

CONCERNING THIS ISSUE

This issue of *Educational Perspectives* focuses on reading education. In recent decades the teaching of reading has been the center of numerous controversies. Most notable have been the issue of whole word versus phonic methods and the debate over code or meaning emphasis programs in beginning reading. At present, the issue of declining reading achievement scores is gaining public attention. Many feel that the schools are responsible for the apparent decline, while others believe that such factors as home and family background and the influence of television affect reading achievement. To compound the controversy, recent research indicates that at least some segments of our school population are improving in reading.

The first two articles deal with the concern over the level of reading achievement in our schools. Dr. Margaret Early, Professor of Education and Associate Dean of the School of Education at Syracuse University, reacts to the report of the advisory panel commissioned by the College Entrance Examination Board to study the steady decline of Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores from 1963 through 1977. She discusses some of the factors which may have contributed to the decline and suggests what teachers need to do to reverse the trend. Mr. Kenneth Yamamoto, Program Specialist for Language Arts in the Hawaii State Department of Education, outlines the State's plan for reading improvement by concentrating its efforts in four interrelated areas: instructional programs, inservice training, curriculum management and parent involvement.

The next three articles are addressed primarily to

classroom teachers because of their crucial role in the teaching-learning process. Dr. Robert Ruddell, Professor of Education and Director of the Reading-Language Development Program at the University of California at Berkeley, briefly explores logical analysis and empirical research related to the nature of the comprehension process. He formulates an instructional framework which accounts for comprehension levels and competencies and discusses how attention to questioning strategies can greatly increase the potential for developing comprehension. Dr. Betty Uehara examines the values of using a language-experience approach for teaching written composition. She urges teachers to use a variety of stimuli to extend and expand the child's experience and language backgrounds to facilitate growth in writing and reading. Dr. Kelvin Young discusses how language cues are used in the reading process, describes a means of evaluating a learner's effectiveness in processing these cues and suggests ways to help foster more effective reading.

Finally, the article by Dr. Mary Austin, Professor of Education and Director of the Reading and Language Arts Center at the University of Hawaii, is addressed to parents, teachers and librarians. Dr. Austin discusses some of the values of literature and provides examples of rewarding experiences for learners to help them develop lifelong interests in reading.

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Guest Editor