

Survey Finds Vocabulary Teaching Weak

Elementary teachers are not using the most effective techniques for teaching vocabulary, a recent study concludes.

The report is based on a survey of 228 first- through fifth-grade teachers, sponsored by the Wisconsin Center for Education Research and directed by Dale Johnson, a University of Wisconsin education professor.

The survey found that teachers relied heavily on workbook exercises and word attack skills as their main teaching strategies instead of emphasizing meaning-based activities, particularly those that relate new vocabulary to prior knowledge and experience.

First- and second-grade teachers most frequently listed new words as a prereading activity, while applying word identification skills and completing workbook pages were ranked second and third in frequency usage. Among third- to fifth-grade teachers, listing new words was most frequently used, followed by reading and completing workbook pages. Discussing vocabulary in the context of the content material was ranked third.—From *Report on Education Research*, vol. 17, 1985.

U.S. Schoolchildren Join to Raise Millions for African Famine Relief

"A fundraising drive for Africa famine relief that started in the New York City public schools has shot like a 'cannonball' to schools across the country, according to relief workers. The Los Angeles Unified School District alone has raised more than \$400,000.

"The 'Children for Children' campaign in New York—[seen] on ABC television's '20/20,'—has raised more than \$250,000 since last December.

"The response has been over-

whelming,' says Marilyn Sheridan, a consultant with Save the Children, a Connecticut-based foundation. . . .

"Although there is no official estimate of how much money students have raised nationwide, Peter Davies, the president of Interaction, estimates the total at 'well over several million dollars.'

"To raise funds, students have participated in marathon sports and reading events, bake sales and skip-a-lunch days, among other activities."—Education Week, vol. IV, Nos. 40, 41, August 21, 1985. Reprinted by permission.

Education Recommended for 3- and 4-Year-Olds

"A Massachusetts task force on early-childhood education has recommended to the state board of education that it expand public-education to include programs for all 3- and 4-year-old children.

"There is a clear need to make high-quality programming in early-childhood education available to all children in the commonwealth," concluded the 37-member Task Force on Early Childhood Education after eight months of study."—Ibid.

Circling the Classroom

Although straight rows of desks are a time-honored tradition in American schools, researchers at the University of California at Berkeley have found that students participate more when their desks are arranged in a circle.

According to their studies, students of all achievement levels participate more in a circle than they do in rows—a finding particularly important for lower achievers who tend to withdraw from discussions.

What about discipline problems? The researchers say that even when children speak out of turn, their comments are likely to

pertain to the topic and discussion.—Research cited by *Learning*, September, 1985. □

UNCLE SAM AND YOUR SCHOOL

By Gary M. Ross

Upholding the American practice of church-state separation exacts a price. This reality is especially apparent in regard to last summer's "shared time" rulings by the U.S. Supreme Court—unexpected rulings that were correct but costly.

Public aid to parochial schools is unconstitutional, the Court declared, if it takes the form of publicly paid teachers entering parochial schools to conduct classes on purely secular subjects. No matter that the funding is state or federal; that the courses are remedial or enriching; or that the classes meet during or after the regular hours of the school day. Nor is anything gained in terms of constitutional propriety when schools, prior to a shared time activity, remove or cover religious objects. Also, violations of the First Amendment's "establishment clause" are exacerbated, not reduced, when authorities monitor the programs to ensure against religious involvement.

The 5-to-4 decisions to this effect struck down programs in Grand Rapids and New York City, which gave direct aid to Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, Seventh-day Adventist, and Jewish school systems for the teaching of various

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secular courses. About 11,000 students are affected in one locale, more than 25,000 in the other. Also, the Reagan administration, which had been pushing for more public involvement in private schools, is nursing a wound.

By implication the rulings indicate at least the following:

1. The high tribunal remains capable of emphatic reaffirmations of church-state separation despite the "conservative" or "accommodating" tendency of its 1983-1984 rulings.

2. In judging aid to parochial schools the three-part test adopted in the 1971 case of *Lemon v. Kurtzman* is alive and well. Under that test a law or program is permissible if its purpose is secular, if its primary effect is neither to advance nor inhibit religion, and if excessive entanglement of government and religion is not fostered.

3. The notion that some curricular aspects of parochial schools are "purely secular" is dubious, as are some of the child-benefit theories currently used to defend parochial aid.

The finding that on-site neutral services are not constitutional is reverberating nationwide. A chorus of sympathy for disadvantaged pupils, many of whose most urgent educational needs may now go unmet, is being heard. The morale of the participating high school teachers is down—they had vowed to function in a strictly separationist way, but now find their integrity being questioned.

There is also a search for alternative, more acceptable kinds of aid to parochial schools. Catholic leaders, for example, may put public school instructors in mobile classrooms parked adjacent to Catholic schools, or bus parochial students to nearby public schools during or after school hours (release-time in reverse). Third-party

providers of remedial instruction (educational television) and neutral sites (such as storefronts) are also under consideration. Meanwhile, the White House is striking back with shopworn proposals to give parents of children in affected schools a tuition tax credit or an expendable voucher—proposals whose fate is uncertain.

Since 1971, the Court has reviewed more than a dozen varieties of aid to parochial schools. Only one or two have passed constitutional muster, most notably Minnesota's provision of a tax break for the payment of tuition. Right now Government's revenue preoccupations bode well for critics of parochial aid, as does the Supreme Court's careful scrutiny of practices that are litigated on church-state grounds. □

Sources of Materials

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riculum for elementary schools in New York state. For information, write to TEMPCO, Inc., P.O. Box 1982, Topeka, KS 66601.

8:30 Monday Morning is an alcohol prevention project for use with young people in grades 7 through 12. It is available from American Business Men's Research Foundation, Suite 1208, Michigan National Tower, Lansing, MI 48933.

The Peer Education Manual on Alcohol and Drugs for grades 7 through 12 costs \$65 and is available from the County of Riverside Health Department, Attention: Monzoor Massey, 3575 11th St., Riverside, CA 92501. □

AU Educational Research Index

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Ladd, Karen. *A Comparative Study of the Psychological Profiles of a Selective*

Sample of Incarcerated Females Versus Non-Incarcerated Females, August, 1984, 179 pages, Fitcher.

Lukman, Roy L. *Androgynous Coping Behaviors: A Test of Bem's Sex-Role Theory*, July, 1983, 107 pages, Blitchington.

Melgosa, Julian. *Occupational Identity Assessment Among Middle and Late Adolescents*, March, 1985, 231 pages, Cruise.

Napper, Byron P. *A Comparative Study Between the Black and White Seventh-day Adventist Seminarians Concerning Their Attitudes and Perceptions of Their Ministry Relative to Selected Social and Theological Issues*, August, 1983, 257 pages, Harris.

Purcell, Stephen L. *An Empirical Study of Relationship Between Religious Orthodoxy Defined as Religious Rigidity and Religious Closed-Mindedness and Marital Sexual Functioning*, April, 1984, 183 pages, Thayer.

Reye, Arnold Colin. *Frederick Griggs: Seventh-day Adventist Educator and Administrator*, January, 1984, 492 pages, Knight. □

Keeping Youth Drug-Free

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phoric highs with mild discomfort coming down. As a result, the user begins to develop a tolerance for the substance. Behavior changes occur; the user becomes moody, hostile; loses interest in hobbies and school; begins to have problems with the law. What started as a way to feel good (in Stage 1) becomes the way to feel good.

Stage 3. Preoccupation with drugs. Now the young person's whole life revolves around drugs. Being high is his or her sole interest. At this stage the drugs of choice are marijuana, alcohol, nicotine, pills, and sometimes cocaine. He steals and deals. Because body tolerance has increased greatly, the user feels physical and psychological distress when off drugs. After the euphoria, there is a backswing into pain. By this stage, the young person has severed relationships with straight friends and begins to experience school failure, police incidents, job