

## MOORE AND MORE ON WHOLE LANGUAGE

**Organizing the whole language classroom** Bill Moore. Pembroke, 1989. 59 pp. \$8.95 paper. ISBN 0-921217-366; **Reading for whole language learning.** Bill Moore. Pembroke, 1989. 59 pp., \$8.95 paper. ISBN 0-921217-37-4; **Writing for whole language learning.** Bill Moore. Pembroke, 1989. 72 pp., \$8.95 paper. ISBN 0-921217-38-2; **Listening, speaking, viewing and doing.** Bill Moore. Pembroke, 1989 59 pp., \$8.95 paper. ISBN 0-921217-39-0; **A whole language primer.** Lee Gunderson. Scholastic-TAB, 1989. 48 pp., \$8.95 paper. ISBN 0-590-73295-1; **Whole language: Inquiring voices.** D. Watson. Scholastic-TAB, 1989. 71 pp., \$9.95 paper. ISBN 0-590-73371-0; **Response journals.** Les Parsons. Pembroke, 1990. 90 pp., \$10.95 paper. ISBN 0-921217-41-2; **What's there to write about?** Kalli Dakos. Scholastic-TAB, 1989. 35 pp., \$5.95 paper. ISBN 0-590-73354-0; **Luk mume luk dade I kan rit.** Una Villiers. Scholastic-TAB, 1989. 96 pp., \$16.95. ISBN 0-590-71701-4; **Did I hear you write?** Michael Rosen. Scholastic-TAB, 1989. 200 pp., \$15.00 paper. ISBN 0-590-73355-9; **Story presentations.** Daniel Kehoe. Pembroke, 1990. 48 pp., \$18.95 paper. ISBN 0-921217-42-0; **First steps to literacy.** American Library Association, 1990. 108 pp., \$19.95 paper. ISBN 0-8389-0521-8.

The current rise in popularity of "whole language" programs has resulted in Canadian writers contributing books about the ways children, especially adolescents, acquire language. Canadian educators will benefit from Bill Moore's four innovative, well-designed, and easily read handbooks on teaching language in the junior classroom, and from other books which add a Canadian emphasis to concepts previously explored by American and Australian authors.

In *Organizing the whole language classroom*, Moore clearly defines the philosophy, emphasizing the importance of language functions and the necessity of integrating all language skills in the classroom. He promotes a thematic approach, accents the process rather than the product of learning language, and emphasizes easing away from large group activities towards small group ones, primarily through the use of activity cards. Moore's general introduction to the whole language concept might be supplemented by Lee Gunderson's *A whole language primer*, which sorts out the ever-increasing range of buzz words in a humorous and easily readable fashion. Gunderson also makes a balanced comparison between whole language and traditional teaching methodology and makes light of the antagonism that exists between proponents of the two methods.

In *Reading for whole language learning*, Moore stresses the need to avoid "banal and boring" exercises. The reading function, expanded into the wider concept of inquiry, is also in focus in *Whole language: Inquiring voices*. This

book presents the concept of inquiry as the focal point of classroom experience. Inquiry is described as a means of empowering students and permitting the teacher to play a less directive role. Tips are given here for getting individual learners involved in inquiry.

Turning to the function of composition, Moore in *Writing for whole language learning* insists that creativity and technical syntactic knowledge are compatible – highly pertinent at a time when many are concerned we are throwing out the basics. Les Parsons, in *Response journals*, describes student journals as an underused tool in the classroom, offers logical and meaningful exercises to encourage the children, and includes samples of children's writing. *What's there to write about?* by Kalli Dakos is a writer's concise account of the process she goes through to enable her to compose, designed to provide strategies to help teachers get their students to write. Una Villiers's very handsome *Luk mume luk dade I kan rit*, demonstrating the developmental stages through which children pass in learning to write, is rather disappointing: its examples are not easily generalizable.

Finally, Moore's *Listening, speaking, viewing and doing* describes ways to improve each of these language skills, especially by vocabulary development. Exercises encouraging students to practice both listening and speaking are a goldmine for teachers, experienced and inexperienced alike. It is left to the teachers to update, vary, and individualize these exercises. *Did I hear you write?* by British author Michael Rosen also emphasizes the oral mode. Rosen urges teachers to avoid imprinting a particular method of expression and to encourage children to use their own language in the classroom. *Story presentations* by David Kehoe gives suggestions for making projects more visually appealing. With the current emphasis on writing generally, and also on project-writing, this is a valuable teacher resource.

For spreading ideas about the whole language philosophy and methods, help is available in *First steps to literacy*, written for librarians or teachers who conduct reading workshops for adults. Talks, used previously with parents in various American cities, and bibliographies, grouped and annotated, will facilitate the task of workshop presenters. The thrust however is towards American literature and no mention is made of excellent and relevant Canadian authors such as Kathy Stinson, Ginette Anfousse, Paulette Bourgeois, or Phoebe Gilman. The heart of the whole language theory is its emphasis on what Bill Moore calls "true reading." Let's include more "true Canadian reading."

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