focus on professional teaching standards that address competency in teaching about issues of diversity.

University of South Carolina

When Dr. Linda Lucas Walling began working in the School of Library and Information Science at USC, she had personal insight into how it feels to have a disability, because she has mild cerebral palsy. Professor Walling believed it was critical that future librarians and teachers develop an understanding of children's abilities and disabilities. In addition to teaching classes and conducting workshops, she coauthored a book about library services for people with disabilities (Walling & Karrenbrock, 1993). The South Carolina Center for Children's Books and Literacy, located in the South Carolina State Library, established a book collection in Dr. Walling's honor when she retired in 2003. The Linda Lucas Walling Collection includes professional resources and books for and about children and young adults with disabilities. Additionally, an informative Web site (www.libsci.sc.edu/fsd/walling/web/bestfolder.htm) includes articles about bibliotherapy, links to other Web sites, bibliographies, and a blog. The Web site has been used by educators from around the world, including Scotland, Brazil, and Iran. For example, an Iranian woman who is a graduate student in special education used the Web site to establish a library for children with



Dr. Karen Gavigan is an Assistant Professor of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina. Karen previously served as President of the Beta Omega Chapter of Eta State. While completing her doctoral studies, she was the recipient of the Hunter-Moore Scholarship (Eta State) and the Founders Scholarship from Delta Kappa Gamma International. She is currently a member of Beta Delta Chapter of Eta State. kgavigan@mailbox.sc.edu



Dr. Stephanie A. Kurtts is an Associate Professor in the Department of Specialized Education Services at the University of North Carolina. She has presented with her coauthor, Dr. Karen Gavigan, at regional and international professional education conferences on the use of children's and young adult literature to help students and teachers understand disabilities. Her professional and research interests include teacher preparation for inclusive education with an emphasis on collaborative practice and accessibility of the general curriculum for students with disabilities. sakurtts@uncg.edu.

disabilities. Closer to home, the Linda Lucas Walling Collection and Web site are used by the students and faculty at USC. Instructors of classes on children's and young adult instructional materials include assignments that utilize the collection.

Implementation in the K-12 Classroom

Several steps can be taken to implement bibliotherapy in K-12 classrooms and libraries. Typically, strategies include reading the literature, or listening to it being read aloud, and then participating in a discussion led by a facilitator (Borders & Paisley, 1992). A suggested framework includes prereading, guided reading, postreading discussion, and follow-up activities (Forgan, 2002). In this framework, the teacher or librarian first helps students activate their background knowledge about disabilities in order to make predictions about the book. Next, in the guided reading stage, students are encouraged to identify challenges the character experiences that are similar to their own. The postreading activity helps students generate alternative solutions to challenges the character faces. Final activities can include role-playing, writing, participating in interactive games, and completing other activities that facilitate the problem-solving process.

Two activities that can be used to help children and young adults understand the issues associated with disabilities are listed below.

- Use the book *Secret Signs along the Underground Railroad* (Riggio, 1997) with students in Grades 1-4. The story is about a young deaf boy's creative use of sign language to help slaves escape on the Underground Railroad. Introduce students to the history of the Underground Railroad. Read the title of the book aloud to the students and ask them to make predictions about the plot. Then read the book aloud to the students and have them answer questions such as the following:
 - Why were secret signs needed along the Underground Railroad?
 - What are the ways people communicate?
 - Have you ever seen people speaking with one another using their hands?
 - What do you think it would be like to be deaf?
- Use the book *Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key* (Gantos, 1998) to discuss attention issues with children in Grades 4-8. Teach the students how to create a KWL chart (K for what they know, W for what they want to know, and L for what they learned). Before they read the book, have them write a paragraph about what they already know about attention deficit hyperactivity disorders (ADHD). Tell them to write a few questions under W about what they want to know. After they finish reading the book, show them the Web page *Understanding AD/HD* by CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) at <http://www.chadd.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Understanding>. Then tell the students to write a paragraph under L for what they learned about AD/HD from the Web site. When they finish the KWL chart, lead the students in

“ When teachers and librarians implement bibliotherapy strategies in schools, they can help disabled students understand that they are not alone . . . [and] help other students develop an understanding of the issues faced by their classmates with disabilities. ”

a discussion about the symptoms that Joey exhibited in the book. (Gavigan & Kurtts, 2010, p.139)

In addition to implementing activities similar to those above, those interested in utilizing bibliotherapy strategies will find further guidance in resources provided at the end of this article. A bibliography (Table 1) suggests literary titles related to specific disabilities, and a webliography (Table 2) provides online resources with a wealth of information about bibliotherapy and additional literary titles.

Conclusion

Exposure to children's and young adult literature about disabilities enables educators to recognize that all of their students bring strengths and weaknesses to their classrooms and libraries. It is important that teachers and librarians are trained to use bibliotherapy to help children and young adults make connections with literature. When teachers and librarians implement bibliotherapy strategies in schools, they can help disabled students understand that they are not alone. Use of bibliotherapy strategies can also help other students develop an understanding of the issues faced by their classmates with disabilities.

References

- Borders, S., & Paisley, P. O. (1992). Children's literature as a resource for classroom guidance. *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, 27* (2), 131-140.
- Gantos, J. (1998). *Joey Pigza swallowed the key*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- Gavigan, K., & Kurtts, S. (2010). Bibliotherapy as an intervention approach for children and adolescents with emotional disabilities. In C. Norton, *Innovative interventions in child and adolescent mental health*. Florence, KY: Routledge Press.
- Herbert, T. P., & Kent, R. (2000). Nurturing social and emotional development in gifted teenagers through young adult literature. *Roeper Review, 22* (3), 167-172. doi:10.1080/02783190009554027
- Kurtts, S. A., & Gavigan, K. (2008). Understanding (dis)abilities through children's literature. *Education Libraries, 31*(1), 23-31.
- Pardeck, J. T. (1994). Using literature to help adolescents cope with problems. *Adolescence, 70* (114), 421-428.
- Riggio, A. (1997). *Secret signs: Along the Underground Railroad*. Honesdale, PA: Boyd's Mill Press.
- Walling, L. L., & Karrenbrock, M. H. (1993). *Disabilities, children, and libraries : Mainstreaming services in public libraries and school library media centers*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Table 1 -**A Selective Bibliography of Books for Children and Young Adults about Individuals with Special Needs**

Topic	Titles for Children	Publishing Information	Titles for Young Adults	Publishing Information
Attention Disorders	<i>Otto Learns about His Medicine</i> by Matthew Galvin	Washington, D.C.; Magination Press. Revised edition, 1995	<i>Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key</i> by Jack Gantos	New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998.
Asperger Syndrome	<i>Understanding Sam and Asperger Syndrome</i> by Clarabell van Miekerk & Liezl Venter	Erie, PA: Skeezel Press, 2008.	<i>Marcelo in the Real World</i> by Francisco X. Stork	New York, NY: Arthur A. Levine Books, 2009.
Autism	<i>Autism and Me: Sibling Stories</i> by Ouisie Shapiro	Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company, 2009.	<i>Anything but Typical</i> by Nora Raleigh Baskin	New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2010.
Cerebral Palsy	<i>Nathan's Wish: A Story about Cerebral Palsy</i> by Laurie Lears	Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company, 2005.	<i>Accident of Nature</i> by Harriet McBryde Johnson	New York, NY: Henry Holt & Company, 2006.
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	<i>Moses Goes to School (Others in the series)</i> by Isaac Millman	New York, NY: Frances Foster Books, 2000.	<i>The Ocean Inside: Youth Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (Others in the series)</i> by Autumn Libal	New York, NY: Mason Crest Publishers, 2004.
Down Syndrome	<i>My Sister, Alicia May</i> by Nancy Tupper Ling	Rahynam Center, MA: Pleasant St. Press, 2009.	<i>My Name is Not Slow: Youth with Mental Retardation (Others in the series)</i> by Autumn Libal	New York, NY: Mason Crest Publishers, 2004.
Dyslexia	<i>Thank You, Mr. Falker.</i> by Patricia Polacco	New York, NY: Philomel Books, 1998.	<i>Egg-Drop Blues</i> by Jacqueline Turner Banks	Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1995.
Epilepsy	<i>Becky the Brave: A Story about Epilepsy</i> by Laura Lears	Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company, 2002.	<i>Living with Epilepsy</i> by Shirley Wimbish Gray	Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, 2002.
Physical Disabilities	<i>Rolling Along: The Story of Taylor and His Wheelchair</i> by Jamee Riggio Heelan	Chicago, IL: The Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago Learning Book Series, 2000.	<i>Picking Up the Pieces</i> by Patricia Calvert	New York, NY: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1999.
Speech Impairments	<i>Hooway for Wodney Wat</i> by Helen Lester	Boston, MA: Walter Lorraine Books, 1999.	<i>Finding My Voice: Youth with Speech Impairments (Others in the series)</i> by Autumn Libal	New York, NY: Mason Crest Publishers, 2004.
Visual Impairments	<i>Hanni and Beth: Safe and Sound</i> by Beth Finke	West Bay Shore, NY: Blue Marlin Publications, 2007.	<i>Helen's Eyes: A Photobiography of Annie Sullivan, Helen Keller's Teacher</i> by Marfe Ferguson Delano	Washington, DC: National Geographic Biography, 2008.

Table 2 - A Webliography of Bibliotherapy Web sites**Bibliotherapy Bookshelf by the Carnegie Library at Pittsburgh**

<http://www.carnegielibrary.org/kids/books/bibtherapy.cfm>

The Web site of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh provides lists of books for young children on the following topics: Visual Impairments, Hearing Impairments, Learning Impairments, Mental Impairments, and Physical Impairments.

Children's Books about Disabilities – TeacherVision

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/learning-disabilities/reading/5316.html>

TeacherVision provides an extensive list of children's books about disabilities, sorted by the readability levels of the books.

Children's Literature Promotes Understanding by Melissa Thibault – LEARN NC

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/635>

This article, from the LEARN NC Web site, includes a description of bibliotherapy and provides resources for selecting appropriate books.

Books about Teens with Disabilities or Illnesses

<http://plymouthlibrary.org/disabled.htm>

The Plymouth District Library (Plymouth, MI) developed this annotated list of more than 30 titles for young adults.

Linda Lucas Walling Collection - Materials for and/or about Children with Disabilities

<http://www.libsci.sc.edu/walling/bestfolder.htm>

This Web site is designed to provide self-instruction on selecting and evaluating (a) materials for children with disabilities and (b) materials about children with disabilities. In addition to bibliographies, the Web site includes helpful articles and a blog.

Learning Life Lessons through Literature

By Marcia C. Stewart

This annotated bibliography of recently published picture books provides resources for educators interested in students' social and emotional growth. Such quality literature can promote rich discussion of life lessons and help children develop strength of character.

Although much emphasis is placed on academic growth and performance, there is increasing awareness of the need to educate the whole child for immediate classroom benefits and the welfare of our future (ASCD, 2010). Noddings stated, "Our main educational aim should be to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving, and lovable people" (p. 368). According to Perry (2001), the six core strengths needed to help our students become caring individuals are (a) being a friend, (b) thinking before acting, (c) joining and contributing to a group, (d) thinking about the needs of others, (e) accepting the differences of others, and (f) respecting yourself and others. Other important traits include self-esteem, empathy, and mutuality (Sawyer, 2009).

One highly effective way to help students develop these strengths of character is through the use of quality literature that provides a context for rich discussion. Teachers have known this for years and have used books to address classroom issues—for example, reading *Hooway for Wodney Wat* (Lester, 1999) to discuss bullying. With numerous books published annually, educators find it impossible to be familiar with all of them. This annotated bibliography highlights some recently published picture books that lend themselves to learning life lessons through literature.

Becker, B. (2008). *A visitor for bear*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.

Bear is adamant that he wants no visitors. A persistent mouse ignores the *No Visitors* sign on the door and proceeds to make himself at home. When the mouse finally starts to leave, the bear has grown to enjoy the company and asks the mouse to stay. Bear learns how to make a friend by being a friend. This story can help children learn that friendships are built over time. Making a new friend may be a little scary at first, but we need to be open to opportunities to meet new people and lend a helping hand. Through sharing his home, Bear gained a friend. Children who have difficulties relating to their peers may learn a life lesson from Bear about reaching out to help others and tending the seeds of friendship.

Berger, C. (2008). *The little yellow leaf*. New York, NY: HarperCollins/Greenwillow Books.

Splendid illustrations and endpapers depict the little yellow leaf, anxious and afraid to fall from the tree in autumn until he meets a little red leaf who has similar fears. They find courage in numbers as they face their fears together to take the leap. Most children can

relate to the fear of the unknown. The life lesson of this story helps readers to know that they are not alone and that working together will reduce fears and anxiety. After reading this book, the teacher could brainstorm with the class about their fears and ways classmates can help each other to overcome them. This book exemplifies the life lesson that there is safety in numbers and would be an excellent choice to read before a field trip or similar activity that requires students to use a buddy system.

Diesen, D. (2010). *The pout pout fish in the big big dark.* New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.

This story of the pout pout fish and his fear of the dark follows Diesen's earlier book, *The Pout Pout Fish* (2008). The first book deals with the problem of pouting, while the newer one focuses on a fear of the dark and concludes with the quote and the lesson that "friends help friends; that's a promise we keep" (p. 30).

Fleming, C. (2010). *Clever Jack takes the cake.* New York, NY: Schwartz Wade Books. Poor Jack wants to attend the birthday party for the princess but has no money for a gift. He barter to obtain ingredients to make a luscious cake with the most succulent strawberry on top. Through misadventures along the way, he arrives empty-handed. Although he is ashamed, he meets the princess and explains what has happened. The princess listens intently to his tale and thanks him genuinely for the unique gift of a well-told story. This story illustrates several important life lessons. The first is that our best efforts do not always yield the results we expect, but we do not need to be ashamed if we have done our best. It captures the notion that "it's not if we win or lose, but how we play the game." Another life lesson from this tale is that the princess enjoyed Jack's gift of a delightful story. Children need to learn that, from the perspective of the giver and the receiver, gifts do not have to be costly or tangible to be of value. Jack gave a gift from his heart, and it was unique.

Isadora, R. (2010). *Say hello!* New York, NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

This colorful book is illustrated in bright oil paints and papers in collage fashion. After a breakfast of *huevos con tocino*, Carmelita and her mother head out to visit Abuela Rosa. On their way, they exchange greetings with vendors from numerous cultures. The last page includes a pronunciation guide for *hello* in Arabic, French, Spanish, Italian, Swahili, Japanese, Chinese, and Hebrew.

Lee, Y. J. (2010). *The little moon princess.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

A princess who is afraid of the dark works with a little sparrow to bring light to the dark night sky. She gives her jewels to make the sky shimmer with starlight. Artist Lee tells an interesting legend of the Milky Way in this stunning debut storybook. The life lesson learned by the princess in this story is that she was able to accomplish a daunting task by working with a friend. Also, she demonstrated critical-thinking skills and problem solving.

Although the solution involved giving away her precious jewels, she gained a beautiful night sky in return.

Muth, J. (2010). *Zen ghosts.* New York, NY: Scholastic.

On one level, this is a picture book about a supernatural event set on Halloween. Like



Dr. Marcia C. Stewart is Professor of Education at Lipscomb University in Nashville, TN. A former chapter president of Alpha Psi Chapter in TN, she also served Xi State as a member of the Children's International Education Centers (CEIC) Committee.
marcia.stewart@lipscomb.edu

Muth's previous *Zen* books, the story is worthy of abstract conversation on the topic of being true to self in various settings that will be best understood by older readers.

Otoshi, K. (2008). *One*. San Rafael, CA: KO Kids Books.

In this story of colors, reminiscent of *Little Blue and Little Yellow* by Leo Lionni (1959), the color Red bullies the others colors, especially little Blue. The other colors are afraid to stand up to Red until bold number 1 joins the group and refuses to let Red tell him what to do. The other colors follow suit and learn to "stand up and be counted." The book closes with the thought that "sometimes it just takes one." This book presents a powerful message through a deceptively simple storyline and has earned 10 awards, including the Teacher's Choice. Teachers can use this book to talk about colors, counting, and character—a must for the early childhood classroom. How beneficial it would be if every young person learned the life lesson of standing up for what he or she believes in and the impact that can be made by a single individual. Pair this book with a unit about influential individuals who stood alone in the face of adversity, such as Rosa Parks, and teach children that "if it is to be, it is up to me." They need to learn that their voice is important and they can be the difference.

Pinkney, J. (2009). *The lion and the mouse*. Singapore: Hachette Book Group.

Winner of the 2010 Caldecott Medal, this heartwarming fable is told through breathtaking illustrations in this wordless book. The story opens with the lion sparing the life of the little mouse. After hunters capture the lion, the mouse repays the earlier kindness by nibbling the ropes that bind the lion. The life lesson embedded in this fable is that being kind to others is not only inherently rewarding but may promote the quality of kindness as "one good deed deserves another." Most cultures have a proverb that exhorts individuals to treat one another as one wants to be treated, which is what the lion and the mouse do in this story. Also, although the mouse is much smaller than the lion, he is able to save the life of his friend. Mouse may be tiny in size, but he has a very large heart and spirit!

Rosenthal, A. (2010). *One smart cookie for the school year and beyond*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Another book in the *Cookie* series, this one is just as delicious as the reader learns about a plethora of values, including being prompt, prepared, and humble. Colorful illustrations depict children practicing these positive traits. The book culminates with a recipe for *One Smart Cookie*. This book presents numerous life lessons that relate to being successful in an academic setting and would be an excellent choice to introduce at the beginning of the school year or any time that the teacher wants to focus on good habits and study skills. After reading the book and discussing the life lessons, teachers can follow the recipe in the book to make and serve smart cookies to celebrate the anticipated success of the class.

Scanlon, L. (2009). *All the world*. San Diego, CA: Beach Lane Books.

The lovely watercolors and black pencil illustrations by Marla Frazee in this 2010 Caldecott Honor book complement the poetic comparisons of items and events the world over, sending the life lesson that "all the world is all of us" (p. 38).

Sierra, J. (2010). *Tell the truth, B. B. Wolf*. New York, NY: Alfred Knopf.

This is a hilarious tale of how the big bad wolf, living in the Villain Villa Senior Citizens Center, has a change of heart about his former actions. His road to redemption is chronicled in bright colors as he is exhorted to change by the Gingerbread Boy and Humpty Dumpty,

among other storybook characters. *Tell the Truth*, B. B. Wolf entertains while teaching values of honesty and forgiveness. Older audiences will enjoy the humor and puns used so aptly throughout the story. This book follows Sierra's *Mind Your Manners*, B. B. Wolf (2007).

Stead, P. (2010). *A sick day for Amos McGee*. New York, NY: Roaring Brook Press.

The muted woodblock colors and pencil illustrations accentuated by a penguin holding a red balloon give this sweet story a nostalgic, sensitive feel. Zookeeper Amos takes good care of his animal friends. When he stays home sick one day, the animals take the city bus to visit him and reciprocate the kindness.

Willems, M. (2010). *City dog, country frog*. New York, NY: Hyperion.

This book is illustrated in soft watercolors by Jon Muth, author and illustrator of the *Zen* stories for children. Mo Willems, author of the *Pigeon* series, relates a bittersweet tale of a country frog who befriends a city dog. The watercolors reflect the changing of the seasons as the friendship between frog and dog blossoms into an easy kinship. City dog waits expectantly for country frog to return the following spring, but country frog does not come. Instead, city dog makes friends with newcomer country chipmunk. This story will tug at the heartstrings yet leave the reader hopeful. This book deals with the difficult life lesson of coping with loss. Willems never states exactly why country frog does not return, but the reader is enveloped with a sense of sadness. Children who have experienced the death of a loved one or a friend who has moved will be able to identify with city dog. Even the deliberate generic names of *city dog* and *country frog* enable the reader to internalize and personalize the characters in the book. This is a powerful book about coping and the human spirit's ability to move beyond a painful situation to a brighter tomorrow.

Conclusion

Teachers impact the lives of students on a daily basis. In addition to helping students learn important core academic concepts and principles, teachers help students learn interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. It would be a joyful classroom in which students demonstrated those skills in the traits suggested by Perry, including friendliness, thoughtful consideration of others, and respect of others and self. One way to promote those attributes is through enriching, quality literature that exemplifies valuable life lessons.

References

- ASCD. (2010). Whole Child Initiative. Retrieved from <http://www.wholechildeducation.org/>
- Lester, H. (1999). *Hooway for Wodney Wat*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin.
- Noddings, N. (1995). A morally defensible mission for schools in the 21st century. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76 (5) 365-368.
- Perry, B. D. (2001). Promoting nonviolent behavior in children. *Scholastic Early Childhood Today*, 16 (1) 26-29.
- Sawyer, W. (2009). *Growing up with literature (5th Ed.)*. Albany, NY: Delmar.
- Sierra, J. (2007). *Mind your manners*, B. B. Wolf. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

Annotated Bibliography Of Materials for Spirituality in the Classroom: Fostering Social and Emotional Learning and Developing Moral Schools

By Elizabeth DeGaynor and Barbara Day

This annotated bibliography arose out of research conducted on the topic of spirituality in public education (USA). It offers a list of thought-provoking texts meant to incite personal reflection and cross-cultural discussion about the place and role of faith, religion, and morality in the educational sphere.

Introduction

The role of spirituality in education is an important topic, but one without easy or clear answers. Our research began in preparation for a conference presentation at Delta Kappa Gamma's North Carolina Eta State Conference (May 2010). We sought to begin a dialogue that would be helpful in our personal lives, in our academic lives (especially in the classroom), and in our communities. We have framed this research within our cultural context (American public education), at the same time recognizing that Delta Kappa Gamma has international, pluralistic, and diverse membership and thus hoping to open cross-cultural conversation. This annotated bibliography selects important, seminal works from a broad survey of the literature on the topic, and many of these titles offer relevant information for educators in other countries. Texts range from philosophical and ideological to legal and practical.

The Spirit of Education. (1998, December – 1999, January). *Educational Leadership*, 56 (4).

This edition of the ASCD journal offers numerous viewpoints on the issue of the role or place of spirituality in the classroom. It includes an article from Parker Palmer in which he asserts that “we teach who we are” (10), bringing our spirituality into the classroom, and so we must create communal spaces with students in which we explore questions with spiritual dimensions; an article from Rachael Kessler in which she describes her *Passages* program, a curriculum that integrates heart, spirit, and community; and an interview with Nel Noddings in which she acknowledges an undeniable human longing for the sacred and expresses a desire for religious and spiritual literacy because religion is part of cultural heritage and because individuals should know what they believe and why.

Groome, T. (2001). *Educating for life: A spiritual vision for every teacher and parent.* New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing.

Groome develops eight depth structures or core convictions for humanizing education. Global consciousness, sacramental awareness, and holistic spirituality shape how people view the world, while positive anthropology offers a benevolent understanding of the human condition. Commitment to relational community, appreciation for history's legacy of tradition, and cultivation of reflective and responsible ways of knowing encourage human beings to seek justice and the common good.

Haynes, C. C., & Thomas, O. (2001). *Finding common ground: A guide to religious liberty in public schools.* Nashville, TN: First Amendment Center.

This book includes chapters on religious liberty and guides for teachers, administrators, and parents. Haynes and Thomas cite *Abington v. Schempp* (1963) and Associate Justice Tom Clark's assertion that education is incomplete without studying the history of religion and comparative religion, which can be accomplished in adherence with the First Amendment. The authors then argue that there are multiple reasons to study religion, including the role religion plays in history and society, both nationally and cross-culturally; the necessity of cultural literacy regarding the basic symbols, concepts, and practices of various religions; and the importance of appreciating religious liberty. They summarize the ways religion should be taught: the approach to religion is academic, not devotional or denigrating; and exposure to and awareness of various religions is developed without imposing any one religion as normative. The authors suggest that the topic of religions should be studied where it naturally arises and differentiate what can be taught in elementary grades ("study of family, community, various cultures, the nation, and other themes and topics may involve some discussion of religion" [76]) and in secondary grades (literature, social studies, the arts, and electives—particularly using primary sources). Haynes and Thomas offer answers to common questions and give resources for implementation.

Kessler, R. (2000). *The soul of education: Helping students find connection, compassion, and character at school.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

This book begins with an acknowledgement that students are spiritual, and Kessler explores seven gateways to the soul in education. The **creative** drive, perhaps the most

familiar domain for nourishing the spirit in school, is part of all the gateways. Whether developing a new idea, a work of art, a scientific discovery, or an entirely new lens on life, students feel the awe and mystery of creation. The **yearning for deep connection** describes a quality of relationship that is profoundly caring, is resonant with meaning, and involves feelings of belonging or of being truly seen and known. The **longing for silence and solitude**, a respite from the tyranny of *busyness* and noise, can create a space for reflection, of calm or fertile chaos, and an avenue of stillness and rest for some, prayer or contemplation for others. The **hunger of joy and delight** can be satisfied



Dr. Barbara Day is Professor and Chair of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. She served as president of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International for the 2006-2008 biennium. bday1@email.unc.edu



Elizabeth DeGaynor is a graduate student at Duke Divinity School, with a focus on Theology and Pedagogy. She is a former department chair and high school English teacher at The Covenant School (Charlottesville, VA). ead15@duke.edu

through experiences of great simplicity, such as play, celebration, or gratitude. It also describes the exaltation students feel when encountering beauty, power, grace, brilliance, love, or the sheer joy of being alive. The **search for meaning and purpose** concerns the exploration of big questions about personal life and life itself (e.g., “Why am I here?” “Does my life have a purpose? How do I find out what it is?”) and acknowledgement of uncertainty and mystery. The **urge for transcendence** describes the desire for young people to go beyond their perceived limits. It includes not only the mystical realm but also experiences of the extraordinary in the arts, athletics, academics, or human relations. The **need for initiation** deals with rites of passage for the young—guiding readers to become more conscious about the irrevocable transition from childhood to adulthood. Each of these gateways fosters emotional intelligence and helps to fill the spiritual void. For Kessler, “classroom environments that acknowledge and invite such experiences help students break down stereotypes, improve discipline, increase academic motivation, foster creativity, and keep more kids in school” (xvii).

“ . . . [T]here are multiple reasons to study religion, including the role religion plays in history and society, both nationally and cross-culturally; the necessity of cultural literacy regarding the basic symbols, concepts, and practices of various religions; and the importance of appreciating religious liberty.”

Lewy, S., & Betty, S. (2007). How to expose fourth and fifth graders to religion and spirituality in a public school classroom. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 12(3), 325-330.

In this article, Lewy and Betty assert that religion is a fundamental part of life for most people and thus needs to be engaged in the classroom setting. Using the example of a 2-week unit on *El Dia de los Muertos* (The Day of the Dead), the authors suggest ways to promote learning and to help students make meaningful connections with the material and one another. They are careful to note that this plan goes “beyond teaching students to *tolerate* an alien tradition; by allowing them to participate in its outward rituals, she taught them to *appreciate* it” (328). Although the example is from an elementary classroom, the approach would also be useful in a high school setting.

Miller, J. (1998). Education and the soul. In J. Kane (Ed.), *Education, information and transformation: Essays on learning and thinking*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

This essay was initially presented at the conference of the Association for Moral Education (AME) on November 15, 1996. Miller begins with the assertion that the 20th century has not been good for the soul. One of the ways he depicts this is by pointing out the mechanical imagery used widely and asserting that outcome-based education is a result of envisioning schools as factories. The author suggests that soulful learning would be fostered by an awareness of the inner life of students (e.g., meditation, dream work, and journal writing), the use of arts (e.g., Waldorf methods), and a reconnection with the

Earth (“soulful learning nurtures the inner life of the student and connects it to the outer life and the environment”[15]). The soul is a source of vitality and love, and the teacher can bring soulful presence (mindfulness, listening deeply) and caring (relating the subject to the needs and interests of the students) into the classroom.

Miller, L., & Athan, A. (2007, April). **Spiritual awareness pedagogy: The classroom as spiritual reality.** *International Journal of Children’s Spirituality*, 12(1), 17-35.

“ The three essential dimensions of a learning space are openness (removes impediments to learning), boundaries (gives structure), and hospitality (creates spaces for asking questions and building relationships). ”

Miller and Athan focus this article on teaching with a spiritual foundation and on “the classroom as an academic space poised to facilitate profound spiritual evolution for students” (17). One of the goals is to “allow the presence of the universe to live in the room” in order for a “a living dynamic incarnation of Divine truth” to unfold (20). Spiritual awareness pedagogy “emphasizes collective use of the classroom as an inherently spiritual space” (18). Testimony and experience are essential components of this type of education, because learning is equated with a process of self-discovery. The authors include descriptions of the classroom and student responses to their approach. One of the lessons they note is the importance of teachers being willing to share of themselves (and to be transformed) if they expect

students to do so. Educators must also turn over power and deauthorize themselves as teachers, participating fully in the process of learning [cf. Paulo Freire and Parker Palmer].

Noddings, N. (2006). **Critical lessons: What our schools should teach.** New York, NY: Cambridge.

Noddings asserts that self-understanding is the most important goal of education (e.g., Socrates’ injunction to “Know Thyself”). For this reason, individuals must examine their lives carefully, including reflecting on their relationships to culture and community. Every thoughtful human being asks certain questions, and to avoid them is “educational malpractice” (p.250). Noddings uses findings from *Soul Searching* (Smith & Dean, 2005; see below) to note that students are interested and invested in spirituality but are unfortunately inarticulate about their faith, in part because so few adults engage in conversation with them about these issues. Noddings explores different types of teacher and student motivations and asserts that, to engage responsibly, participants must know something about the area of inquiry. Students should have a basic vocabulary about religion, faith, and God. Public school teachers should not give specific answers to religious questions. Instead, they should introduce students to ways of addressing questions from multiple perspectives.

Nord, W. A. (1995). **Religion and American education: Rethinking a national dilemma.** Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

This book covers a great deal of ground, beginning with a history of the relationship between religion and education from the Reformation and inception of the United States to the present. Religion has been and continues to be central to American culture and therefore must have a place in education, not restored to centrality or removed into the private realm.

Nord argues that educators must take religion seriously (a position supported by the First Amendment), but this can be done without endorsement of or indoctrination into any one particular religion.

Palmer, P. J. (1983). *To know as we are known: Education as a spiritual journey.* New York, NY: Harper.

Palmer asserts that current problems in education—disconnection from colleagues, between teachers and students, from the subject matter, and from ourselves—are caused by **objectivist** approaches to knowing. North American institutions of learning are informed by competition, individualism, and empiricism, leaving a “cosmology of fragmentation” (xiv). In response to this, some people have moved toward **subjectivism**, but this leads to isolated individualism. What is necessary, according to Palmer, is “**wholesight, where mind and heart are united**” (xxii). When human beings accept that knowing something requires a mutually-influencing relationship to that which is known, and when they are brought into connection as learners with the subject, they can build a community of truth. This is not simply a therapeutic community with intimacy as its aim or a civic community with tolerance or civility as its aim. Instead, the community must be marked by intellectual rigor, compassionate vulnerability, and willingness to change. The three essential dimensions of a learning space are *openness* (removes impediments to learning), *boundaries* (gives structure), and *hospitality* (creates spaces for asking questions and building relationships). The desired outcomes of education are communities with power dynamics in check and with self-integrated awareness.

Palmer, P. J. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

In the first few chapters, Palmer focuses on the inner domain of the teacher, and in the second half of the book, the author focuses on building a community of truth where human beings cultivate a relationship with elements of knowledge and with one another.

Purpel, D. E., & McLaurin, W. M. (2004). *Reflections on the moral and spiritual crisis in education.* New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Part I is a slightly revised version of Purpel's *Moral and Spiritual Crisis in Education* (1989). Part II is the authors' response to that original text, along with attempts to delineate the current issues in education and paths out of the crisis. The authors acknowledge that there is no such thing as a *value neutral* curriculum; note the implicit curriculum of teachers, administrators, and schools; and suggest that addressing the mythical components of North American culture would allow educators to find common ground on issues such as justice and compassion.

Smith, C., & Dean, M. L. (2005). *Soul searching: The religious and spiritual lives of American teenagers.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

The authors detail data gleaned from random phone surveys and interviews of teenagers in the United States (National Study of Youth and Religion, 2001-2005 at University of North Carolina). They note that although teens' religious and spiritual lives are significant to them, this aspect often goes often unexplored and undiscussed. In terms of religion, teens are complicated and “all over the map” (p. 26) (although most identify as Christian, the authors suggest that their belief system is *Moralistic Therapeutic Deism*, which includes a God who created and orders the world but is not particularly involved with individuals

and human beings, who are meant to be fair and nice to one another as they strive to feel good about themselves, achieve happiness on earth, and go to heaven when they die [p. 162-163]). Teens' ability to articulate their beliefs varies widely (although most are inarticulate). Even if schools are not perceived to be hostile to religion, students keep expressions of religious faith to a minimum while at school. It is possible, however, for public schools to help students address spiritual matters in ways that are civil and inclusive. The authors assert that there is a positive association between religious involvement and positive outcomes in life.

Summary

The authors have sought to bring together a collection of works from leaders who offer philosophical, practical, and legal reading materials relative to a growing need and desire for those seeking a way to bring heart, spirit, and community into the classroom. Humanizing education for our students is a formidable task, especially in an age of enormous technological advancement and growing accountability in outcome-based education.

“Humanizing education for our students is a formidable task, especially in an age of enormous technological advancement and growing accountability in outcome-based education”

So, come and journey in an area where good educators have been traveling for a very long time. Educators may find helpful new information and discover new ways to bring body, mind, and spirit together, especially in their classrooms. By utilizing new habits and dispositions for learning and living that include spiritual components, educators can build communities rooted in trust and compassion. They can foster discussions that honor differences, helping students to improve relationships with one another via mutual understanding and allowing students and teachers to make meaningful connections to ideas and to people both locally and globally. These are among the transformative results that educators

can experience when they foster social and emotional learning and seek to develop moral values in the classroom.

illuminating Pathways through Rigor, Respect, Relevance, and Relationships: Scaffolding Cross-Generational Understandings

By Merry Boggs and Susan Szabo

Each individual spends a lifetime developing a process that guides his or her decision making with family, coworkers, and peers. Further, each individual develops this individual decision-making process with guidance from multiple sources. In their work as teacher educators, the writers have found that preservice teachers face challenges because their decision-making processes often differ from those of the current generation of teachers. In this article, the authors share an approach they developed for preparing preservice teachers, generally Generation X and Y students, to work amiably side by side with inservice teachers, generally Baby Boomers, in a year-long student-teaching experience. The authors call this approach Illuminating Pathways because of its focus on shedding light on the unique developmental paths of individuals.

Introduction

Communication misunderstandings due to generational differences have historically been a component of the workplace (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). In our work as teacher educators, we note that generational differences present unique challenges as we work with and try to prepare the new generation of teachers. Each semester, we find ourselves addressing the same concerns expressed by mentor teachers regarding their interns or residents (i.e., student teachers). Upon careful review of mentor teachers' issues, we noted that many revolved around generational differences in approaches to work habits, beliefs, and attitudes. As members of the Baby Boomer generation and the parents of Generation X and Y children, we "live" daily in multiple generations and fully understand the challenges of miscommunications due to different generational attitudes, beliefs, work habits, and experiences. Teacher educators preparing the next generation of teachers cannot overlook the impact of these real or perceived generational characteristics during the year-long student-teaching experience.

Society tends to characterize different generational groups by assigning a set of generalized beliefs that suggest a generation's work habits, attitudes, and beliefs (Zemke et al., 2000). A generational group is defined as individuals who share common birth years, similar history, and a collective personality (Zemke et al., 2000). Adjectives commonly used to describe the Baby Boomer Generation include *hardworking, motivated by prestige, independent, competitive, and goal-oriented* (Smith & Clurman, 2007; Zemke et al., 2000).

Descriptions of Generation X include terms such as *individualistic*, *technologically adept*, *seeking home/work balance*, and *flexible* (Coupland, 1991). Generation Y individuals, also known as *Millennials*, are described as *self-reliant*, *friend-oriented not family-oriented*, *practical*, *optimistic*, *cynical*, *technology-linked*, and *egocentric* (Barnes, 2009; Raines, 2005; Twenge, 2006).

Certainly, these generalized characteristics may not apply to all individuals within a specific generational category, but the different ways of viewing the world that are implicit in these generational definitions often become a source of miscommunication between our preservice teachers (those learning how to be teachers) and the inservice teachers (mentor teachers who are already working in the classroom) (Barnes, 2009; Zemke et al., 2000). As teacher educators, we have come to understand the importance of preparing preservice teachers for their year-long student-teaching experiences guided by those of another generation. Accordingly, we developed activities that we refer to as *Illumining Pathways* because they brighten the path for the preservice teachers to work successfully with their assigned mentor teachers.

Setting the Context

As teacher educators, we teach literacy and education courses while also supervising the student-teaching experience of undergraduate education students. The student-teaching experience at our university is a year-long program in which preservice teachers are assigned to work with inservice teachers in various public school districts and at various grade levels.

In order to address mentor teachers' concerns with and about the student teachers assigned to them, we started recording the issues they raised. After several years of journaling, we realized the data showed that many complaints revolved around conflict that occurs because of different generational work habits, attitudes, and beliefs. Five examples follow:

1. Many Generation X and Y preservice teachers have tattoos on various parts of their bodies. Some are hidden, while others are for public view. Mentor teachers express concerns about hidden tattoos—such as those lining the lower back—becoming visible when student teachers lean over and thus posing a distraction for children. Their concerns are both modesty and classroom focus.
2. Although many mentor teachers rely on their cell phones for contacting parents or for personal matters, they express concern about student teachers' use of these devices. They complain that Generation X and Y student teachers seem to perceive their cell phones to be part of their attire, want to be seen with *the right cell phone*, and see nothing wrong with texting friends while teaching. The mentor teachers disapprove vehemently.
3. Mentor teachers express concern that an ever-growing number of student teachers appear more concerned with outside matters than with a singular focus on the student-teaching experience. For example, rather than concentrating on learning the *how* and *why* and the *ins* and *outs* of becoming an effective classroom teacher, preservice teachers may put their effort into wedding plans instead of teaching plans.
4. The majority of Baby Boomer inservice teachers place high value on time management and punctuality. They express concerns that Generation X and Y preservice teachers do not see the importance of watching the clock as carefully as the mentor teachers, whose generational beliefs differ.
5. Many Generation X and Y preservice teachers have parents who are still actively

involved in their children's daily lives, and these student teachers are quick to call parents to intervene on their behalf. Parents call to disapprove of how the mentor teacher handles their child's (i.e., student teacher's) problems during student teaching. Inservice teachers of the Baby Boomer generation are troubled by such calls because they believe that the preservice teachers should take responsibility for concerns arising during the student-teaching experience and not encourage parent intervention.

As teacher educators, we came to see that issues such as those shared above can serve as a major roadblock to the development of the preservice teacher. Generational differences should not interfere with one's development or chosen career. Thus, we chose to help our preservice teachers enhance their understanding of their own and others' values as a way to bridge such differences.

Illuminating Pathways: The 4R Process

Illuminating Pathways activities were developed as a means to help Generation X and Y preservice teachers to understand more fully the work habits, attitudes, beliefs, motivation, and experiences of the teachers and staff with whom they will work directly in the student-teaching endeavor. We elected to develop our instruction around the 4Rs: *respect, relationship, rigor, and relevance*. Specifically, we focused on activities to generate discussions related to the meanings of the 4R concepts and how these ideas might influence each preservice teacher's ability to build positive working relationships in the school system during their student-teaching experiences.

The 4R lessons were designed with the Socratic Method (Copeland, 2005) in mind and allowed us to select individual activities based on our preferences as teacher educators and on the needs of the preservice teachers. Lesson goals were loosely developed but remained flexible enough to allow the preservice teachers time to question and articulate their understandings of the different generational meanings of the 4R concepts, as well as to consider why the different meanings could cause them problems in the classroom. In addition, the preservice teachers provided comments and asked questions that were important to them and their individual situations. This allowed the entire group of student teachers to hear many viewpoints, have broad conversations, and share problem-solving ideas.

Dr. Merry Boggs is an Assistant Professor of Literacy in the Curriculum and Instruction Department at Texas A & M University-Commerce. She teaches undergraduate and graduate literacy courses. A new member of Beta Lambda Chapter of Alpha State, TX, Dr. Boggs looks forward to professional opportunities provided by Delta Kappa Gamma. merry_boggs@tamu-commerce.edu



Dr. Susan Szabo is an Associate Professor and currently teaches in the Curriculum and Instruction Department of Texas A&M University-Commerce. She teaches both undergraduate and graduate literacy courses. She is a member of Beta Lambda Chapter of Alpha State, TX. susan_szabo@tamu-commerce.edu



Defining the 4Rs

Respect, relationship, rigor, and relevance provided the foundation for the 4R concept. The 4R is a mnemonic device used to aid students in remembering the chosen concept words, which were specifically chosen because we believed they summarized, in general, the characteristics of Baby Boomers and of effective teachers. These four concepts formed the base for all *Pathway* activities. Every read-aloud and independent reading text could be traced directly back to the 4Rs. Because each R-word can activate different meanings in different generations and even in different professions, the meaning of the concept ultimately lies within each individual. Below, we provide our definitions of the 4Rs as applied to the student-teaching experience.

Respect. *Respect* refers to the honor or esteem given to each individual that the preservice teachers meet during their student-teaching experience. These individuals include peers, college faculty, university liaisons, and all public school personnel.

Relationship. *Relationship* refers to the importance of working on and developing a positive relationship with various people during the student-teaching experience. Positive interactions do not just happen. Relationships take time and even hard work to build good rapport with others.

Rigor. *Rigor* refers to an individual's work ethics. Teaching is a rigorous profession in which many hours are spent preparing effective lessons and developing classroom management techniques. It is a profession that requires teachers to show up on time and put their best effort into every lesson taught.

Relevance. *Relevance* refers to the importance of meaningful interaction with peers, mentors, students, administrators, and college faculty. That is, each individual's attention should be focused on his or her education, on the education of the students, or on building communication among the preservice teacher, mentor teacher, and students in the assigned classroom.

Introducing the 4Rs

All 4R words were introduced at once to the whole class. Each individual student teacher wrote down his or her conception of or understanding of each word. Next, the student teachers shared their individual definitions of the 4R words in small groups. After listening to the individual definitions, the group members developed one definition using input from each individual's understanding and viewpoint regarding the 4R words. Each small group recorded its definition or understanding of each word on chart paper in order to share members' thinking.

During this small group activity, the student teachers quickly saw how each individual arrived at his or her meaning through a unique path. This realization was an important step in the *Illuminating Pathways* process: as each student teacher reflected and articulated his or her understanding of the concepts, others in the group developed a deeper understanding and began to open to different views, including those related to generations. When all the small groups had completed the assignment, the whole group reconvened.

Ultimately, the chart papers with the groups' definitions were posted on the wall and were used to start whole-group discussions. Similarities and differences in the small groups' definitions were discussed. Finally, the whole class developed a comprehensive definition that was used throughout the year-long student-teaching experience.

Our goal in this activity was not to force the student teachers to accept our understanding of the 4R words but to have them develop an understanding of the multiple conceptions the words bring. We believed that this activity would help the student teachers

when they encountered public school personnel and public school students and would help them to stop and think about how other individuals might interpret the concept. More importantly, our student teachers needed to understand how different perspectives regarding the words could affect communication with others.

We concluded this activity by sharing a PowerPoint presentation that stated what we, as teacher educators, believed was important about each concept and how those ideas would help the student teachers become better educators. We then discussed the similarities and differences between the class definition and our definitions of the 4R words.

The activity was structured to value the preservice teachers' conceptualization of the 4R concepts and to show to them how our perspectives aligned, or in some cases did not align, with their conceptions. The 4R discussions continued throughout the year-long student-teaching experience and were frequently reinforced. We believe this continuous experience with the 4R concepts was important, as it helped preservice teachers visualize the generational meanings of the concepts that might lead to communication problems. In addition, the *Illuminating Pathways* activities helped the student teachers learn how to handle themselves in difficult situations as they realized the impact of generational perspectives.

Starting the *Illuminating Pathways* Activities

Setting the groundwork for the 4Rs. Every May, new student teachers are mailed a package of preparatory materials that provide them with detailed explanation of their year-long student-teaching experience. Most of the preparatory materials are focused on assignments, professional dress, seminar meeting dates, and campus-related paperwork. In addition, they are asked to read the book *Fish: A Remarkable Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results* (Lundin, Paul, & Christensen, 2000). While reading the book, the student teachers complete a reader-response sheet that is submitted on the first day of class in August. The reader-response sheet asks the student teachers to think and reflect about their readings and to make text-to-text connections, text-to-self connections, and text-to-world connections. The book was chosen because the ideas presented by the author provide the conceptual framework for the rest of the *Illuminating Pathways* activities, as the authors' main idea is "When we choose to love the work we do, we can catch our limit of happiness, meaning, and fulfillment everyday" (Lundin et al., 2000, p. 9). Thus, Lundin et al. indirectly address the 4Rs through an optimistic and constructive approach applied to work and family life. From our experiences with this activity, the majority of our student teachers have been able to internalize the concepts from this text and have used them in their personal lives even before the first day of student teaching.

***Illuminating Pathways* activities.** On the first day of class, *The Little Engine That Could* (Piper, 2005) is read aloud to the preservice teachers, and a discussion about the Little Engine's problems and his solutions follows. Many preservice teachers point out

“ Respect,
relationship,
rigor, and
relevance
provided the
foundation for the
4R concept.”

that that the Little Engine's struggles parallel their struggles as they begin their student-teaching experiences. The theme in this text reflects the generational understanding of mentor teachers and university faculty regarding how to take responsibility for your own problems and deal with them until they are solved.

In *I Can Make a Difference* (Edelmann, 2006), the author provides numerous multicultural short stories, poems, folktales, and fables that share inspirational messages. Themes revolve around caring and serving, persevering and not giving up, being determined,

working together with others, and making a difference. As Baby Boomers, we believe that many of the stories in this text reflect messages that shaped our beliefs, works habits, and attitudes. Throughout the academic year, selections from this text are read aloud, and then students work in small groups or pairs to discuss their thoughts on the author's messages. The small-group discussions are shared through whole-class discussions or through visual representations such as posters. We have found that members within the Generation X and Y group do not always share similar beliefs, and by focusing on multiple beliefs on a topic, our preservice teachers gradually became aware of how each individual's beliefs and attitudes have been shaped, whether through shared generational cohort experiences or through a unique individual perspective. For our closing activity, student teachers have the opportunity to apply their expanded knowledge of the concepts studied, as they respond to the following questions:

- How does this lesson apply to your work with your grade-level colleagues?
- How does this lesson apply to your work with students?
- How does this lesson help you through the student-teaching experience?

Another text we use is *One Green Apple* by Bunting (2006). Farah, the main character, shares her fears and tribulation as a new student attending a school in the United States for the first time. Her classmates are slow to warm up to Farah but eventually extend a warm welcome. We discuss how the preservice teacher, who is assimilating into the role of teacher, is a foreigner in the place called school. Our preservice teachers share a journey similar to Farah, even if in a different context.

Later in the year, texts such as *The Meaning of Life* (Greive, 2002), *Only One You* (Kranz, 2006), and *The Giving Tree* (Silverstein, 1964) are used to revisit multigenerational beliefs and attitudes. Other books that have been used include the following:

- *The Sea Is So Wide and My Boat Is So Small: Charting a Course For the Next Generation* (Edelman, 2008);
- *Radical Reflections: Passionate Opinions on Teaching, Learning, and Living* (Fox, 1993);
- *Letters to a Young Teacher* (Kozol, 2007);

“*Illuminating Pathways activities help these preservice teachers clarify their beliefs, attitudes, and work habits while considering others' points of view; this understanding leads, in turn, to improved communication with public school teachers and staff.*”

- *Who Moved My Cheese?* (Johnson, 2002);
- *Juggling Elephants: An Easier Way to Get Your Most Important Things Done—Now!* (Loflin & Musig, 2005);
- *Entertaining an Elephant* (McBride, 1997);
- *I Can. You Can Too!* (McMullough, 1996);
- *Ourselves: Why We Are Who We Are: A Handbook for Educators* (Smith, 2006).

Multiple copies of these texts are collected and shared in class. In small groups, the preservice teachers read the text together. After reading, they discuss the author's message regarding beliefs, attitudes, and work habits and then create a poster using varied visual representations such as Venn diagrams, T-charts, or other graphics organizers. The preservice teachers share their interpretations and explain how they believe the message applies to their work as student teachers. They also discuss how their mentor teachers might interpret the message of the text. As we push the preservice teachers to take on the role of the *other*, they gradually begin to see how critical effective communication is for teachers and how varying perspectives on the same issues may cause conflict.

Reflections

Illuminating Pathways activities help these preservice teachers clarify their beliefs, attitudes, and work habits while considering others' points of view; this understanding leads, in turn, to improved communication with public school teachers and staff. All activities are geared to help the student teachers actively engage in reflecting and clarifying their viewpoints and the viewpoints of others. This is important, as Generation X and Y students experience different decision-making processes than those of the current generation of teachers (Barnes, 2009; Coupland, 1991; Twenge, 2006). Thus, these activities help these preservice teachers assimilate into teacher status with less difficulty than many student teachers experienced before the 4R activities were developed.

We believe our attention to developing decision-making processes through awareness of differing generational viewpoints successfully supports our students' entry into teacher status for two important reasons. First, it helps them become teachers who understand that people have different viewpoints on many issues. Second, it focuses their attention on negotiating complex issues, as relationships and good communication skills take time to develop.

The *Illuminating Pathways* activities that the researchers developed to bring the 4R concepts to the forefront have provided student teachers with an understanding of *rigor*, *respect*, *relevance*, and *relationship* and of the multiple meanings of these 4R concepts. As a result of this program, we have received fewer complaints from mentor teachers. In addition, communication from the preservice teachers—through multiple venues such as emails, course evaluations, and in-class activities—has indicated that the majority of our student teachers were able to internalize the concepts from these activities and have even used them in their personal lives. We share a few brief snippets of anonymous student feedback that amply summarize the value of the *Illuminating Pathways* program:

1. Respect comes in many forms—a lot more than I expected.
2. You must first earn respect by showing you care and can have a relationship. You always have to put forth rigor while still having relevance.
3. I learned how valuable other people's thoughts and opinions are when discussing respect, relationships, rigor, and relevance.

4. Relationships are important with parents, students, coworkers, and administration.
5. I have learned the importance of remaining positive in all situations. It is so important to build strong relationships with the people around you based on trust and respect.
6. You have to work hard at the things you are passionate about.

References

- Barnes, G. (2009). Guess who's coming to work: Generation Y. Are you ready for them? *Public Library Quarterly*, 28, 58-63. doi: 10.1080/01616840802675457.
- Bunting, E. (2006). *One green apple*. New York, NY: Clarion Books.
- Copeland, M. (2005). *Socratic Circles: Fostering critical and creative thinking in middle and high school*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.
- Coupland, D. (1991). *Generation X: Tales from an accelerated culture*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin.
- Edelman, M. W. (2005). *I can make a difference: A treasury to inspire our children*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Edelman, M. W. (2008). *The sea is so wide and my boat is so small: Charting a course for the next generation*. New York, NY: Hyperion.
- Fox, M. (1993). *Radical reflections: Passionate opinions on teaching, learning, and living*. New York, NY: Harcourt.
- Greive, B. T. (2002). *The meaning of life*. Kansas City: KS: Andrews McMeel.
- Johnson, S. (2002). *Who moved my cheese?* New York, NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons.
- Kozol, J. (2007). *Letters to a young teacher*. New York, NY: Crown.
- Kranz, L. (2006). *Only one you*. Flagstaff, AR: Rising Moon.
- Loflin, J., & Musig, T. (2005). *Juggling elephants: An easier way to get your most important things done—now!* New York, NY: Penguin.
- Lundin, S. C., Paul, H., & Christensen, J. (2000). *Fish: A remarkable way to boost morale and improve results*. New York, NY: Hyperion.
- McBride, W. (1997). *Entertaining an elephant*. San Francisco, CA: Under One Roof.
- McMullough, M. (1996). *I can. You can too!* Colorado Springs, CO: Honor Books.
- Piper, W. (2005). *The little engine that could*. New York, NY: Philomel Books.
- Raines, C. (2002). *Managing millennials*. Retrieved from <http://www.hreonline.com/pdfs/ManagingMillennials.pdf>
- Smith, F. (2006). *Ourselves: Why we are who we are: A handbook for educators*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Smith, J. W., & Clurman, A. (2007). *Generation ageless: How baby boomers are changing the way we live today...and they're just getting started*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.
- Silverstein, S. (1964). *The giving tree*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Twenge, J. M. (2006). *Generation me: Why today's young Americans are more confident, assertive, entitled—and more miserable than ever before*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Zemke, R., Raines, C., & Filipczak, B. (2000). *Generations at work: Managing the clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in your workplace*. New York, NY: AMACOM.

Workplace Bullying: Costly and Preventable

By Terry L. Wiedmer

Workplace bullying is a pervasive practice by malicious individuals who seek power, control, domination, and subjugation. In businesses or schools, such bullying is an inefficient way of working that is both costly and preventable. Senior management and executives are ultimately responsible for creating and sustaining bully-free workplaces. Workplace bullies can be stopped if employees and employers work together to establish and enforce appropriate workplace policies and practices. This article presents information about workplace bullying, including its prevalence, targeted individuals, bullying behaviors, employer practices, and steps to prevent bullying. In the end, leadership and an environment of respect provide the ultimate formula for stopping workplace bullying.

Bullying occurs between and among people in all venues—in the home, community, and workplace. It is a pervasive, targeted, and planned effort that can be overtly obvious or can fly under the radar and is conducted by practiced and malicious individuals who seek power, control, domination, and subjugation. The impacts of such actions—in terms of finances, emotions, health, morale, and overall productivity—are destructive, and the ramifications are limitless (Mattice, 2009). Because no one is immune from the potential of being subjected to bullying in the workplace, this topic merits further review and analysis (Van Dusen, 2008).

To combat workplace bullying, often referred to as psychological harassment or violence (Workplace Bullying Institute [WBI], 2007), employers must have a full range of policies in place and means available to them to create and maintain a healthy workplace culture and climate. Although they are not generally for-profit endeavors, schools and school systems are purposeful businesses that share the same concerns and have the same responsibility to ensure that each employee works in a respectful environment and is not subjected to workplace bullies.

Workplace Bullying

According to the Workforce Bullying Institute (WBI), workplace bullying is the repeated, health-harming mistreatment of one or more persons (the targets) by one or more perpetrators that takes one or more of the following forms: verbal abuse; offensive conduct/behaviors (including nonverbal) which are threatening, humiliating, or intimidating; and work interference—sabotage—which prevents work from getting done. (Definition of Workplace Bullying, para. 1)

Bullies seek to induce harm, jeopardize one's career and job, and destroy interpersonal relationships. The behaviors of bullies harm people and ravage profits.

Prevalence of Workplace Bullying

Thirty-seven percent of U.S. workforce members report being bullied at work; this amounts to an estimated 54 million Americans, which translates to nearly the entire population of the states of Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Arizona, and Utah (Namie, 2007). These statistics are based on the August 2007 responses of 7,740 participants in the online WBI-Zogby U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey; the respondents comprised a sample representative of all American adults. The WBI-Zogby survey is the largest scientific study of bullying in the United States. Other key and depressing findings of the 2007 study included the following:

- Most bullies are bosses (72%);
- 60% of bullies are men;
- 57% of targets are women;
- Bullying is four times more prevalent than illegal forms of harassment;
- 62% of employers ignore or worsen the problem;
- 45% of targets suffer stress-related health problems;
- 40% of bullied individuals never tell their employers; and
- only 3% of bullied people file lawsuits. (WBI, Key Findings, para. 2)

These workplace bullying activities resulted in the targets reporting stress-related health problems such as debilitating anxiety, panic attacks, clinical depression, and even post-traumatic stress (WBI).

Another significant finding of the WBI-Zogby survey was that, in 72% of cases, bullies had control over the targets' livelihood and consequently used this leverage to inflict pain or to block transfers, thus forcing employees to quit or lose their jobs (Namie, 2007). In addition to having to leave a job or a profession of choice, other reported economic impacts imposed by bullies included the target being forced to transfer (13%), being discharged without reasonable cause (24%), and quitting to address a decline in health and sanity (40%) (Namie, 2007). Controlling bullies seek to make targets resign, which results in unemployment, loss of health insurance, and the inability to seek medical attention. Accordingly, the bottom line is that all members of society pay for the consequences of unacceptable workplace behaviors and practices. According to the WBI, workplace bullying is thus a silent epidemic.

Profiles of Targets

The WBI (2007) reported that 61% of bullying occurs within the same gender, and 71% of female bullies target other women. In 2000, a WBI study found that veteran employees—often the best and brightest, not the weakest—are often selected to be targets (WBI, 2010). Bullies typically target individual(s) they perceive to pose a threat. Skilled targets are often sabotaged by insecure bully bosses who take credit for the work of the targets, who are thus not recognized or rewarded for their talents and contributions.

Based on findings from thousands of interviews in 2000, the WBI researchers



Dr. Terry L. Wiedmer is an associate professor of curriculum in the Educational Studies Department of Teachers College at Ball State University, Muncie, IN. She currently teaches undergraduate teacher education courses and graduate courses specializing in supervision and instruction, staff development, and public relations. A 32-year member of Delta Kappa Gamma, Dr. Wiedmer belongs to Beta Mu Chapter, IN, and serves on the research committee. She is a graduate of the 1983 DKG Leadership Management Seminar, recipient of an Ola B. Hiller International Scholarship, and grantee of an Educational Foundation Self-initiated Study Grant. twiedmer@bsu.edu

confirmed workplace bullies typically target independent employees who refuse to be subservient. Furthermore, in 2010 WBI confirmed that targets were typically more technically skilled than the bullies and that they were the “go to” veteran employees from whom new workers sought guidance. Collectively, the targets were reportedly better liked, had more social skills, likely possessed higher emotional intelligence, and were appreciated by colleagues, customers, and management (bullies excluded) for the warmth and care they brought to the workplace (WBI, Who Gets Targeted). The principal weapons that bullying bosses and coworkers reportedly employed were alienating these targets from social interaction and withholding validation. As a result, coworkers often chose to separate themselves from the target out of fear of being the next victims (WBI, 2010).

Ethics and honesty are attributes often commonly possessed by targets. In particular, whistle blowers who expose illegal or fraudulent behaviors are most vulnerable to being bullied. Targets can be typified as morally superior to bullies due to their generally nonconfrontational, prosocial orientation focused on a desire to help, heal, teach, develop, and nurture others (Namie, 2007).

Practices of Employers and the Rights and Responsibilities of Targets

Employers have a moral and social responsibility to protect employees from bullying and to safeguard those who comprise their workforce. Employees need to be aware of bullying practices and knowledgeable about their rights and responsibilities, but ultimately managers and supervisors are the key players who are responsible for building and maintaining healthy and bully-free work cultures. When managers and supervisors commit time and effort to talk with their employees about the ecology of relationships in the workplace, employees better understand what factors foster the evolution of bullying. Such conversations can aid in policy refinement, improved employee guidance, and professional-development initiatives that contribute to a healthy and bully-free workplace.

Employees deserve and should be assured their place of employment is one where respect and civility prevail. Managers, supervisors, and other identified leaders of employees need to be foot soldiers to lead the fight against bullying—to identify bullies, to protect the bullied, and to intervene and stop bullying behaviors (Namie, 2007). Employees need to feel physically, emotionally, and socially safe and to believe they are valued and belong.

Practices of Bullies

Bullying is typically a series of calculated incidents that accumulate over time, carefully planned and executed by the bully to avoid legal grounds for grievance or disciplinary actions (Bully Online). Bullies may engage in some or all of the following behaviors toward their target(s):

- consciously undermine the position, status, worth, value, and potential;
- marginalize, ignore, overrule, and freeze out;
- set unrealistic (and even undesirable) goals, timelines, and expectations;
- distort, misrepresent, and twist anything said or done;
- single out, treat one differently from others, or ostracize;
- increase responsibility and simultaneously reduce authority;
- overload with work or have work taken away to trivialize existence;
- deny leave, even when provided for contractually;
- steal or plagiarize work and take credit for it;
- deny opportunities for training that are requisite for job performance; and
- coerce into leaving (constructive dismissal) through no fault of the target and

activate early or ill-health retirement (Bully Online, para. 2).

Profile of the Typical Workplace Bully

Bullies engage in predictable and recurring practices to debase and debilitate their targets (Bully Online). Individuals who engage in such uncivil and amoral workplace bullying tactics demonstrate common elements and behaviors. Are any of these behaviors evident in your workplace? If so, you, too, may be subject to potentially being bullied. Workplace bullies often

- possess a Jekyll and Hyde nature (vindictive in private but charming in public);
- display self-assuredness and certitude to mask insecurity;
- portray self as wonderful, kind, caring, and compassionate, but actual behaviors contradict this self-crafted persona;
- cannot distinguish between leadership and bullying behaviors;
- counter attack and deny everything when asked to clarify;
- manipulate others through guilt;
- are obsessed with controlling others;
- use charm and behave in an appropriate manner when superiors or others are present;
- are convincing and compulsive liars in order to account for matters at hand; and
- excel at deception, lack a conscience, and are dysfunctional (Bully Online, para. 3).

At times every employee may demonstrate one or more of these behaviors. The key, however, is to monitor whether or not the behaviors are recurring and predictable with an intended outcome to cause harm. The target must document and record accurately when suspected bullying occurs should a need arise to stop bullying behaviors.

Stopping Bullying

To stop bullying in the workplace requires time, input, policy changes, and a company culture that does not tolerate bullies. To help managers and supervisors maintain a civilized workforce and handle bullying, Alsever (2008) outlined and recommended the following five-step process: (a) understand what constitutes bullying and recognize it in action, (b) act fast to show that the company will not tolerate bad behavior, (c) enforce a clear action plan, (d) devise a policy for a civilized workplace, and (e) screen for bullies in the recruiting process.

Serial violators need to be identified and stopped in their tracks. Policies, rules, and practices must be in place to make workplaces safe and conducive to workers producing at peak levels. Bullying hurts the bottom line through lost productivity, low morale, the departure of experienced workers, and higher health care costs for stressed-out victims (Ceridian Services, 2008, para. 12).

Chief executive officers, including school superintendents, can ill afford to mislead their supervisors, managers, and human resource personnel about the level of bullying in their workplaces. Efforts to cover up bullying may include no reporting, under-reporting, leveling no punishment, dismissal of the bullied, and promotion of the bully (WBI, *How Bullying Happens*). Left unaddressed, bullying can rapidly evolve into a serious workplace health issue.

Steps to Take

To reduce workplace bullying effectively, employees need to know that they are supported. The bottom line is that the employer's return on investment is dependent on the work

produced in the workplace. If work is not completed successfully in a business, finances will suffer and the losses will inspire management to make adjustments. If workers in schools and school systems cannot be productive because of workplace bullying, the bottom line of student achievement is impacted. Thus, employers and school leaders need to take positive steps to address bullying with commitment and intensity.

First, put a policy in place. Second, address directly any reported or suspected bullying—regardless of who is reported. Third, identify resources and solutions and make them available to remedy a suspected problem. Those who manage and supervise employees ultimately represent and enforce workplace policies. They need to be competent and proactive in employee rights, as well as engage in leadership behaviors that create and enforce bully-free environments.

Put a policy in place. Workplace policies and procedures for addressing bullying may include disciplinary and legal consequences, additional supervision and oversight, training or counseling, and relationship-building activities. An extremely important aspect of policy and procedure is to have clear, detailed, and accurate documentation. Once reported, bullying incidents should be monitored and tracked over time to chronicle the incident reportage, steps taken, outcomes realized, and effectiveness of strategies employed. By tracking instances of transgression, employers can use the information gained to formulate preventative measures, identify alternative interventions, and guide professional development for all employees.

Employees and supervisors need to be aware of the most up-to-date policies and practices to ensure report assessment and implementation of appropriate actions. Timely implementation of policies is critical to initiate intervention, alert the parties involved, bring attention to the matter, monitor the situation, and address underlying, contributing problems. In extreme cases, it may be necessary to involve law enforcement officials.

As part of policy, employers should incorporate regular and ongoing climate assessments for all employees in order to record their perceptions of workplace bullying, and the results of these assessments should be made public. Recognizing their responsibility to stop and prevent bullying, employers must ensure that policies are clearly outlined to mandate that managers and supervisors not only report bullying acts but also work quickly to protect bullied employee(s) from retaliation and further harm while resolving the situation.

Address reported or suspected bullying directly. A tremendous disconnect often occurs between what employees and employers believe to be the existence and degree of workplace bullying. To resolve this discrepancy, or at least narrow the divide, employers must encourage and enable all members of the workforce to report possible bullying incidents in a timely manner and, even more importantly, ensure an expeditious, fair, and ethical review and evaluation of suspected bullying incidences. They cannot allow a code of silence—often prevalent in bullying cases—to exist. Positive and trusting relationships among adults and the knowledge that a concern will be taken seriously are critical

“ *Positive and trusting relationships among adults and the knowledge that a concern will be taken seriously are critical components to preventing and remedying bullying.* ”

components to preventing and remedying bullying.

Employees must be able to go to a person(s) who can be trusted and who will respond to the matter in a concerned, proactive, and supportive way. Having such a trusted individual is key, because all too often the bully is the supervisor. In the case of schools, employee options may include going to a department chairperson, principal, human resource officer, or the superintendent. Multiple avenues are necessary if the bullying is endemic, or it will be nearly impossible to achieve recourse and resolution. Friends and coworkers of bullied individuals need to feel free and safe to speak up when they witness bullying behaviors, and employers have a responsibility to support employees in identifying and resolving troublesome behaviors without violence. Workplace cultural norms can either foster or eliminate bullying, depending on how superiors react to supported or suspected incidents. In short, unless actions are taken to address the underlying work culture and climate conditions that precipitated or allowed for bullying, such behaviors will continue.

Even more importantly, employers must carefully guard workplace climate by recognizing that bullying seldom occurs in isolation. Aggressive or bullying individuals typically seek out and befriend like individuals. When managers and supervisors model bullying behavior in the workplace, they unfortunately serve to normalize workplace-bullying behaviors. In such settings, when the managers or supervisors are the perpetrators and when they ignore or minimize the situation, employees report a diminished allegiance to and effort expended in their workplaces. Similarly, managers and supervisors are often less proactive and persistent in addressing and resolving bullying behavior among employees when human resource managers and chief executive officers are less focused on enforcing policies.

Identify resources and solutions. Employee training and awareness of anti-bullying policies and procedures that comprehensively address the issue of workplace bullying are key. The message must be clear wherever bullying behavior may occur—the office, lunchroom, parking lot, classroom, assembly line, cell phone, or the Internet—it **will not be tolerated**. Employers must establish and publicize systems to support employees and to address bullying behaviors and interpersonal conflicts. For example, rather than fighting, shutting down, or giving in to a bully, targets need to stay engaged and do their work. They need to maintain a calm and professional demeanor, remain engaged and focused, and plan ahead to deescalate a situation before it occurs (Ross, 2007-2009). The success of the school or business depends on all employees knowing where they can go for assistance and on their learning and practicing necessary skills to address workplace bullying.

A Respectful Workplace

Cade (2010), a workplace-bullying expert, identified three things leaders can do to create a respectful workplace where bullying is not allowed to exist: (a) show appreciation, (b) treat employees like insiders, and (c) demonstrate empathy for problems. She further suggested that bullying rarely exists when all workers honor each other as valuable; treat one another with dignity; communicate to include, not exclude or control; are heard by another and respond with courtesy and curiosity; acknowledge thoughts and feelings; ask—do not order or yell or swear; provide clear and informative answers to questions that are legitimately their business; know the right to receive encouragement and support; speak of others positively; and seek to connect and build communication for all parties as opposed to positioning for control (Cade, 2010, para. 2).

Everyone's Responsibility

Elimination of workplace bullying is the responsibility of all employees; however, senior management and executives are ultimately responsible for creating and sustaining bully-free workplaces. In school settings, key leaders such as superintendents, human resource officers, principals, supervisors, and department heads must guide the educational workforce to recognize and report bullying within their ranks. By launching united efforts, defining and implementing clear policies, putting model practices in place, and having the courage to stand up against bullies, individuals in all lines of work can stop workplace bullying. The simple formula of combining leadership with an environment of respect will contribute to the well-being of all employees and make an improved and healthy work climate and culture a reality.

References

- Alsever, J. (2008, October 20). *How to handle a workplace bully*. Retrieved from <http://www.bnet.com/article/how-to-handle-a-workplace-bully/242687>
- Bully Online. *United Kingdom National Workplace Bullying Advice Line*. Retrieved from <http://www.bullyonline.org/workbully/amibeing.htm>
- Cade, V. (2010, July 7). *10-point assessment: What is respect?* Retrieved from <http://www.bullyfreetwork.com/blog/?p=1289>
- Ceridian Services. (2008, August). The workplace bully and the bottom line. *Ceridian Connection*. Retrieved from http://www.ceridian.com/eap_article/1,6266,15757-69778,00.html
- Mattice, C. (n.d.) What is workplace bullying? *No Workplace Bullies*. Retrieved from <http://noworkplacebullies.com/>
- Mattice, C. (2009). *Successful learning organizations understand the power of positive workplaces*. Retrieved from http://noworkplacebullies.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/Kirkpatrick_Article.36120227.pdf
- Namie, G. (2007, September). Workplace Bullying Institute & Zogby International. *U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey* [Electronic Version]. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacebullying.org/docs/WBISurvey2007.pdf>
- Ross, M. (2007-2009). *Workplace bullies: How to best the business bullies*. Retrieved from <http://www.Kamaron.org/Dealing-With-The-Business-Customer-Bullies>
- VanDusen, A. (2008, March). *Ten signs you're being bullied at work*. Retrieved from http://forbes.com/2008/03/22/health-bullying-office-forbeslife-cx_avd_0324health.html
- Workplace Bullying Institute. *Definition of Workplace Bullying*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacebullying.org/targets/problem/definition.html>
- Workplace Bullying Institute. *How bullying happens*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacebullying.org/targets/problem/why-bullies-bully.html>
- Workplace Bullying Institute. *Who gets targeted*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacebullying.org/targets/problem/who-gets-targeted.html>
- Workplace Bullying Institute. (2007). *Results of the WBI U.S. Workplace Survey*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacebullying.org/docs/WBISurvey2007.pdf>
- Workplace Bullying Institute. (2010). *Frequently asked questions*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacebullying.org/faq.html>

Teacher as Bully: Knowingly or Unintentionally Harming Students

By Ruth Sylvester

Bullying behavior is repeated, intentional, and within the context of an unequal power relationship. Yet, when teachers display bullying behaviors within their own classrooms, I contend that they may not be cognizant of their bullying conduct. In this article, I present ways teachers may knowingly or unintentionally bully their students, labels they often employ to mask or deflect the bullying behavior, and implications for educators.

Introduction

Recently, K-12 schools across the large county where I live were required to reserve an entire day for bullying-prevention instruction. The efforts of the district parallel the current attention popular media and scholarly journals have placed on documenting the nature and extent of bullying, victims of bullying, and witnesses of the bullying (Merrell, Isava, Gueldner, & Ross, 2008; Milsom & Gallo, 2006; Rivers, Poteat, Noret, & Ashurst, 2009; Sanchez, 2010).

Bullying may be characterized as repeated physical hurt or psychological distress inflicted by unwanted, offensive, threatening, insulting, or humiliating assaults or any conduct that causes so much stress that it interferes with a victim's educational performance (McEvoy, 2005). Bullying is usually associated with an imbalance of power in which the bully has perceived, appointed, or self-appointed authority over another due to factors such as the victim's size, age, experience, title, socioeconomic status, or brawn.

Bullying is not restricted only to the schoolyard, peer-on-peer skirmishes, and cyberbullying (Chen, 2010) but is observed or felt in less-expected contexts as well. For example, bullying in the workplace made headline news when a victim's suicide note described the bullying boss as the cause of the worker's decision to commit suicide (Sanchez, 2010). Likewise, the very people whom parents trust to provide a safe, nurturing environment for their children 180 days a year may be bullying students. Olweus (1993) posited that bullying is repeated, intentional, and within the context of an unequal power relationship. Yet, for the classroom, I contend that teachers may not be cognizant of their bullying or bordering-on-bullying behavior. In this article, I present ways that teachers may knowingly or unintentionally bully their students, labels they often employ to mask or deflect the bullying behavior, and implications for educators.

Engaging in Bullying Behaviors: Knowingly or Unintentionally

Four common ways that teachers may unintentionally bully students are through sarcasm, opaque name calling, refusing late or unidentified work, and humiliating future students

whom they perceive as having potential behavioral problems in the classroom.

“Yeah, you’re going to be a world-class writer.” Sarcasm is a type of irony users employ to speak of something as the complete opposite of what they really mean. For example, noticing the small amount of food on the plate of a dieter, a friend might ask sarcastically, “Are you going to eat all that?” Sarcasm can also be a cutting remark when the meaning of the statement is intended to wound the recipient of the comment. Either type of sarcasm has no place within the classroom. Although adults and older students understand the irony of teasing associated with the first example, young students are more literal and are often confused by the rhetoric. Culturally diverse students who are unfamiliar with this device of language may also be confused by sarcasm intended as humor.

Using words of sarcasm to respond to a student, reprimand a student, or evaluate a student’s performance is demoralizing and insulting. For example, a high school teacher of English might return a graded composition to its struggling author and quip, “Yeah, you’re going to be a world-class writer.” Making such an insensitive remark within the hearing of the entire class just one time, to one student, would hardly classify the teacher as a bully, yet the remark could leave the student wounded in action, demoralized in front of peers, and questioning his or her academic competency. The first such incident might cause embarrassment, but if instances continued and became a pattern, the student would not only lose respect for the teacher but also confidence as a writer.

Secret names. Most educators would never flagrantly call a student *stupid*, *dumb*, *incompetent*, or other denigrating descriptors and likely would be appalled if a colleague were reported to be belittling students in this manner. However, although unlikely to engage in such blatantly unprofessional conduct, these same teachers may give students secret names through opaque name calling. To illustrate, when a math teacher assumes students remember vocabulary or concepts foundational to the math lesson at hand, only to discover by students’ perplexed stares and silence that they are lost, a common response may be “Come on, you guys should know this. You had it last year.” A similar response is “Didn’t Mrs. Math teach this last year?” Not only do such comments secretly name Mrs. Math as *incompetent*, but they also rename students as *academically behind*, *not up to par*, or *an inconvenience to the teacher*. Although the teacher is not directly calling students by these names, they interpret themselves as such. Surely teachers are surprised and disappointed when their students have not mastered skills necessary to understand new concepts. Furthermore, during the era of high-stakes testing, having to introduce or reteach foundational skills can indeed make teachers feel as if they are losing ground instead of moving forward. Seldom is the gap a direct link caused by the students, yet they are often the recipients of a teacher’s frustration.

Rejecting late assignments and trashing nameless papers. Most teachers understand the importance of having procedures in place to facilitate the daily flow of school activities and related tasks, and they design a few mindfully written school and

Dr. Ruth Sylvester is an assistant professor in the Department of Childhood Education and Literacy Studies at the University of South Florida Polytechnic in Lakeland, FL, where she teaches and conducts research. She is on the executive board of several professional literacy association and reviews for a number of literacy research journals. She is a member of the Delta Beta Chapter of Mu State, FL. ruthsylv@poly.usf.edu



classroom rules to ensure procedures are followed. Two common classroom practices witnessed over the years might seem justified as routine classroom practice but, in my opinion, are bullying behaviors. One practice is rejecting late assignments and not allowing the student to explain why the assignment is late. Rejecting a late assignment or grossly reducing the number of points for submitting a late assignment is clearly an abuse of power. When a student spends time on an assignment—especially when the student completes it at home instead of engaging in more enjoyable activities—having the work then disregarded and discarded inconsiderately by the one in authority because of the student’s oversight is humiliating.

Another inconsiderate practice is tossing unidentified work in a waste basket, often with a flourish, as an example to other potentially negligent students. Rather than penalizing students, a teacher who wants to help students remember to identify their work might ask them to circle their names, put a star above the third letter, or do any special thing to call attention to their names just before passing in their work. Students receive a bonus point if their name is circled, starred, and so forth. Although a bonus point will certainly not affect students’ overall grades, getting an extra point will likely motivate them to put a name on their work.

“My reputation precedes me.” Some middle and high school teachers begin their bullying behavior toward students whom they perceive as having behavioral problems. These perceptions are usually a result of teacher-lounge gossip or their observations of these students’ actions and behaviors in the hallways, in the cafeteria, or before and after school. These teachers begin the humiliation and sometimes threats early on in order to make students fearful of them and thereby more likely to acquiesce when the students are in the bully’s classroom. This sort of deliberate humiliation serves no legitimate academic purpose.

Masking Bullying Behavior

Teachers may justify their behavior as motivational, an appropriate part of the instruction, an appropriate disciplinary response, or good classroom management. Teachers who use

“Whether their bullying actions are intentional or not, teachers who bully leave a blight on the profession that most of us consider a calling.”

sarcasm as insults, as in the case of the English teacher, most likely think they are amusing. The very students who are bullied may even promote this false identification when they chuckle with the bully and class in order to save face. Teachers who reject late work or discard *no name* work usually defend their behavior as a way to teach students responsibility. I cannot help but wonder if these teachers ever forgot to sign a check, or stamp an important bill, or return a library book on the due date. Fortunately, we, as adults, are not penalized with threats or humiliation when we are occasionally negligent. Accepting late work, changing a grade in the grade book to reflect an adjustment, or tracking down the author of a

nameless paper can be time consuming, but such actions are marks of a considerate human being, not a bully.

Implications

McEvoy (2005) surveyed 236 high school and college-age students regarding their recollection of high school teachers who were abusive to students. Of the teachers identified, 89% had been in the profession for 5 or more years, and only 6% were new teachers. Confronting veteran teachers who are secure in their positions is unquestionably a difficult challenge.

Students may feel they have no avenue of redress when they feel bullied by a teacher. The administration or other teachers will unlikely defend the victim if the abusive teacher has what they perceive as redeeming qualities, such as content expertise, longevity, good rapport with average or advanced students, or a consistent record of high test scores. However, when bullying is ignored, administrators are tacitly sanctioning a teacher's bad behavior and mistreatment of students. Children may attempt to seek help from their parents, and although some parents may confront the teacher, others are less likely to do so because they (a) feel intimidated or inferior due to their socioeconomic status or level of education; (b) may be from a culture where teaching is held in high esteem and would be unlikely to question overtly the teacher's conduct, expectations, or methods of classroom management; or (c) are uninvolved in their children's school life.

Summary

Repeated occurrences of behaviors described in this article are forms of teacher-student bullying. Often at the beginning of a new school year, students receive instruction about peer-peer bullying prevention, and bullies are warned about the consequences of their behavior, but students do not know how to respond to teacher-student bullying. It is up to those who are advocates for all children, regardless of their age, to be their voice and confront colleagues who exhibit bullying or bordering-on-bullying behavior.

In addition, caring educators must tend to the wounded victims of abusive colleagues whose actions go uninvestigated and whose behavior impacts the morale of the entire school and the learning process of students. Whether their bullying actions are intentional or not, teachers who bully leave a blight on the profession that most of us consider a calling.

References

- Chen, S. (2010). In a wired world, children unable to escape cyberbullying. *CNNLiving*. Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2010/LIVING/10/04/youth.cyberbullying.abuse/>
- McEvoy, A. (2005, September). *Teachers who bully students: Patterns and policy implications*. Paper presented at the Hamilton Fish Institute's Persistently Safe Schools Conference, Philadelphia, PA. Retrieved from <http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/teachers%20who%20bully%20students%20McEvoy.pdf>
- Merrell, K. W., Isava, D. M., Gueldner, B. A., & Ross, S. W. (2008). How effective are school bullying intervention programs? A meta-analysis of intervention research. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 23(1), 26-42.
- Milsom, A., & Gallo, L. L. (2006) Bullying in middle schools: Prevention and intervention. *Middle School Journal*, 37(3), 12-19.
- Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers.
- Rivers, I., Potrat, V. P., Noret, N., & Ashurst, N. (2009). Observing bullying at school: The mental health implications of witness status. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 24(4), 211-223.
- Sanchez, R. (2010, August). *Did depression or alleged bully boss prompt editor suicide?* abcNews. Retrieved from <http://abcnews.go.com/Business/MindMoodResourceCenter/editors-suicide-draws-attention-workplace-bullying/story?id=11421810>

Interview

Doing the Right Thing for Special Education Students: An Interview with Practitioner Diane Rawley

By Janice M. Novello

This interview is eighth in a series initiated by members of the Bulletin's Editorial Board. The goal of the series is to feature interviews conducted with Delta Kappa Gamma members or other educational leaders on a topic related to the theme of the issue.

Introduction

I met Diane Rawley in 1998 when she was a Special Education teacher in a new Florida middle school. She is a teacher known for staying calm in the midst of the sometimes chaotic world of her field. Parents, students, and regular education teachers ask for her professional opinion, and she responds with wisdom that goes right to the core of the situation and moves everyone forward. She continues to infuse respect for all invested members and all situations in her career as her district's Administrator for Special Education and for the English for Speakers of Other Languages program.

Mrs. Rawley, please share a little about yourself.

I hold an M.A. from the University of South Florida in Special Education, majoring in the Emotionally Disturbed field. I am married with two children and four grandchildren. I enjoy many hobbies, especially those dealing with arts and crafts, and like to spend time with my grandchildren, sew, paint, work with wood, shop, and read. I have won many awards for my photography, and many of my pieces hang in the halls of the administrative offices of my current district.

Diane, have you always worked in Special Education?

I began teaching in 1979. I taught Emotionally Handicapped elementary students for 1 year and then shifted my focus to a middle school population. I taught in a Varying Exceptionalities (VE) classroom, with full-time Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students for 14 years. A VE class is made up of students with various disabilities. Children classified as Learning Disabled, Emotionally Handicapped, Language Impaired, Educable Mentally Handicapped, Other Health Impaired, or any other ESE classification are together in one classroom rather than in separate classes according to their exceptionality. During that time, I was appointed the ESE Department chairperson for our school. I then taught a class for Severely Emotionally Disturbed (SED) students for 3 years, and in 1997,

I was voted Teacher of the Year for that school.

In 1998 a new middle school opened. Our SED unit was transferred to that school, and I continued with that unit. I taught VE students for several more years until my administrator appointed me to coordinate all ESE paperwork for our school. I left the classroom and began working with students, teachers, and parents on ESE-related issues on a full-time basis. I moved to Nolan Middle School when it opened in 2004 and continue to work in the administrative office in the same capacity. I also coordinate the education intervention 504 Plans and recently added the English for Speakers of Other Languages Program (ESOL) to my responsibilities.

What made you decide to focus in the Special Education field?

I began my career in Special Education, concentrating in the area of Emotionally Handicapped and Behavior Disorders, because I understand these kids. Growing up in a dysfunctional family, dropping out of traditional high school, and graduating from an adult education program gave me a unique perspective and knowledge that is not found in textbooks. Having experienced much of the anger and feelings that my students were experiencing gave me a distinct advantage in working with them. I was able to see things from their perspective because I had lived it. This empathy has kept me active in Special Education even as I have seen so many colleagues leave or transfer into the regular education area.

How do you feel about supervising Special Education rather than being in the classroom? What do you like? What do you miss?

I miss the daily interaction with the students, but I also enjoy supervising the ESE program in our school. I enjoy helping the parents who are frustrated and at the end of their rope and helping teachers with providing strategies that are beneficial for all students. I also continue to work with ESE students one-on-one when they are in crisis or having difficulty coping with some of the day-to-day issues that are common to middle school students. I also do not mind doing paperwork—as long as I have time to do it. I never again want to have to teach AND be responsible for all the official paperwork!

Our theme for this edition of our international publication is Morality in Education. Can you share your perspective on this theme from your experience?

I can see how several of the areas of morality interweave in the core of what the Special Education program tries to achieve. Teachers and administrators in this field are the leaders for the students as they develop their attitudes, values, and personal beliefs. We work on skills to reduce bullying, curb school violence, ease race relations, and create a respectful environment. All of these are moral issues with which our Special Education students struggle.

I think education is all interconnected. I work with the whole child rather than isolated pieces. What happens in our lives has a domino effect: one thing impacts another, and we are a product of our experiences. Those experiences can lead us down a good path or one that is not so good. When children are faced with challenges, they need to use their experiences—both good and bad—to their advantage. They may not know what to do, but they usually know what NOT to do. Children who are experiencing difficulties need a place where they can have fun; where they can feel safe, cared-about, and respected; and where they feel as if they have some control. When they have these things, they are receptive to learning. Without these things, they will resist you every step of the way—and they can be very good at it!

I know that you have personally invited specialists in the Special Education field to hold seminars for you and your staff. Tell me a little about these events. Did these seminars shed light on any of the above topics for you and your staff?

Yes, I believe our guest speakers have made a positive impact. I have always accepted “the more heads, the better.” No one has all the answers, and the more input we can get from a variety of sources, the more equipped we are to deal with a given situation. For example, we had an occupational therapist speak to the faculty, and she provided a great deal of useful information on sensory issues. This, in turn, helped the faculty understand why some students do some of the things they do. For example, most people are aware that physical exercise releases endorphins in the brain, which helps to elevate one’s mood. Likewise, some students need some form of sensory input in order to help them remain calm and focused in the classroom. Some students may feel the need to chew—gum, paper, pencils, fingers, or anything else—because the mouth is a very organizing sensory system. Chewing helps some students to calm and organize themselves, which is why some schools allow gum chewing during important tests. Sucking on peppermint candy may help some students focus, while others may need a *fidget item*, such as therapy putty or a squeeze ball. Students who wiggle in their seats, sit with their knees drawn to their chests, or rock back-and-forth or side-to-side may also be doing so in order to give themselves the sensory input their bodies demand in order to remain calm and focused during class. Seeking movement to help organize our sensory system is very common, and having an understanding of how the brain and body are interconnected in ways we might not have realized helps teachers to be better teachers and students to be happier students.

Do you have any thoughts you would like to share with other women educators at this time?

The bureaucracy that has taken over much of teachers’ professional focus saddens me. This focus is wrong because it reduces the amount of actual time teachers are able to spend teaching. Using the school day to complete paperwork does nothing to improve our children’s education. I am also disappointed in the demands to pay teachers based on students’ test scores and to promote or retain students based on a test score. A score on a test is only a snapshot that measures knowledge at a particular moment in time. It

does not take into account any other factors that may influence the outcome of the snapshot. Maybe the child has test anxiety or her parents are divorcing; maybe she had an argument with her mother on the way to school; maybe he is tired; maybe a relative is terminally ill; maybe his life is so messed up that making a good score on a test is way down the list of things on his mind. I have worked with students like these, and to measure their knowledge—or a teacher’s pay—based on a single test when we cannot control all the variables is, in my opinion, an injustice to both students and teachers.



Diane Rawley has worked in Special Education for 31 years. Teacher of the year in 1997, she continues to impact parents, students, and teachers as Administrator for the Exceptional Student Education and English for Speakers of Other Languages programs at R. Dan Nolan Middle School in Lakewood Ranch, FL.



Dr. Janice M. Novello is a Professor in the School of Advanced Studies at the University of Phoenix and is a Board Member of the Florida Association of Science Teachers. A member of Gamma Upsilon Chapter in Mu State, FL, she currently serves on the *Bulletin’s* Editorial Board and on the National Association for Gifted Children Editorial Board.

Book Review

Learning Styles Research: What Really Works A Review of *Differentiating Instruction for At-Risk Students: What to Do and How to Do It*

By Audrey Cohan

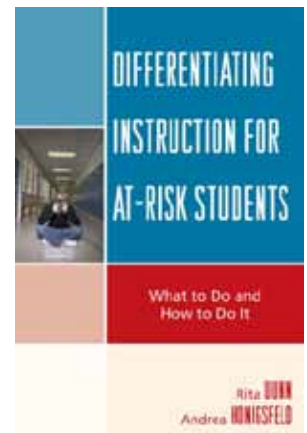
Dunn, R., & Honigsfeld, A. (2009). *Differentiating instruction for at-risk students: What to do and how to do it*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

To meet the needs of all learners, while improving student achievement, educators are encouraged to differentiate instruction. It is not uncommon to hear teachers comment that it is nearly impossible to use a differentiated approach on a daily basis due to time constraints. Rita Dunn and Andrea Honigsfeld's book, *Differentiating Instruction for At-Risk Students: What to Do and How to Do It*, offers hands-on strategies for teaching the struggling student. Dunn and Honigsfeld's methods are grounded in the following definition of learning style: "the way in which each student begins to concentrate on, process, internalize, and remember new and difficult academic information" (p. 11).

Teacher-friendly and visually appealing, the book offers scenarios, clear descriptions, and potential plans of action for working with diverse learners. At the beginning, the authors clearly identify which students are typically at risk and describe 21st century students as having significant, yet somewhat different, needs than students in the past. With an understanding that students of today possess a wide range of academic strengths and weaknesses, the authors outline suggestions for integrating learning-style-responsive approaches in meeting the needs of at-risk students.

The strength of this book lies in the knowledge base that the authors share about understanding that students possess different ways of learning, often referred to as perceptual preferences, and may use them to improve academic achievement. For instance, knowing the differences and similarities between analytic and global learners can help to reshape the thinking, and ultimately the teaching approaches, of educators. The authors organize the instructional activities around perceptual differences and individual needs, rather than focusing on one technique or strategy standardization.

The book is divided into 13 chapters with supportive appendices. In addition, the authors include a list of outstanding references that support the research base for learning styles. The programmed learning sequences are illustrated within Chapter 9 and exemplify



the use of games as structured materials in which learning can occur in small increments. This games-based teaching approach most definitely benefits the at-risk child as well as the student with special needs or the English-language learner. Robin A. Boyle wrote the 13th chapter in an effort to help readers understand the relationship between learning styles theory and the individualized education plan (IEP). With a concern for the high-stakes testing movement in the United States, she comments, "Despite the rise in concern over standardized test scores, parents, students, and educators should strive to include within their IEP's a working definition of learning styles" (p. 153-154). In this chapter, Boyle provides a unique and helpful legal perspective to the definition of learning styles for at-risk students.

Scenarios with students and teachers provide insights on ways teachers could meet the needs of at-risk students. One teacher, for instance, introduces an economy lesson *globally*, while another teacher helps her students recognize their strengths and talents in a redesigned classroom. Most impressive is the *Circle of Knowledge* strategy designed to help struggling students review newly introduced content material or previously taught skills. Dunn and Honigsfeld provide a solid review of learning styles theory, and their format helps make the book easy to read.

Differentiating Instruction for At-Risk Students is designed primarily for midcareer or more experienced teachers, who are ready to synthesize their teaching skills into strategies that can then be thoughtfully applied in the classroom. The teachers who will most likely benefit from this book are teachers who are naturally reflective, self-evaluative, and open to change. Novice teachers will also benefit from the clear explanations and examples, although they may not yet be in a phase of professional development that would allow them to read the examples and then transform their classrooms without additional guidance or onsite collegial support and administrative leadership.

This book on learning styles is, in many ways, the compilation of 40 years of in-depth research from around the world. It was the last book written by Rita Dunn, who passed away in the summer of 2009. This collaboration with Andrea Honigsfeld represents the culmination of Dr. Dunn's tireless career dedicated to the study of learning and teaching styles. Dr. Dunn's pioneering work has helped define relationships between learning styles, cognitive styles, and academic achievement in a manner that is accessible to classroom teachers. Through the Dunn and Dunn model, students and teachers alike have come to recognize their personal learning-style profiles. Dunn and Honigsfeld remind us that, as educators, we have a key role to play in using these profiles to meet the daily educational needs of at-risk students.



Dr. Audrey Cohan is a Professor in the Division of Education at Molloy College, Rockville Centre, NY. A member of Alpha Phi Chapter in NY, she has published on child sexual abuse and effective professional development practices. acohan@molloy.edu

Preparing and Supporting Teachers for 21st Century Expectations through Universal Design for Learning

By Laura H. King, Jennifer B. Williams, and Sandra H. Warren

Integration of 21st century goals into teacher education programs requires attention to diversity, technology, and instructional supports in terms of how content material is presented, students are engaged, and learning is documented. Faced with barriers such as disparities in access to curriculum and technology, as well as differences in background experiences and prior knowledge, teachers in today's classrooms face unique challenges as they struggle to meet the diversity of needs within a single classroom setting. As a result, educators need innovative approaches to address the diversity of available resources, student characteristics, and other environmental challenges. One approach is the integration of Universal Design for Learning principles with instructional planning. By using a wide lens approach to initial instructional planning and then narrowing the focus through the integration of Universal Design for Learning principles to meet individual needs within lessons from facilitation through assessment, teachers are able to address individual needs while also facilitating planning for the entire class.

Education is changing dramatically due to the impact of society and culture, changes in family structures, the effects of the economy and global issues, and the growth of technology. Many schools are prioritizing initiatives designed to prepare students to be globally competitive and prepared to live in the 21st century (NCDPI, 2009; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). With the national expectation to incorporate 21st century skills in classrooms from prekindergarten through Grade 12, teacher preparation programs need to prepare teachers to deliver instruction that encompasses these necessary skills. We have an increasingly global society and need to prepare teachers who understand culturally diverse family values (Zhan, Sandell, & Lindsay, 2007) and who can teach our students to be culturally aware (Landsford, 2002). In tandem with rapid technology growth, it is critical for future teachers to incorporate technology into their instruction and to teach students necessary technology skills for success (Duran, Fossum, & Luera, 2006; Marino, Sameshima, & Beecher, 2009; Pope, Hare, & Howard, 2002).

21st Century Goals and Skills

A key education reform initiative is to prepare our students in prekindergarten through Grade 12 to leave school with skills that will enable them to be successful in the "new" 21st century. What is meant by this and how it translates to the classroom is a hot topic of discussion across various education venues. Key components of 21st century learning

include an emphasis on core subjects and learning skills, the use of learning tools to engage learners in both context and content, and the integration of assessments and evaluation that effectively measure student progress (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). The conceptual framework offered by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills presents a rainbow to illustrate the necessity of life and career, learning and innovation, and information, media, and technology skills for students to succeed in their career and personal lives. Additionally, this framework highlights teachers' responsibilities to deliver core knowledge instruction and school systems' obligations to provide support systems to align standards and assessment, curriculum and instruction, professional development, and learning environments (see Figure). Students competing in a global economy need to learn core subjects and 21st century themes, including literacy (e.g. English, reading, or language arts), mathematics, science, foreign languages, government and civics, economics, arts, history, and geography. Furthermore, it is essential that students master related skills, including critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2010).

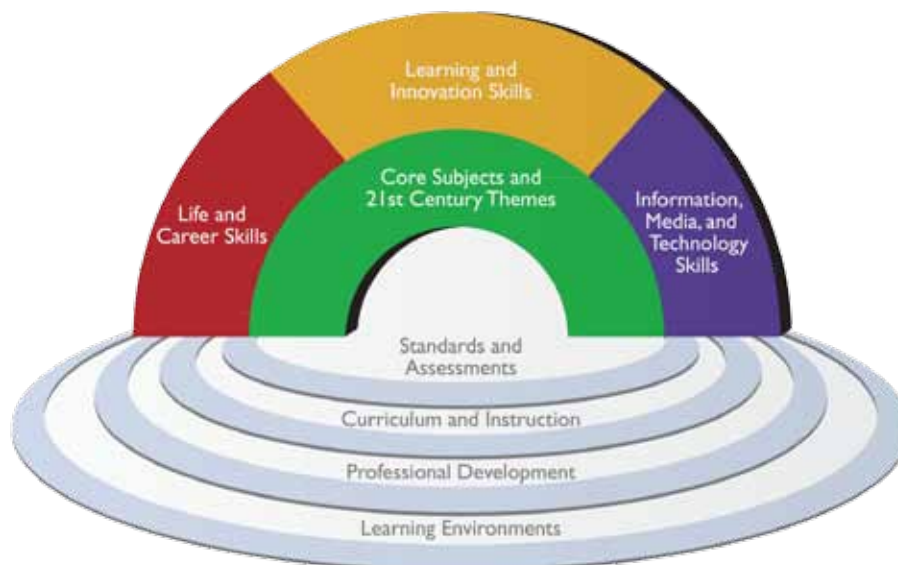


Figure. Framework for 21st century learning. Reprinted from *Framework for 21st century learning*. [Online image], by Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009, Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/documents/P21_Framework.pdf. Reprinted with permission.

As teachers embark on integrating instruction to include 21st century goals, they are also challenged by the global diversity evident in the classroom setting. Classes are becoming more diverse with an increase of students with disabilities; with differences in race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (Council for Exceptional Children, 2005; Montgomery, 2001); and with language and cultural barriers (Mount-Cors et al., 2009). The 21st century learning framework described above provides educators with a valuable resource for addressing the new expectations of the 21st century classroom, supports for diverse learners, and integration of technology. One specific approach that simultaneously addresses the need for integration of technology, tiered instruction, and accommodation and supports within instructional contexts for students in the 21st century is Universal Design for Learning (UDL; CAST, 2007).

Overview of Universal Design for Learning

The UDL model facilitates classroom instruction by providing flexible academic and social supports that enable teachers to match research-based instructional methods with strengths and challenges of all students. UDL provides a framework for initial, up-front planning for access, participation, and learning (CAST, 2007) that can be beneficial for students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELL), and those who may be economically disadvantaged. UDL calls for a major mind shift in how educators view instruction and student supports. Instead of viewing certain students as being deficient and in need of “fixing,” UDL calls for changes in thinking about how we deliver instruction and evaluate student progress in learning. The UDL model is based on emerging knowledge of brain function (recognition, affect, and strategic networks) to help us absorb, assimilate, and use information. The three critical components of UDL—multiple means of (a) representation, (b) engagement, and (c) expression—are related to each of these brain networks (Rose & Meyer, 2002).

Through *multiple means of representation*, teachers activate the recognition network of the brain that is associated with the “what” of learning by identifying key facts, ideas, and concepts (Rose & Meyer, 2002). To solidify the content presented in a variety of forms that match student strengths and support connections between new information and previous experience, teachers rely heavily on students’ prior knowledge and individual learning styles. Examples of how representation is addressed during classroom instruction include integration of a variety of methods to present the material. These methods may include a traditional lecture format, the use of graphic supports to illustrate key points, a podcast made for students who require additional auditory supports, and the use of multimedia tools such as presentation software (e.g. PowerPoint), electronic reading products (e.g. Kurtzweil), or software tools that allow critical information to be enhanced through methods such as highlighting (e.g. Office tools).

Through *multiple means of engagement*, teachers engage the affect network of the brain that is related to the “why” of learning and help students assign meaning to why they might act on information in a particular way (Rose & Meyer, 2002). Using this network, teachers engage and motivate students to learn by linking learning to real life examples and building on their interests. Examples of how a teacher may enhance student engagement include the use of cooperative grouping or peer buddies and the integration of varied technologies for student work (e.g. utilizing a Web quest using the Internet to increase motivation).

Through *multiple means of expression*, teachers activate the strategic network of the brain that is associated with the “how” of learning and help students plan and execute actions and reactions to information presented (Rose & Meyer, 2002). Teachers foster learning

Dr. Laura King is an assistant professor in the area of Special Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at East Carolina University. kinglau@ecu.edu



Dr. Jennifer Bautel Williams is an assistant professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at East Carolina University. williamsj@ecu.edu



Dr. Sandra Hopfengardner Warren is the Interim Assistant Dean in the College of Education at East Carolina University and is a member of the Gamma Mu Chapter in NC.



by providing students with choices for communicating their understanding of a topic or mastering an academic task in various ways. Examples of multiple means of expression within the instructional setting allow students to draw on personal strengths to show mastery of content. Some students may opt for using music or art projects to illustrate the content, while others may prefer more traditional text-based products.

An important point to remember is that each option need not be available for each individual lesson, but rather a variety of choices should be offered over time, allowing students to draw on strengths by choosing preferred learning modes for some assignments and activities while also allowing them to hone new skills as they work outside their particular areas of learning strengths.

Excellent professional training resources on UDL are available at <http://www.cast.org/pd/OnlineModules/index.html>. Future generations of teachers can use the UDL model to integrate technology into instruction and to encompass the new technology abilities of students in the 21st century.

Implications for Teacher Preparation and Induction

Curriculum planning must address how all students have access to the general curriculum, how they are engaged in the instructional activities, and how they are evaluated for knowledge outcomes. Effective curriculum planning that integrates UDL principles requires focused attention during development of lesson plans, delivery of instruction, and evaluation of student performance. By explicitly teaching UDL components with lesson planning, teacher educators can prepare general and special education preservice teachers to engage with the content within the context of preservice courses, thereby demonstrating how to increase access to the content information, increase student engagement, and demonstrate more effective means of measuring mastery. In turn, preservice teachers can demonstrate understanding of what they learn by applying UDL principles to course assignments that may be utilized in practicum or intern settings with K-12 students.

General and special education preservice teachers need to have the opportunity to learn and apply UDL principles across a variety of courses and venues. First, while modeling UDL within courses, teacher educators may allow preservice teachers to select outcome assignments for content that best meet their individual learning style. In addition, faculty can model how to transform a previously-written, direct-instruction lesson plan from a content area into one that integrates UDL principles in order to individualize it for more diverse learners. Through this process, teacher educators model solutions to potential barriers to learning, showing that such barriers may be proactively addressed during the initial planning to increase learning potential. As teacher educators model lesson development, they address each of the UDL components of representation, engagement, and expression to support and enhance learning at every step of a direct instruction lesson plan during methods and instructional planning courses. It is also important to address concepts of UDL across a variety of courses that directly teach skills that will be utilized in the classroom setting, including those with a focus on assessment and classroom management. As preservice educators see the practical application of UDL through each of their courses, they will develop greater understanding of the three principles as they apply to individualization.

Conclusions

The teaching profession is changing as educators strive to reach more diverse populations in tandem with addressing 21st century goals. Teachers are expected to be able to demonstrate

content knowledge to fulfill *highly qualified* certification requirements. In addition, they are expected to manage diverse classrooms in terms of academic, functional, behavioral, and social needs. Given the broad diversity in language and culture, environmental issues, and disabilities (including cognitive, sensory, and physical disability) in today's classrooms, veteran teachers as well as preservice and novice teachers struggle with effectively managing and teaching such diverse populations within one classroom.

The application of UDL principles to lesson planning allows teachers to address proactively the diverse needs of students within their own instructional settings. New teachers are learning the UDL approach to lesson planning as an effective pedagogical practice with the expectation that it will enable them to begin their teaching careers more confident in their ability to work with inclusive and diverse populations. In addition, these beginning teachers will be able to model UDL practices to inservice teachers through coteaching or on-site professional development. The strength of the UDL approach lies in meeting individual student needs through up-front instructional planning for the whole class. This initial planning results in better efforts to reduce splintered instruction, enhance student engagement, and increase student achievement. The application of UDL to initial instructional planning simultaneously bridges the best of instructional methods and strategies to meet the needs of all learners more effectively.

References

- Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST, 2007). *Teaching every student: Getting to know you the UDL way*. Retrieved from www.cast.org
- Council for Exceptional Children (2005). *Universal design for learning: A guide for teachers and education professionals*. Arlington, VA: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.cec.sped.org>
- Duran, M., Fossum, P., & Luera, G. (2006). Technology and pedagogical renewal: Conceptualizing technology integration into teacher preparation. *Computers in the Schools*, 23(3/4), 31. Retrieved from <http://www.routledge.com>
- Marino, M. T., Sameshima, P., & Beecher, C. C. (2009). Enhancing TPACK with assistive technology: Promoting inclusive practices in preservice teacher education. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, 9(2), 186-207. Retrieved from <http://www.citejournal.org/>
- Montgomery, W. (2001). Creating culturally responsive, inclusive classrooms. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 33(4), 4-9. Retrieved from <http://www.cec.sped.org>
- Mount-Cors, M. F., Cortina, R., Cooper, B., Corredor, M., Madson, K. D., Fitchett, P., & Whytock, J. (2009). Bridging Spanish language barriers in Southern schools. *NC Learn Editions*. Retrieved from www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/brdglangbarriers
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. (2009). *Future Ready Students for the 21st Century*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/profdev/home/futureready/futurereadystudents.pdf>
- Partnership for 21st Century Skills. (2009a). *The MILE guide: Milestones for improving learning and education*. Retrieved from http://p21.org/documents/MILE_Guide_091101.pdf
- Partnership for 21st Century Skills. (2009b). *Framework for 21st century learning*. [Online image]. Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/documents/P21_Framework.pdf
- Partnership for 21st Century Skills. (2010). *Principles and recommendations for 21st century readiness for every child: A guide to the reauthorization of the elementary and secondary education act*. Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/documents/Principles%20and%20Recommendations%20for%2021st%20Century%20Readiness_ESEA%20Reauthorization_100326.pdf
- Pope, M., Hare, D., & Howard, E. (2002). Technology integration: Closing the gap between what preservice teachers are taught to do and what they can do. *Journal of Technology in Teacher Education*, 10(2), 191-203. Retrieved from <http://www.aace.org/pubs/jtate>
- Rose, D., & Meyer, A. (2002). *Teaching every student in the digital age: Universal design for learning*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Viewpoint: How Can College Students Cope with Learning Disabilities?

By Michele J. Adam and Judith J. Pula

This article deals with internal and external coping strategies necessary if students with learning disabilities, including attention deficit disorder (ADD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), are to succeed in college. The authors review the current situation faced by these students and then outline various coping strategies that have proved successful for students during their college years.

Introduction

The foundation for this article was a presentation by a college student with learning disabilities to a Delta Kappa Gamma chapter. The student came to understand what was necessary to cope and succeed in college, namely that the most important accommodations were ones she had to make within herself. For example, she learned it is actually more important to take the time needed to prepare for a test than to depend on teachers giving more time to take tests. This article summarizes her thoughts after she succeeded in college as an individual with disabilities. Her aunt, a university professor with 20-plus years working with college students with learning disabilities and other specialized educational needs, helped the student—now a graduate—polish this written version of her experience to help ease the way for other college students, their families, and their professors.

Many observations in this article are based on the combined personal experiences of the graduate and her mentor-aunt. Both have talked and worked extensively with students and others who have learning disabilities—individuals who were invaluable sources of information on personal coping methods that work.

The Current Situation

Today many freshmen entering college have learning disabilities, but they can still reasonably expect to have success in their academic endeavors even though it may not be an easy task. These students may have to work twice as hard as students without disabilities to maintain the grade point average needed to remain in school. Nevertheless, the success of many of these students clearly demonstrates that academic success is possible in spite of learning disabilities.

Most professors now understand the challenges students with learning disabilities may encounter and are willing to work with them to overcome these difficulties. Of course, knowledge of problems by the students and their professors does not make these challenges disappear, and students with learning disabilities too often find the transition from the more structured high school environment to a college setting (which can be difficult even

for students with no learning problems) particularly daunting. Students new to college are in a strange setting, without the support of family and friends, and find themselves in the position, many for the very first time, of needing to advocate for themselves. Their professors must be made aware of their difficulties before any necessary accommodations can be given.

These students time and again require personal and institutional adjustments if they are to remain and—even more importantly—succeed in college. Furthermore, it is the students who must take the initiative and learn to advocate for themselves—requesting modifications in learning environments, adopting new personal strategies and work habits, and, if necessary, seeking medical help to cope with college work.

A combination of external and internal coping methods is usually the most effective way for these students to adapt to the new environment, and implementing these strategies should begin before the first class. Once students have class schedules, they should meet with their professors to explain in detail their needs and any physical accommodations necessary in the classroom. Discussing learning disabilities with professors is of paramount importance. At this time, they can also present a letter verifying their disability from student support services, now part of the academic structure at most colleges and universities.

Classroom Modifications and Other External Strategies

Classroom accommodations may be as simple as sitting at the front or as extreme as recording lectures, having printed copies of lectures, or scheduling time with the professor outside of class to review lecture content. Of course, external accommodations are no guarantee of classroom success; for example, recording lectures may encourage students to pay less attention in class! Students will need to commit to using internal coping strategies, such as paying strict attention in class and taking detailed notes for review after class. If a student has problems with taking notes, it may be necessary to copy a classmate's notes or ask the professor to have a scribe write the notes. Recording the lectures could also be an effective external strategy. However, this may require extending study hours to listen carefully—and if necessary relisten—to lecture recordings.

Classroom participation and arranging to have out-of-class study aids (classroom notes or recorded lectures) are a start. Students must also consider how they can take tests in a way that will not be jeopardized by their disability. Pretest talks with professors can begin this process of accommodation.

Testing accommodations may involve the following:

- *Untimed tests.* This is a misnomer; actually, the professor and student agree on the length of an extended period for test taking.
- *Isolation.* This strategy minimizes distractions. Only the test and writing instruments are allowed in the room. Isolation sites may include the professor's office, other building workspace, or a room in the student support services office.

“...[I]t is the students who must take the initiative and learn to advocate for themselves—requesting modifications in learning environments, adopting new personal strategies and work habits, and, if necessary, seeking medical help to cope with college work.”

Cultivating New Personal Internal Strategies

Ultimately, professors and other students can only be so helpful. It is the student who must prepare for each course by structuring classroom time and study time for maximum effectiveness, including altering personal habits. Students with learning disabilities may not be able to participate in some college activities. Instead they may have to spend additional time studying and preparing for classes and tests. The following internal strategies may be critical to success in college:

- *Get sufficient sleep.* Lack of sleep will surely decrease the ability to concentrate in classrooms and study periods.
- *Take breaks while studying.* Scheduling breaks—and following the schedule—will ensure maximum study effectiveness.
- *Minimize distractions.* Loud music, telephone distractions, or roommate chatter can disrupt studies.
- *Plan ahead.* Anticipating problems and allowing time to deal with them is an essential coping strategy for students with learning disabilities.

New personal strategies and work habits require discipline and commitment from students with learning disabilities, but they will pay off in academic progress.

In a college setting, it is sometimes difficult to control the environment. Students with learning disabilities may have trouble finding a quiet place to work—or one available early in the day when they may be more alert and better able to grasp the material. Sometimes just asking for help, building a support network, or, when needed, locating a study buddy can be intimidating—but it will be well worth the effort.

Students with learning disabilities must be especially organized so study time is not wasted. Such organization may be as simple as using a different colored notebook for each class or storing class materials in the same place.

Internal strategies—actually, any of the strategies suggested—cannot guarantee academic success, but they can dramatically increase the chances that students will master their college work and remain in school until graduation.



Michelle J. Adam, a graduate of Frostburg State University, presented the information in this paper to a chapter DKG meeting while still an undergraduate. As a volunteer private tutor, she has assisted many students with learning disabilities with their writing and with the process of keeping their materials organized for success in college. Adam currently works as a mission specialist for a government contractor who provides administrative and management support services for the Department of Homeland Security. She previously worked for a government contractor processing personal effects of wounded and deceased American soldiers. madam81@gmail.com



Judith J. Pula, Ph.D., a member of Alpha Alpha Chapter, Maryland, is a chapter past president and former editorial board member for the *Bulletin*. She is a specialist in the teaching of composition, reading, and students with learning disabilities in the English Department at Frostburg State, and has been recognized at campus- and state-wide levels for teaching excellence. jpula@frostburg.edu

Seeking Medical Help

Finally, some students, particularly those with attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), may be helped by medications. Adderall, Concerta, or related stimulants have proved effective in helping students' concentration span while they are in class. Students who have ADD and ADHD typically have trouble concentrating on one thing for any period of time. They may be restless, fidget, and be easily distracted. Students with ADHD may be impulsive, overactive, or disruptive. Stimulant medications have proved effective in helping these students in class.

Medications to cope with learning disabilities require prescriptions and should not be the first, or only, strategy for these students. Several studies have shown that many students, sometimes as many as two thirds of the individuals in a study, were able to cope with learning disabilities through internal and external strategies—certainly a significant number.

Conclusion

Medication may have a place for students with learning disabilities, but the first line of attack should be coping through a combination of external and internal strategies, including obtaining the right physical accommodations, seeking help, and remaining open to suggestions from faculty, family, and fellow students. Students with learning disabilities are welcomed into college classrooms today, and their contributions are appreciated. One day, with continued research into these problems, their successful college careers may not require such strict discipline on their part or accommodations by professors and fellow students.

“Medication may have a place for students with learning disabilities, but the first line of attack should be coping through a combination of external and internal strategies, including obtaining the right physical accommodations, seeking help, and remaining open to suggestions”

“Oh! That Reminds Me...”: Motivating Memoir Manuscripts

By Diana Ott Wright

Students savor their stories and love to share them, which makes them eager authors. In-depth inquiry of mentor texts and nontext materials can tap learners' memories and encourage exploration of writer's-craft knowledge for recreating anecdotes on paper. Students' poems embedded in the article show sample results of memoir study. Suggested materials and methods are reminders for teachers to view everything with class applications in mind.

Introduction

“Write what you know,” Nancie Atwell advised (1987, p. 139), and memoirs top that list. As I ponder tales from my life and lineage, my pen curls around vowels and consonants to pepper the page with scenes snatched from the precipice of extinction. Literature that inspires me also inspires students to chew their pen caps in thought, then spill their stories. Students' children and grandchildren will appreciate these gifts of ancestral anecdotes someday.

However, memoirs do not self-compose. Katie Wood Ray suggested amassing texts in varied genres, explaining that reading will guide writing later as readers are immersed in the mentor works, notice writers' craft, and then create literature influenced by text study (2006, p. 19).

This article begins, then, with several memoir mentor texts but encourages memoir writing influenced by other resources. Mentor texts jog memories, a vital part of the writing process. “This cannot be stated bluntly enough: The writer must have something to say” (Fletcher, 1993, p. 151). Students will not compose using concise sentence structure, figurative language, precise vocabulary, dialogue, dialect, character development, and detailed descriptions if they have nothing they care to write. Ground work and educator ingenuity awaken students' desires to immortalize their memoirs—stories itching to be shared—and creative lessons nudge students' vignettes onto paper.

Memoir-Motivating Methods and Materials

Memoir study requires initial engagement in memoir texts. Ray and Laminack said, “... studies always begin with...immersion in the genre..., getting a feel for the kind of writing under study...[and] end with students writing...” (2001, pp. 139-140). A *Noticings Chart* (Ray, 2006, pp. 130-131) can be used to guide and record inquiry into genres and into authors' techniques to be adapted into learners' writing styles. Teachers suggest topics for memoir-response but encourage deviations from preconceived prompts. For example, I write alongside students, perhaps as my life relates to a book's events or in the author's

writing style. “We need to...share our writing with students [to] demonstrate...the process of composing...” (Atwell, 1987, p. 18). I am students’ model, yes, and also their authorship equal and writer’s-conference partner.

Picture-Book Memoirs

I begin memoir inquiry with picture books. Children’s books are blessings of short, poignant texts, meaningful to all ages, and many are beautifully-crafted memoirs. For example, students examine organization, content, figurative language, nouns used as verbs, and compound adjectives in *My Mama Had a Dancing Heart* (Gray, 1995). *Owl Moon* (Yolen, 1988) offers an imagery-rich peek at an awaited-with-excitement adult-child activity. Additionally, classes can enjoy dialect, grandchild-grandparent interaction, and unified details of a traditional event in *Saturdays and Teacakes* (Laminack, 2004).

Vignette Books

Students love books of anecdotes embracing local or regional culture or universal events, with content and language suited to community standards. Dialect and humor color the vignettes in *If I Ever Get Back to Georgia, I’m Gonna Nail My Feet to the Ground* (Grizzard, 1997). *Fatherhood* (Cosby, 1994) is an entertaining foray into parent-child relationships with serious undertones.

Mama Makes Up Her Mind (and Other Dangers of Southern Living) (White, 1994)—a series of memoirs exaggerating the eccentric qualities of the author’s mother through short, descriptive literary sketches—captured one student’s attention. Her strong lead detailing her grandmother’s peculiar changes weakened to rambling prose. During writer’s conference, I recalled Ralph Fletcher’s advice: “We must speak to our students with an honesty tempered by compassion: Our words will literally define the ways they perceive themselves as writers” (1993, p. 19). I suggested turning loose prose into tight poetry, pared to lay bare what she was desperate to say. Transformed, the piece became a lovely tribute to her grandmother.

When Nana Remembered

When Nana remembered,
She made the sweetest iced tea
On Sunday afternoons.
When Nana remembered,
She counted my ribs and tickled me
So hard I would cry.
When Nana remembered,
She would say she had one *great* granddaughter
And three stinkin’ boys.

Things have changed.
Nana has Alzheimer’s.
Nana no longer remembers (Gilbert, 2006, p. 16).

Realistic-Fiction Novels

After inquiry of memoir texts, students are ready to write memoirs from analyses of realistic fiction. Fictional events in well-written prose spark readers’ memories to connect with plot, characters, dialect, or other factors. A read-out-loud, stand-alone passage or a story-length

section delineated in a corporately-read novel works well to inspire student writing.

As an example, students enjoy the whitewashing section of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Twain, 1980, pp. 12-20). They can use this as inspiration to write realistic fiction about *when you or a family member 'tricked' someone into doing something that you (or he or she) did not want to do* or about *an interesting trade between you and a friend or sibling*.

Life lessons abound in the portion of *To Kill a Mockingbird* that explains the title (Lee, 1982, pp. 272-276). Resulting prompts for student writing could focus on *a life-truth an adult taught you, someone you know who is misjudged or misunderstood, or harmless nature mistreated or feared*.

The sneaking-out-of-mourning-to-go-fishing passage from *Cold Sassy Tree* (Burns, 1984, pp. 74-77) is a favorite. Students readily relate to writing about *something you did behind your parents' back and got caught – or didn't, a dangerous situation you got yourself into, your pet's warning you of danger or bravely standing by you, or a death that affected you*. One student connected being on (not under) a train from this excerpt. As the resulting piece suggests, inquiry had spawned mini-lessons in dialogue and dialect.

I Wode a Twain!

"Papa, wook, there's a twain!"

The train slowed to a stop in front of our truck.

"Whoa, a weal twain!"

The engineer got out

And walked over to Papa.

"We gotta back up. She wanna go, too?"

I stared gleefully at the big man.

"Can I go? Can I go?"

The withered old man nodded, smiling.

I hopped on the seat;

A jumping jack, was I.

I blew the whistle,

Sat in his lap,

And we backed up.

The engineer picked me up

And placed me back down.

Back in the truck,

We rode all the way home.

Grandma was in the kitchen

Rolling the biscuits.

"Guess what, Nanny!"

"What, Honey?"

"I wode a weal twain!"

She turned away,

Marched into the hall:

"Bud Blackwell, you old goat!

They could have kidnapped her!"

He only laughed and put up his hat.

"Well, knowing Nikki,

They'd bring her right back!" (Dedmond, 2005, p. 29).

Before the train-trestle distraction in the Burns work, the novel's narrator is on his way to go fishing, which inspired another student. He included repetition from memoir-genre study of *When I Was Young in the Mountains* (Rylant, 1982) and other selections.

Patience Really Is a Virtue

I had to wait a long time
 Before I got to go on my first fishing trip.
 My uncle always said,
 "Maybe you'll be old enough next year."
 When my year finally came,
 I was so excited I couldn't think straight.
 I repeated in my mind over and over:
When you go fishing,
You have to be patient.

I still remember sitting on the dock
 Under a burning-red setting sun:
 Sitting silently—waiting, waiting
 As one hour, two hours ticked by.
 I held back all the words,
 Not wanting to disturb anything.
 I was proving I was old enough to go fishing,
 'Cause *when you go fishing,*
You have to be patient.

Rrrrrrrrr! Click! Click!
 My fishing rod sounded off.
 "Uncle Joe, Uncle Joe, I got something!"
 I yelled at him in excitement.
 After what seemed like an eternity
 Of tugging and reeling, tugging and reeling,
 I brought up one of the best catfish ever caught—
 Not because of size or anything,
 But because I caught it.
When you go fishing,
You have to be patient...

Until you catch something, that is! (Hughey, 2006, p. 32).

Anthology Selections

Cross-genre literature in textbooks can also elicit memoirs. For example, in folk-literature studies, students provide proverbs learned "the hard way" as morals, fleshing out details to create personal fables. Added computer graphics, original art, photos, captions, or technical effects create text-rich picture books or slide shows and incorporate technology standards.

Interesting responses develop after dissecting the short story *The Day I Got Lost* (Singer, 1991, pp. 113-115). Political-cartoon sketches and photos of the same people invite examining the humor of exaggerated physical features in the sketches as examples

of caricature. Story analysis includes discussing the *verbal caricature* of an absent-minded professor. One possible memoir that might evolve from this study would be a humorous anecdote detailing a relative's strongest character traits.

Hyperbole lessons accompany study of *Pecos Bill: The Cyclone* (Felton, 1991, pp. 647-652) or *The Devil and Daniel Webster* (Benet, 2001, pp. 254-263). Listing the strengths and talents of cowboys (Bill) or lawyers (Daniel) prefaces reading and discussing the story and then charting the hyperbole that stretches reality. A possible memoir topic for students might then be a relative's occupational or hobbyist qualities and talents—starting with facts, then exaggerating an event into legend.

Positive adult-child relationships emerge under the influence of *Thank You, M'am* (Hughes, 2001, pp. 739-742). After classes read the story, a split chart illustrates Mrs. Jones' parent-like actions, capturing actions on the left side and the effects of actions on Roger on the right side. Analysis of this work could inspire a student memoir about *an adult who takes a no-nonsense but caring stance with you*.

Contests

Find a contest, and students will write! Competitions supply a writer's purpose and audience (and sometimes tangible rewards), making it more satisfying to expend creative effort. Conveniently, some contests feature memoir. *Reminisce* magazine (www.reminisce.com) publishes memoirs from 1900-1960, spurring evolution of family-background pieces by students (Kapanowski, 2008, p. 47). A contest requiring a student to tie an author's work to his or her life is *Letters about Literature* (2009).

Poetry

"I never 'get' poetry," students often complain. But what are favorite songs? Poems! Students love poetry, just not all poetry. Savvy teachers who talk to students in the lunch line, read their journal entries carefully, and pay attention when they talk among themselves can locate memoir-inspiring verse tailored to classes' interests and concerns. Make them laugh, make them angry, make them ponder, make them sad; make them experience school and sports and family and friendship and betrayal and music and romance in verse. Fill them with poems they devour willingly, and they will fill pages with *their* words.

Student-Written Poetry



Save school anthologies and other student-written collections from past years. Current students enjoy sustained reading in these treasures. When an anthology entry moves the reader, he or she can write a memoir (any form, any voice) shaken loose from memory storage. Many local or national student-poetry collections regularly offer immortality: publication! *A Celebration of Young Poets* (www.poeticpower.com) publishes kindergarten through adult authors across the United States and Canada (Worthen, 2009). *A Near Miss* (anearmiss@uscupstate.edu) publishes NC and SC high-school writers (Barker, 2007). Check with *your* local college.

Eagle Vision is the anthology of Chesnee Middle School (Wright, 2007). No anthology at your school? Start one!

Professional Poets

Poems of professionally published poets often stir students' emotions. The two books mentioned here contain memoir poetry, but other types of poetry prompt memories, too. *Heartsongs* (Stepanek, 2002) relates serious thoughts, recorded as early as age three, of a seriously-ill child. *Neighborhood Odes* (Soto, 1994) contains everyday-activity poems with brief where-this-came-from introductions.

Song Lyrics

Most songs support study of rhyme, rhythm, refrain, and other poetic devices. The words of carefully-chosen songs also awaken thoughts about life experiences. Playing recordings, with lyrics typed for visual learners, facilitates inquiry to foster listeners' memoir poems, songs, letters, or vignettes. *Oldies* prevent preconceived notions attached to familiar verse of current hits. *Bridge Over Troubled Water* (Simon, 2008, track 13) extols friendship and illustrates metaphor and simile. *Cat's in the Cradle* (Chapin & Chapin, 2008, track 1) paints family dynamics in a narrative poem; the refrain involves allusion. *School Day* (Berry, 1999, track 4) colors school topics with humor. One student wrote a hilarious poem about cafeteria food after studying this lyric; another, an ironic poem about "ed-yu-cay-shun."

Three Facts and a Fiction

This activity feels like a game but promotes multiple skills. Students brainstorm facts, narrow down choices, write concise but detailed sentences, create believable fiction, stand before a group, read aloud to peers, listen actively, interpret nonverbal cues, employ logical thought, ask questions, and provide impromptu oral elaboration. They also have fun and end up with superb memoir pieces.

Directions for the activity are simple:

1. Brainstorm interesting facts about your life, either sensational—"My grandfather was governor"—or simply memorable—"My cat moans and hauls around socks to deal with separation anxiety."
2. Revise three facts into detailed sentences.
3. Create a statement that is *not* true but *could* be.
4. (Distribute 4" X 6" note cards.) Write your facts and fiction in random order.
5. Students take turns presenting their statements to the class. Card-writers choose up to three volunteers to identify fictions and then answer peers' questions about facts.
6. Students draft "fact" narratives or poems.



My model narrative is *Toilet-Top Fiasco* (Wright, 2000). My three facts and a fiction include

1. A cocker spaniel bit through my hand when I was three.
2. Twice, I have stood within 10 yards of Britain's royal family.
3. The Jonas Brothers boarded my airplane in New York. (fiction)
4. I broke a toilet across the street from Florida State University.

Students love to hear that teachers once were kids who did such things—albeit accidentally—as breaking a motel’s toilet.

Interviews

The first interview is called *Know-what-I-think?* Interview questions for parents start family conversations, and many students interview multiple adults on their own initiative. They may seem oblivious of Mom and Dad, but children—even teens—crave adult attention. The writing assignment is *Interview your parent, or call or visit to interview an adult relative*. Students react in real-time—what they were surprised the adult did or did not know, the value of the family-share experience—or in memoirs detailing an answer. Sample questions include a) *Who is your child’s greatest hero?* b) *What is your child’s greatest fear?* and c) *What is your child’s loudest complaint about the family?*

The second interview strategy is called *Find-out-about-you!* In this case, students compose interview questions that unearth family-background stories. Multigenerational interviews often resurrect the sitting-around-the-campfire or dinner-table, family-share experience. The assignment is *Interview your eldest relative, a parent, an aunt, or an uncle*. Sample questions include *How did you meet your spouse? What happened when you got into trouble at school? What parental or adult-mentor mistake do you wish you could undo? How did an adult from your childhood impact who you are? What day or event would you like to relive?*

Charm Bracelets and Heirlooms

Charm Bracelets: My friend’s daughters designed a charm bracelet and wrote mother-daughter vignettes for each pendant. Students draw, print, or trace clip-art “charms” to symbolize a relationship, life events, goals, or qualities and add written explanations. Some students create jewelry; others, booklets.

Heirlooms: Students describe a family-oriented gift or heirloom and explain its significance. Sometimes the simplest heirloom inspires the warmest memoir of the year. Interesting!

Human-Interest Stories

Clip newspaper and magazine articles and collect inspiring brochures and flyers. Glue them onto typing paper, laminate or enclose in sheet protectors, and bind. Students read and respond to articles individually, or the teacher chooses some for whole-class study of periodical literature. These kinds of stories motivate memoir-writing, too. *Sand, Sun, Surf and Serenity* (Burger, 2009) offers myriad lessons—including setting details, personification, onomatopoeia, imagery, and intentional use of sentence fragments—while taking readers’ memories to vacations. *When Fathers Cry for Sons Left Behind* (Burger, 1993, C1) laments family break-up from a father’s viewpoint. *Me and the Box Queen* (Bombeck, 1996, pp. 33-34) provides Mom-drives-me-crazy-but-I’m-like-her pack-rat traits.



Diana O. Wright, president of Beta Eta chapter in South Carolina, is a retired teacher of English language arts who attends professional conferences as a participant and as a presenter. She serves on the leadership team of Spartanburg Writing Project (SWP) in South Carolina, directs Spartanburg Junior Writing Project summer writing enrichment program for students, and is a consultant for teaching-of-writing partnerships between SWP and local schools. Diana tutors English at Spartanburg Community College. dottwright@gmail.com

Dramas

Plays in textbooks often are stodgy, boring dramas. Students need to understand the genre, however! Grade-level-specific academic periodicals include modern-language, high-interest plays. *The Kid Who Wouldn't Quit: The Brad Silverman Story* (Lee, 1987, pp. 272-276) adapts the true story of parents' advocacy for their Down-syndrome child. After analyzing plays, students create new memoir pieces in the style of a drama. Even better, writers rework prose memoirs as plays and discuss which version is superior and why.

Current Events

Amid history-changing events, pause for students' real-time memoirs. Later, their childhood reactions to topical issues may amaze them—and their progeny. Create a classroom climate focused on the reason for the current-events pause.

I taped a cassette mix of patriotic, dreaming-of-peace, and war-protest songs to accompany a wall of patriotic calendar photos as inspiration one year. *Operation Desert Storm: Here's How We Feel* (Wright, 1991) is the collective poetic record of students' teenaged thoughts during the first Gulf War. This history-specific anthology written by their relatives, family friends, and teacher became part of the immersion literature when classes paused in reaction to the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001; as the second Gulf War began; and as a classmate mourned his soldier-cousin's death in Afghanistan.

In 2005, a sudden pause found students struggling to cope with a classmate's suicide. The freedom to write with impunity allowed students the option to pen their pain and to put profane thoughts safely in a manila envelope, sealed for privacy and placed in the bottom of my classroom trash can. By the next day, I had located poetry and prose expressing grief and celebrating lives to help writers limp through their shock. Several dedication poems grace that year's school anthology.

Comic Strips

The comics are ageless, layering complexity and creating appeal on multiple maturity levels. The "funny paper" offers life or family situations that prompt personal stories, and comics often include the bonus of literary techniques such as rhyme, onomatopoeia, alliteration, pun, and idiom. Clip and catalogue newspaper comics for various uses, including memoir writing, and find book collections of favorites. One strip with sophisticated content and clever language features the characters Calvin and Hobbes (Watterson, 1991).

Random-Thoughts Cards

Random-Thoughts Cards are 3" X 5" note cards on which students write what is on their minds: perhaps quotations discovered through their reading or personal reactions to humor, anger, confusion, or enlightenment that week. Screen the cards and read several gems aloud on Fridays to prompt writers' and listeners' memoirs. I read them anonymously, although I require that students sign them. Some students are the deep thinkers among their age groups, and their thoughts spur the thoughts of others.

Instrumental Music

Fully infused with text, students are ready to meet nontext inspiration. I adapted for memoir writing an aural activity from a continuing-education class (Hightower, 1995). Varied instrumental melodies inspire interesting anecdotes. Sometimes the *same* music elicits diverse responses. One year, a gentle classical piece sent one student's thoughts to a

backyard rope swing, with her little sister's feet arcing up to touch the sky in slow motion, while another's thoughts ended up at her grandmother's funeral!

Directions for this activity are

1. Demonstrate: Fold paper in half twice to form equal quadrants. Number 1, 2, 3, 4.
2. Explain: "We'll listen to four musical excerpts. Otherwise, silence will reign. Under dimmed lights, close your eyes to limit distractions. Escape into the music; make the melody your world. When the sound stops, fill the appropriate numbered quadrant with words, thoughts, feelings, phrases..."
3. Play each segment and allow time to write reactions (song # 1, quadrant # 1). A lively banjo piece; a relaxing classical piece; a nature piece with bubbling-brook, bird, and insect sounds wound throughout gentle music; and a startling piece from a Halloween CD inspire vivid, varied responses.
4. Facilitate discussion of students' lists.
5. Instruct students to choose one quadrant of jottings to draft melody-prompted memoirs.

Calendar Photographs

Save photo calendars—and beg them from family and friends. Protect the private calendar-grid side under card stock and laminate. Cover a wall with photo-calendar art or hand each student a stack and then pass them around. Each student "walks around" in pictures until one prompts a recollection. Then, they are off and writing!

Olfactory Stimuli

A colleague stimulated memories through smell, an often-ignored sense in the classroom. Prepare cups containing common substances: alcohol, grape drink, pine scent, dirt, cinnamon, or laundry detergent. Students sit, eyes closed, while the teacher roams the aisles, positioning a cup within sniffing range. After a scent passes, students list associated words, phrases, settings, and people. As last-row students jot reactions, earlier sniffers are ready for another pass-through. Finally, students write aroma-associated memoirs (Waddell, 2007).

Conclusion

Lucie Calkins said, "The instinct for memoir is there whenever we return to a remembered place, catch a whiff of a childhood smell, feel nostalgic over a photograph...listen to stories and say, 'That reminds me...'" (1994, p. 400). The *instinct* is there! We can't help enjoying others' memoirs and wanting to share ours. Memories are the essence of what makes life special. Enabling and encouraging students to nurture theirs is pure joy, and writing as their peer is twice the fun! Students will analyze literature that touches them, will labor over writing they love, will welcome conferring as writer to writer, will accept revision advice among equals, and will grow beyond measure as authors when they write by choice—almost by compulsion.

And stimulated authors will continue to notice and to write and to grow—even beyond memoir, even beyond the current school year.

References

- Arwell, N. (1987). *In the middle: Writing, reading, and learning with adolescents*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.
- Barker, J. (Ed.). (2007). *A near miss*. Spartanburg, SC: University of South Carolina Upstate.
- Benet, S. V. (2001). The devil and Daniel Webster. In L. Skiba (Ed.), *Literature and the language arts: Experiencing literature* (pp. 254-263). St Paul, MN: EMCParadigm.
- Berry, C. (1957). School day. On *Best of Chuck Berry* [CD]. New York, NY: Geffen Records. (1999).
- Bombeck, E. (1996, March). Me and the box queen. *Reader's Digest*, 148, 33-34.
- Burger, K. (1993, January 16). When fathers cry for sons left behind. *The Post and Courier*, p. C1.
- Burger, K. (2009, August 1). Sand, sun, surf and serenity. *The Post and Courier*. Retrieved from <http://www.postandcourier.com/news/2009/aug/01/sand-sun-surf-and-serenity/>
- Burns, O. A. (1984). *Cold sassy tree*. New York, NY: Dell.
- Calkins, L. M. (1994). *The art of teaching writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Chapin, H., & Chapin, S. (1974). Cat's in the cradle. [Recorded by Harry Chapin]. On *Cat's in the cradle and other bits*. [CD]. New York, NY: Rhino Records. (2008).
- Cosby, B. (1994). *Fatherhood*. New York, NY: Berkley Publishing Group.
- Dedmond, N. (2005). I wode a twain! In D. Wright (Ed.), *Eagle vision* (p. 29). Chesnee, SC: Chesnee Middle School.
- Felton, H. W. (1991). Pecos Bill: The cyclone. In E. Thompson, E. Bowler, P. Fried, D. Jackson, D. McCollum, J. Standen, ... K. Ackley (Eds.), *Prentice Hall literature: Silver* (pp. 647-652). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Fletcher, R. (1993). *What a writer needs*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Gilbert, M. (2006). When Nana remembered. In D. Wright (Ed.), *Eagle vision* (p. 16). Chesnee, SC: Chesnee Middle School.
- Gray, L. M. (1995). *My mama had a dancing heart*. New York, NY: Orchard Books.
- Grizzard, L. (1997). *If I ever get back to Georgia, I'm gonna nail my feet to the ground*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books.
- Hightower, M. L. (1996). Teaching to the auditory intelligence. Lecture presented in graduate-level class *The Muse Machine*. University of South Carolina Upstate, Spartanburg, SC. Unpublished lecture-demonstration.
- Hughes, L. (2001). Thank you, M'am. In E. Thompson, E. Bowler, P. Fried, D. Jackson, D. McCollum, J. Standen, ... K. Ackley (Eds.), *Prentice Hall literature: Silver* (pp. 739-742). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hughey, E. (2006). Patience is a virtue. In D. Wright (Ed.), *Eagle vision* (p. 32). Chesnee, SC: Chesnee Middle School.
- Kapanowski, S. (2008, August/September). Let's catch some frogs. *Reminisce*, 18, 47.
- Laminack, L. (2004). *Saturdays and teacakes*. Atlanta, GA: Peachtree.
- Lee, H. (1982). *To kill a mockingbird*. New York, NY: Warner Books.
- Lee, J. (1987, September 18). The kid who wouldn't quit: The Brad Silverman story. *Scholastic Scope*, 36, 6+.
- Letters about literature*. (2009, May 12). Retrieved from www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/letters/
- Ray, K. W. (2006). *Study driven*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Ray, K. W., & Laminack, L. (2001). *The writing workshop: Working through the hard parts (and they're all hard parts)*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Rylant, C. (1982). *When I was young in the mountains*. New York, NY: Dutton Children's Books.
- Scholastic Scope*. Retrieved from <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/search?query=scope&x=26&y=10>
- Simon, P. (1969). Bridge over troubled water. [Recorded by Art Garfunkel]. On *The best of Simon & Garfunkel* [CD]. New York, NY: Legacy Recordings. (2008).

- Singer, I. B. (1991). The day I got lost. In E. Thompson, E. Bowler, P. Fried, D. Jackson, D. McCollum, J. Standen, ... K. Ackley (Eds), *Prentice Hall literature: Silver*. (pp. 113-115). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Soto, G. (1994). *Neighborhood odes*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Stepanek, M. J. T. (2002). *Heartsongs*. New York, NY: Hyperion.
- Twain, M. (1980). *The adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Mahwah, NJ: Watermill Press.
- Van Buren, A. (2001, February 1). *Good attitude goes a long way when grandkids visit*. Retrieved from http://www.uexpress.com/dearabby/index.html?uc_full_date=20010201
- Waddell, S. (2007, October 27). Untitled olfactory demonstration. In T. Thomas (Director), *Pamper your inner poet: A taste of our times*. Mini-conference of Spartanburg Writing Project, Spartanburg, SC. Unpublished presentation.
- Watterson, B. (1991, September). *The revenge of the baby-sat: A Calvin and Hobbes collection*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- White, B. (1994). *Mama makes up her mind (and other dangers of southern living)*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Worthen, T. (Ed.). (2009). *A celebration of young poets*. Logan, UT: Creative Communication.
- Wright, D. (Ed.). (1991). *Operation desert storm: Here's how we feel*. Chesnee, SC: Chesnee Middle School.
- Wright, D. (2000). *Toilet top fiasco*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Wright, D. (Ed.). (2007). *Eagle vision*. Chesnee, SC: Chesnee Middle School.
- Yolen, J. (1987). *Owl moon*. New York, NY: Philomel Books.

Practices and Partnerships in Preschool Literacy

By Lisa M. Dimling, Rick A. Worch, Mary M. Murray, Richard Oldrieve, Susan Peet, Ruben Viramontez Anguiano, Leslie A. Straka, and Deborah G. Wooldridge

Based on concern expressed by a local school district in Ohio regarding the literacy readiness of incoming preschoolers, the researchers conducted focus-group discussions with 21 parents of preschool children. Five privately and federally funded preschools within a rural, high-poverty community in Northwest Ohio participated in this study. The purpose was to determine the literacy practices utilized at home, as well as identify strengths and challenges within the local preschool programs with respect to literacy, as identified by parents. Several themes represent the parents' thoughts and expectations, with the most salient theme being the need for better communication and information to assist parents with preparing their child for kindergarten.

Introduction

It has long been known that the literacy readiness scores for incoming kindergarteners in many high-poverty school districts in Northwest Ohio are low. In the fall of 2009, faculty from Bowling Green State University's College of Education and Human Development collaborated with preschools within a rural, high-poverty school district in Northwest Ohio to examine the literacy of preschoolers in the area. Administrators from the school district were concerned with the literacy readiness scores of the incoming kindergarteners and were interested in identifying factors that might be contributing to the children's literacy development. Given the strong research base in early childhood achievement and the link of readiness to family involvement and experiences, the researchers in this study used discussions with parents to investigate the literacy experience at home.

Literature Review

Parents are the experts about their child and the most important teachers (Cornish, 2008; Turnbull, Turnbull, & Wehmeyer, 2010). It follows, then, that a child's success in school is influenced by the parents' ability to supplement learning that takes place in the classroom with learning at home. In fact, more than 30 years of research have shown that, when supported in the home by the family, children's learning and school achievement are positively affected (Cairney, 1994; Calfee, 1997; Eastman, 1991; Epstein & Salinas, 2004; Hannon, 1995; Lonergan, 2000; Purcell-Gates, 2000; Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, Soodak, & Shogren, 2011). Further, literature also suggests that literacy success largely depends on language development (Dickinson, McCabe, & Clark-Chiarelli, 2004), which begins in the home through parent-child interactions. The well-known study conducted by Hart and Risley (1995) documented this correlation between at-home language interaction

and cognitive development with high quality verbal interactions positively influencing cognitive development. The study indicated large differences between socioeconomic status (professional, working class, and welfare) and the quantity and quality of verbal interactions children were exposed to at home, thus affecting the amount of vocabulary children knew. Therefore, the study provided additional support for the importance of parent-child interactions and at-home learning.

Early childhood educators recognize how instrumental family involvement is for learning and that teachers single-handedly cannot prepare children for kindergarten. Research supports the parent-child relationship in connection to learning. For instance, Conell and Prinz (2002) suggested that parents who demonstrate a sensitive and responsive nature to their children promote good social competence and thus lead to better communication skills. Researchers also suggest that child-centered, at-home play helps foster positive peer interactions, independence in the classroom, motivation to learn, and literacy development (Fantuzzo & McWayne, 2002; Nord, Lennon, Liu, & Chandler, 1999). Given how important family involvement is in child development, the partnership between parents and the school can therefore be paramount to further enhancing learning.

The home-school partnership is integral for developing literacy skills in young children. Morrow and Young (1997) investigated the effects when inner-city African-American and Latino families used at-home literacy activities that were similar to those being utilized in the school setting, such as reading storybooks and magazines, emphasizing words in the environment, and journaling. Children in the study were found to make better reading and writing progress when compared to the control group. Similarly, Jordan, Snow and Porche (2000) found comparable results in terms of language development when parents received information about how to support their children's literacy development at home.

Purpose of Study

The overall goal of this project was to assist the school district with identifying literacy strengths and challenges in the preschool programs that transitioned children into the district and to develop a strategic plan to improve kindergarten readiness. District personnel hoped that improved literacy skills at the preschool level would positively impact kindergarten readiness, and ultimately student success in school, specifically in the area of reading and writing. The findings presented here are the result of focus-group discussions designed to determine how parents addressed literacy in the home, their expectations for kindergarten literacy readiness, and their needs for supporting their child's literacy development.

Methods

Setting and Participants

The study took place in a rural, high-poverty community of approximately 15,000 people in Northwest Ohio. Five preschools within the school district, but independently operated from the school district, participated in the study. Three preschools were run by private organizations, and two were publically funded through Head Start. Parents targeted for interviews had 4- and 5-year-olds who attended participating preschools and who would be transitioning to kindergarten during the next academic year. A total of 21 parents representing all five preschools participated in the focus group discussions.

Data Collection and Analysis

All preschool parents who agreed to participate in the study took part in a focus-group

discussion at their child's preschool. Three to five parents participated in the discussion at each preschool site. For approximately 1 hour, parents discussed a variety of open-ended questions prepared in advance that focused on how literacy was addressed at home, what literacy skills parents expected their children to learn in preschool, their understanding of what constituted literacy, and what they needed to support their child's literacy development (see Appendix for Focus Group Discussion Protocol). The discussions were then transcribed, and the text was coded and organized into categories based on key words or concepts. Researchers combined data from all five interviews and identified themes associated with the overarching ideas of the study.

Results

The focus-group discussions were designed to capture the essence of how parents addressed literacy at home with their preschool children. Each of the five themes that emerged from the data is discussed here.

Theme 1: Parents believed social skills are more important than literacy and numeracy skills to prepare their child for kindergarten.

The majority of skills taught at home focused on social skills (n=7), such as following rules and sharing; communication skills, such as talking about your feelings or emotions and holding conversations; and personal-care skills, such as tying shoes, dressing, and hygiene (tooth brushing, hand washing). Practicing letter recognition (n=4) and sounds (n=2) and recognizing numbers and counting (n=4) received less emphasis. The following comment illustrates the priority parents placed on basic functional skills and their perceived role in helping their child learn these basic functional skills: "I am hoping she knows her phone number and address, which I'm working on with her, and tying her shoes. These are skills that I think are really important for her to know before kindergarten." Another parent's comments further illustrate the functional element of number knowledge: "We have a book with all the kids' phone numbers and address written in it, and they would sit down and practice it."

Theme 2: The majority of parent-child activities were related to physical activity or play rather than literacy.

More than half of the parents (n=12) stated that outdoor activities, such as camping, swimming, bike riding, playing or watching sports, and going to the playground consumed



Dr. Lisa M. Dimling,
School of Intervention
Services

Dr. Rick A. Worch, School
of Teaching and Learning

Dr. Mary M. Murray,
School of Intervention
Services

Dr. Richard Oldrieve,
School of Teaching and
Learning

The authors are colleagues at Bowling Green State University
For further information regarding this study, contact Dr. Dimling: dmlisa@bgsu.edu

the majority of daily parent-child activities. Because this community is rural, it was also not surprising to hear that children were playing outdoors with farming equipment, such as tractors: "That's all he plays with is the John Deere."

Forty percent of the parents (n=10) said they participated in literacy activities with their child. Activities identified by the parents as literacy-related were visiting the library, telling stories, singing songs, and reading books to their children. For most parents, singing songs and reading books were typically part of the bedtime routine rather than a midday activity: "At bedtime, we always read at least one book that they each get to choose from."

However, families spent less time together engaged in literacy activities than other activities such as outdoor physical play (n=12), watching television (n=6), playing with toys (n=3) and games (n=3), crafts (n=3), cooking (n=3), and pretend play (n=3). None of the parents suggested that these kinds of activities could be opportunities to promote literacy learning: "We eat, of course, and he helps with that stuff a lot; he's in the kitchen with me cooking a lot. But that's all we do when we cook."

Unfortunately, most parents indicated that their primary role when children were playing was supervising, usually in absentia, rather than supporting their child's play or actually playing with the child: "I would say I just supervise. The kids like to say, 'Watch me Mom.' And so I watch them, you know?" Parents frequently cited time as a major constraint to their ability to be more involved in their child's activities. They were unsure how to balance the work they had at home (i.e., housework) and playtime with their child. When asked what they generally do when their child is playing, one parent reported, "It depends on if I have a lot of dishes to do and if the girls are playing together, or if they are fighting; and if they are fighting, then I definitely have to get involved."

Theme 3: The element of limited time is a major factor for parents.

As noted in Theme 2, time was a significant parental concern. Several parents (n=5) stated that commitments including employment, housework, and other family-support duties negatively impacted their ability to devote the time they acknowledged they should and want to spend doing things with their children. Thus, it appeared to be a juggling act for many parents: "If they are playing, then I can be in the area, but I'm not always jumping right in. Sometimes they make me pretend I am a princess or do some dancing in the kitchen, if I am trying to clean the kitchen, but they may need to play by themselves so I can finish up."

This dilemma led to a feeling of guilt for some parents because they are not able to



Dr. Susan Peet, Family and Consumer Sciences

Dr. Ruben Viramontez Anguiano, Family and Consumer Sciences

Leslie A. Straka, B.S., Institute for Child and Family Policy

Dr. Deborah G. Wooldridge, Family and Consumer Sciences. Dr. Wooldridge is a member of Gamma Delta Chapter, Ohio, and former member of the DKG Editorial Board.

meet their child's learning needs at home: "He's getting better at letting me get done what I need to do." For others, it served as a rationalization for engaging in "fun" activities with their children rather than educational ones, which, of course, suggests that education is not fun: "I want to enjoy the time with my kids, not teach them."

Theme 4: Parents' understanding of phonics is incomplete.

When asked about their understanding of phonics, the majority of parents thought that phonics involved the sounds of letters and sounding out words (n=6), letter recognition (n=5), and blends or putting sounds together to make words (n=2). One parent stated a fairly accurate definition of phonics: "I understand it to be sounds of letters and putting them together to make words by sounding them out." However, most parents had only a partial understanding of what phonics entails. As one parent stated, "It's like the alphabet placemat my son has. It has a word and a picture of what it will start with." Another parent said, "Everybody pronounces things in different ways. Her dad tends to, if she pronounces a word wrong, he stops her and tells her the right way and asks her repeat it to him." Only one parent knew that phonics involved rhyming and learning how to pronounce words.

Theme 5: Parents want ongoing communication with their child's teacher to supplement their child's learning and preparation for kindergarten.

The most significant area of concern for parents was their perceived lack of teacher-parent communication. The following comments illustrate the parents' frustration with the lack of communication: "I just don't understand what they want me to do." "I would like to know what they want us to work on with them at home. I don't know what they are doing there (at the preschool) because I'm not in there with her." "Do they even have a game plan? What do they need to know?" When asked what skills the children were learning in their preschools, many parents were unclear about what was actually happening in their child's classroom. For instance, one parent stated, "I'm not sure. I know they read books, but I'm not sure."

All parents agreed that their role in their child's education is very important and that they want to be involved: "Absolutely, I think the parent plays a huge role. They're (the children are) with their parents more than they're at school, I would hope." "I think parents need to get involved in what they're learning. If you know they are practicing numbers, then continue that at home. If they are working on months of the year, continue that at home." Several parents also stated their desire to know if their child is struggling with a skill so that they could work on it at home. "If my son's having a problem with something and everyone else seems to be picking up on it, I'd kind of like to know; maybe you should work extra hard on whatever this is he's not quite getting."

Interestingly, it appeared that because many parents were not getting information from their child's teacher or the preschool about the developmental expectations for kindergarten, they were finding alternative means to identify the information. For instance, one parent stated that she found out "through a home-school teacher what some of the expectations were for them to be able to do in kindergarten, and I looked at this lady and was like, 'Seriously?' There is no way that my 4-year old would even know how to do some of that stuff. But now that I know, that's something I can start to work with my kids on. But, it would be nice to know what they need to know by the end of the school year."

To help alleviate the communication problem, one parent suggested that their child's teachers complete a daily worksheet to assist with parent communication, but she recognized this could be a burden on the teacher: "I don't want to make more paperwork for the teachers, but it would be kind of nice to have... to know what they did during the

day.” “I need to learn where my kid needs to be. At age 3 he should be at this stage, or age 4 he should be at this stage and should be able to pick this up.... these are some of the developmental skills that our child should be learning. I guess I like to see that.”

With respect to activities related to literacy skill development at home, few parents knew what phonemic awareness is, that it is a prerequisite to reading, or that there are activities they can do with their children to develop phonemic awareness skills, such as segmenting words, blending sounds together, or spelling or decoding words based on onsets and rimes. The National Early Literacy Panel indicated that these phonemic awareness skills, when combined with spelling pseudo words and spelling real words, are by far the best predictors of later success in literacy. Focus-group discussions with the parents revealed a great interest in learning how they could help their children become better readers and suggested that parents were willing to incorporate literacy activities into their daily routines.

Discussion and Conclusions

Based on the focus-group discussions with preschoolers’ parents, the key finding of this study appears to be that communication is really the key to getting parents more involved in their child’s education. The partnership between the school, teachers, and parents is one that is paramount to increasing learning and achievement. The parents attending the focus groups expressed a great deal of interest in learning how to help their children learn how to read, but, like other parents (Colombo, 2004), they felt they did not know how. These parents had the desire to contribute to their children’s literacy development and wanted to know what they could do to help. However, one of the greatest challenges was the limited time that parents had due to work, school, family, and so forth, and, therefore, they needed support from teachers and administrators to learn how to help the children effectively at home. Parents would like to know how to incorporate phonemic awareness and literacy learning into their every day routines. These skills can be taught easily, for example by turning a trip to the grocery store into a word-finding expedition, by sounding out all the words they see that start with “sh,” by increasing word knowledge by talking about the words around us through environmental print, or by singing rhyming songs while putting away the dishes. These types of activities can be systematically taught to parents to help their children learn the preliminary skills necessary for language and reading (i.e., literacy) development, thus preparing their children for a successful kindergarten year.

The National Reading Panel (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000) report noted that there is a major difference in literacy outcomes when learning is the result of a systematic teaching strategy rather than incidental. Preliminary research by Neuman and Koh (2009) showed that it is possible to help preschool teachers and aides develop more systematized routines of literacy that focus on phonemic awareness such as identifying and producing rhymes. Why not include the parents as well? Future research could address this need and empower parents to provide experiences to help their child be successful when he or she enters kindergarten. The transition to kindergarten will be difficult for children if preschools and parents do not work together to help children develop the literacy skills, particularly phonemic awareness, that schools now expect children to have upon entering kindergarten.

References

- Cairney, T. (1994). Family literacy: Moving towards new partnerships in education. *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, 17, 262–275.
- Calfee, R. (1997). Language and literacy, home and school. *Early Child Development and Care*, 127–128, 75–98. doi:10.1080/0300443971270107
- Colombo, M. W. (2004). Family literacy nights...and other home-school connections. *Educational Leadership*, 61(8), 48-51.
- Conell, C. M., & Prinz, R. J. (2002). The impact of childcare and parent-child interactions on school readiness and social skills development for low-income African-American children. *Journal of School Psychology*, 40(2), 177-193. doi:10.1016/S0022-4405(02)00090-0
- Cornish, M. M. (2008). Introduction. In M. M. Cornish (Ed.), *Promising practices for partnering with families in the early years* (pp. xiii-xvii). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.
- Dickinson, D. K., McCabe, A., & Clark-Chiarelli, N. (2004). Preschool-based prevention of reading disability. In C. A. Stone, E. R. Selliman, B. J. Ehren, & K. Apel (Eds.), *Handbook of language and literacy: Development and disorders* (pp.209-227). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Eastman, M. (1991). *Family: The vital factor*. Melbourne: Collins Dove.
- Epstein, J. L., & Salinas, K. C. (2004). Partnering with families and communities. *Educational Leadership*, 61(8), 12-17.
- Fantuzzo, J., & McWayne, C. (2002). The relationship between peer-play interactions in the family context and dimensions of school readiness for low-income preschool children. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 94(1), 79-87. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.94.1.79
- Hannon, P. (1995). *Literacy, home and school*. London, UK: Falmer Press.
- Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- Jordan, G. E., Snow, C. E., & Porche, M. V. (2000). Project EASE: The effect of a family literacy project on kindergarten students' early literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35, 524-546. doi:10.1598/RRQ.35.4.5
- Longergan, J. (2000, May). *Parent partnerships with schools in the middle years of schooling*. Paper presented at the Middle Years of Schooling Conference, Brisbane, AUS.
- Morrow, L. M., & Young, J. (1997). Parent, teacher, and child participation in a collaborative family literacy program: The effect of attitude, motivation, and literacy achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 89, 736-742. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.89.4.736
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction* (NIH Publication No. 00-4769). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Neuman, S. B., & Koh, S. (2009, December). Support for enhancing preschoolers' vocabulary through teaching vocabulary in semantic clusters. In S. Koh (Chair), *Giving all children a good start: Strategies for narrowing the vocabulary gap*. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the National Reading Conference in Albuquerque, NM.
- Nord, C. W., Lennon, J., Liu, B., & Chandler, K. (1999). *Home literacy activities and signs of children's emerging literacy, 1993 and 1999* (NCES Publication No. 2000-026). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement. Available at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2000026>
- Purcell-Gates, V. (2000). Family literacy. In M. Kamil, P. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research: Volume III* (pp. 853-870). Mahwah, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum Associates.
- Turnbull, A. P., Turnbull, H.R., & Wehmeyer, M. L. (2010). *Exceptional lives: Special education in today's schools* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Turnbull, A., Turnbull, H., Erwin, E., Soodak, L., & Shogren, K. (2011). *Families, professionals, and exceptionality: Positive outcomes through partnerships and trust*. (6th ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Appendix

Parent Questionnaire

Directions to focus group members: *This questionnaire is designed to elicit open-ended questions. If a question leads you to a slightly different idea than asked, please follow your thought process and go down that new pathway. If the focus-group leader thinks that you are going off in a direction that is off topic, he or she will eventually ask you to stop. On the other hand, if the focus-group leader senses you are going off in a desired direction, he or she may ask you and/or other members of the group follow-up questions.*

- 1.) Describe your typical day when you're home with your child.
- 2.) Why did you decide to take your child to the program?
 - a. Why did you choose this particular program?
 - b. What do you like about the daily program?
 - c. What would you like to be done differently?
- 3.) What do you expect your child to be able to do by the time he/she enters kindergarten?
 - a. Speaking/Language
 - b. Personal care
 - i. Clothing
 - ii. Personal hygiene
 - c. Social skills
 - i. When playing with you
 - ii. When playing with friends
 - iii. When playing by him or herself
 - iv. At centers
 - v. During play
- 4.) What kind of play does your child engage in at home?.....at school?
 - a. What kinds of materials do you have in your house that may help your child develop literacy skills?
 - i. Types of toys
 - ii. Books
 - iii. Activities
 - b. What type of play areas does your child have access to outside the house? For example, your yard, parks, school playgrounds?
 - i. Which of these are used most often?
 - c. When your child is playing at home, what do you usually do?
 - i. Watch
 - ii. Play along
 - iii. Household chores
 - iv. Leisure activities
 - d. Tell us about rules in your home regarding TV, video games, computers, gaming systems, such as WII.
 - i. How often does your child play alone versus with others?
 - e. Tell us about bedtime routines and rules in your household.

- f. What types of experiences do you and your children enjoy doing together when you have free time?
 - i. Santa Claus
 - ii. Playgrounds
 - iii. Relatives
 - iv. The beach
 - v. Camping
 - vi. Museums
 - vii. The Zoo
 - viii. Cedar Point
 - ix. Plays
 - x. Movies
- g. Do you plan outdoor play experiences with your child or children?
- h. Explain your thoughts about how children develop literacy skills as they play.

Directions to Focus-Group Leader: *With 15 minutes left in the session, please wrap up any of the above topics and begin the questions related to literacy.*

5.) Reading/Literacy

- a. What are your family routines related to reading/literacy skills?
 - i. How do you engage your child or children in the story?
 - ii. What do you hope your child or children learn from your reading aloud?
- b. Describe your role related to reading/literacy.
 - i. What is your role in preparing children for literacy success in kindergarten?
 - ii. What is the teacher's role in preparing children for kindergarten?
 - iii. How do parents and teachers work together to prepare children for kindergarten?
- c. Tell us your understanding of phonics and how phonics is used with preschool-age children.
- d. Thinking about your child's literacy experiences, do you feel you are able to meet your child's learning and developmental needs and interests?
 - i. If so, tell us more.
 - ii. If not, tell us more.

Poetry

Melting

By CharleAnne P. Sher

Beta Kappa Chapter, Georgia

Like a cube of ice in a glass of Southern sweet tea,
You are melting.
The ravages of Alzheimer's
Are taking you away.
Melted are your days
Of walking, talking, eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, and saying,
"I love you."

It's been you and me for 64 years.

I remember when . . .

You played "Boogie Woogie" on the piano,
Fixed Sunday dinner for Papa and our family,
Dressed up in pink dresses with your high heels and hats,
Put pink roses in a jelly jar on the kitchen window sill,
Helped me to learn to read in the first grade,
Taught me to love music,
Baked the best chocolate pie with coconut in the meringue,
Drove me to college classes on snowy days,
Joked about "ten 'til eight" (tintillate),
Celebrated with me at two weddings,
Listened as I cried with two divorces,
Beamed with pride when I was "teacher of the year."

When I was little, you took care of me.

Now, our roles reverse, and I take care of you.

Our special phrases of "yummy yummy for your Tummy" and "sho nuff"

Now, not hearing them is really tough.

Slowly you've melted over 6 years.

Without your knowing I've shed thousands of tears.

I'll continue to see you every day

So long as there's a way

To see your smiles and eyes of blue.

That I love you is surely true.

Children—Over Easy!

By Suellen May Lamb

Beta Tau Chapter, Louisiana

If we ordered up our children
They'd be perfect; they'd be wise
With a wicked sense of humor
And a twinkle in their eyes.

They'd agree to all we wanted.
They'd be pleasant all the time,
Never wild or hard to handle;
Sour looks would be a crime

They'd see life just as we do;
Never choose to disagree.
They'd be perfect little clones.
They'd be you or maybe me

But, we could miss a prize;
Someone better to behold,
Facing challenges of life
When the cost is being bold.

So, guide your children well.
Give them rules and let them be,
For the seeds were amply planted.
Let them blossom and be free.

Correction: In the Fall 2010 issue, poet Marilyn Trainor's state organization was incorrect. She is a member of Beta Tau Chapter in Michigan.

Five Doors

by Suzanna Bevins Mullins

Alpha Psi Chapter, Virginia

Five doors.

Five doors down the hallway.

Five doors down the hallway from *your* library.

Five doors down the hallway from *your* library is *my* classroom.

As a child, I ran down this hallway.

As a teenager, I talked with my friends in this hallway.

Now as an adult, it is the sound of *my* shoes which echoes
where *your* shoes once did.

My first day of work, I cried as I drove to school.

How much I have to tell you.

How much I long to share my experiences with you.

Occasionally, I will pick up a book and find your writing.

Some days I sit and wonder what your days were like.

A woman came by the library.

She was a former member of your library club.

Tears rolled down her cheeks as she recalled her days in your library.

It was evident you had an impact on her life.

That is what I want. To have an impact on the lives of my students.

Daily I visit *your* library, *my* sanctuary.

Five doors.

Five doors down the hallway.

Five doors down the hallway from *my* classroom.

Five doors down the hallway from *my* classroom, I am home.

Bulletin Submission Guidelines

Submissions from members will be accepted for review provided that:

- The submission is not being considered concurrently in whole or substantial part by another publisher.
- The *Bulletin* has exclusive option of possible publication for a period of six months following receipt of the submission.
- The author assumes responsibility for publication clearance in the event the submission was presented at a professional meeting or is the direct product of a project financed by a funding agency.
- Authors are responsible for accurately citing all quoted and bibliographic materials and for obtaining permission from the original source for quotations in excess of 150 words or for tables or figures reproduced from published works.
- Co-authors are permitted. At least one author must be a Delta Kappa Gamma member.

Manuscript Preparation

- Although there is a suggested theme for each issue, manuscripts on all topics are welcome.
- Manuscripts should be focused, well organized, effectively developed, concise and appropriate for *Bulletin* readers. The style should be direct, clear, readable, and free from gender, political, patriotic, or religious bias. Topic headings should be inserted where appropriate.
- Please see Submission Grid on the following page for specific requirements of the types of manuscripts appropriate for publication.
- Use *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, current edition, for manuscript preparation. Visit the APA Style website at www.apastyle.org.
- Double space the entire manuscript, including quotations, references and tables. Print should be clear, dark, and legible. Pages must be numbered.
- References should refer only to materials cited within the text. Non-retrievable material, such as papers, reports of limited circulation, unpublished works, and personal communications, should be restricted to works absolutely essential to the manuscript.
- Abbreviations should be explained at their first appearance in the text. Educational jargon (e.g., preservice, K–10, etc.) should be defined as it occurs in the text.
- Place tables and figures on separate pages at the end of the manuscript. Use Arabic numerals and indicate approximate placement in the text.
- Photos, graphics, charts, etc. that may enhance the presentation of the manuscript may be included. Contact the editorial staff (bulletin@dkg.org) for information regarding the use of photos.

Submission

- **One submission per author per issue.**
- Submit electronically your manuscript, definitive abstract, and biographical information to bulletin@dkg.org. Biographical information must include author(s) name(s), occupational position(s), Society and professional affiliations (list offices held), address(es), phone number(s) and e-mail address(es).
- Submit a recent photograph of the author(s) suitable for reproduction to *Bulletin* Editorial Staff, The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, P.O. Box 1589, Austin, TX 78767-1589. To submit electronic/digital photos, the files must have a **minimum of 300 dpi** resolution and be saved as a JPG or TIFF file. Please e-mail to bulletin@dkg.org.

Poems and Graphic Arts

Submit a single copy with your name, address, and chapter affiliation on it. A photograph is not required.

Publication of Submissions

- Authors of published articles will receive five complimentary copies of the *Bulletin* in which the article appears; authors of published poems and graphic arts will receive two complimentary copies.
- The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International and the editorial staff assume no responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed by contributors in *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*.
- All published materials are copyrighted by The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International and may not be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission.
- The editorial staff reserves the right to make changes of a nonsubstantive nature.

For evaluation rubric, please go to the Publications page of the library at www.dkg.org.

Bulletin Submission Grid

Submission Type and Description	Word Length	Abstract or Introduction	Documentation
Action Research: Organized, systematic, and reflective observation of classroom practice that also addresses areas of concern.	1,500-4,000	Abstract	Required
Qualitative Research: Focuses on how individuals and groups view and understand the world and construct meanings from their experiences; essentially narrative-oriented and employs nonstatistical approaches.	1,500-4,000	Abstract	Required
Quantitative Research: Involves the measurement of quantity or amount in order to test a hypothesis or a theory; gathers and analyzes measurable data in order to support or refute a hypothesis or theory. Numbers and statistics are central to quantitative research.	1,500-4,000	Abstract	Required
Annotated Bibliography: An alphabetical listing of sources that provides an account of research that has been done on a given topic; includes a concise summary of each source as well as some assessment of its value.	1,500-3,000	Introduction	Required
Position Paper: Defines an issue; asserts clear and unequivocal position on that issue and argues directly in its favor.	1,000-1,500	Abstract	Required
Program Description: Provides an overview and details of a single program in an educational setting. Goals, resources and outcomes are included. No marketing or promotion of a program is allowed.	1,000-1,500	Abstract	Encouraged
Book Review: Combines summary and personal critique of a book on an educational topic or with educational relevance.	400-700	Introduction	Required
Graphic Arts: Original drawings, sketches, etchings, woodcuts, photographs, cartoons	NA	NA	Not required
Letter to the Editor: Responds to materials previously published in the <i>Bulletin</i> ; must include author's name and chapter/state of membership.	200-300	NA	Not required
Poetry: Original expression in any brief poetic format.	NA	NA	Not required