A Fight for Their Minds --
Read a Book? or Turn on Play Station?

Never in the course of history has it been so difficult to succeed in prompting a young or an older child to read voluntarily a book, a newspaper, or other print media. Perhaps, in an earlier age, the children had numerous chores to complete and time to read was minimal, but for today's children, if there is minimal time to read, it is likely that it is because they are so involved with numerous other areas of recreational stimulation. What is a parent or teacher to do? How can you guide children to the value and pleasure of reading when those children are accustomed to spending their time with something that is animated, in brilliant color, interacts, talks, provides music, and includes moving pictures? As educators, should we devise unorthodox and downright outrageous methods to guide our students' attention toward the mind-expanding, entertaining, and life-enriching habit of reading and help them in the process to keep their education balanced? Of course, we should!

If we are lucky, the children may read the directions for their latest Game Boy or Play Station. That may be the extent of their unforced reading. I suspect, however, that usually they just turn it on and experiment until their quick minds figure it out. What if children had an assignment in which they needed to present exacting directions on the use of one of these handheld or desktop games to a target audience of individuals from a different planet? or from a senior citizens facility? (What if they had to explain its value?) Would they read the manufacturer's directions more carefully to prepare their report? Would they think about how clear, how organized, and how appropriate to their audience the presentation of directions would need to be? Maybe.

There are numerous ways to exploit our students' interests to entice them to the world of reading. Be outrageous. Exploit away. In the Los Angeles Times (March 4, 2000, p.F26), an advertisement appears entitled Ticker Tape Rally. It is a program which involves eighteen weeks of lesson plans and twice-weekly delivered newspapers (ten copies) in an effort to organize students in teams to create investment portfolios, study (read) economic influences and trends regarding their investments, and in the process, apply mathematical skills in varied ways. The program is geared to grades three through twelve and is provided free of charge it seems through the newspaper. There are also cash prizes available. Money is a powerful incentive. Manipulate it whenever possible in getting your students to read. Certainly, this program may provide a useful and authentic means to engaging students to read. However, this approach--the combining of classroom and beyond classroom environments for the purpose of learning--could be adapted in many other ways to spur students to read purposely. Consider class projects of creating a magazine with pictures; compiling an anthology of their own short stories; writing a science or social studies short textbook where they must decide what is included; a partners or group book, movie, or television review; design a political campaign complete with candidate, platform, and schedule; or create a television news program complete with credits, scripts including real stories from the newspaper, commercials with products that they have selected, and video-recording. Each and every one of these suggested projects involve the need to read for research purposes so that the students become familiar with the medium--true authentic and purposeful reading.

If students are constantly kept engaged in reading for some authentic and stimulating academic objective alone, in pairs, or in groups, perhaps, they may soon recognize the empowerment and joy of knowledge through reading for themselves. They definitely will see the usefulness in reading for information. Some, of course, will read off the Internet, but they will still be reading. It will take very patient and deliberate machinations on our part to charm our students into actually gripping a book, newspaper, or magazine in their own hands and reading for the pleasure of it.

If we are patient, creative, and diligent, some day our students may discover the wisdom and immense pleasure derived from reading a stimulating and thought-provoking book borrowed free-of-charge from
the library as opposed to giving up nearly $30 or more of cold, hard cash for one commercial handheld or
desktop game of mental limitation. Exploit their financial sensibilities to the best of your ability. Press the
monetary savings. In this case, the means--however devious and contrived--justifies the end -- embracing
a book rather than a Game Boy! In the process, you are attempting to stimulate and save a mind rather
than watching it dehumanize and diminish!

Faculty Footnotes

By Kathi Bartle Angus

Several faculty members who teach in the undergraduate program had the opportunity to attend the
Claremont Graduate University Reading Conference this month. These faculty members were invited by
Toni Chambers to join her in a presentation: "Creative and Active Strategies to Promote Critical Thinking."
Some of the instructional strategies used in the READ 290, Critical Reading as Critical Thinking course
were presented. Strategies were selected that would be appropriate for use in middle school, high school,
and college classrooms, such as Making CENNS of the News: Critically Evaluating News and News
Sources presented by Carla Thomson and Fortune Cookies, Horoscopes, and Ambiguity presented by
Jan Bagwell.
The conference was in a wonderful setting, the new Burkle building at CGU. The food, keynote
addresses, and quality sessions all led to an impressive conference experience. One session that
impressed many of us was on brain research. The session, Creating Meaning, presented by Maribeth
Jacobs, wove together current brain research findings, Gardener's theory of multiple intelligences, and
schema theory to provide constructs for instructional practice. Brain research and its relationship to
reading instruction is
an exciting new field. For those interested in more information, check out http://www.dana.org/brainwork
or Mosaic of Thought by Keene and Zimmerman.

Volunteers Needed

If you would like to volunteer to work at the Book Fair booth sponsored by the Reading Program at the
Community Fair on April 15, please contact Norma Inabinette at 714-278-3735. Thanks!!

CSUF 40th Anniversary Celebration

By JoAnn Carter-Wells, Event Coordinator

The College of Human Development and Community Service (HDCS) has planned an extraordinary and
unprecedented event entitled "Celebrating Campus and Community" to honor the 40th anniversary of Cal-
State, Fullerton. Its purpose is to highlight the history and unique focus of each department and center in
the school and to recognize the various community agencies, school districts, and distinguished alumni
who have contributed to the growth and recognition of HDCS over the years.
This community fair will take place on Saturday, April 15, 2000, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Titan
Pavilion and the grassy area near the Performing Arts building. HDCS will feature over 13 booths,
displays, children's activities, Book Fair, entertainment (bagpipe, brass quintet and salsa band), food,
rappelling demonstrations and competitions, and an Army National Guard historical display. A very
exciting Time Capsule ceremony with Honor Guard, gonfalons, and music will begin the day at 11:00 a.m.
at the site of the replica of Michelangelo's "Fallen David" between the library and the Education
Classroom building. Faculty and staff have been working hard over the past year in preparation for this event and have identified key alumni to honor on that day, invited children's groups and related agencies, developed a theme and designed a logo, disseminated Time Capsule forms and various update flyers, and established a web site  (hdcs.fullerton.edu/anniversary/hdcs40th.html). The departments and centers have solidified their specific plans for each booth, found some department items for both the Time Capsule and the display in EC 303, and identified key student groups for assistance on that day. We hope that you can join us on this special day as you are an important part of the "celebration" component of our HDCS community. Please mark your calendar for APRIL 15, 2000 and plan to come to the Cal-State, Fullerton, campus to help us "CELEBRATE CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY! Parking is free and the day will be wonderful! Contact Dr. JoAnn Carter-Wells for further information at (714) 278-3357 or jcarterwells@fullerton.edu.

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**Hancock Fund**

The Hancock Fund was established to honor Dr. Deborah Osen Hancock for her contributions to the field of reading and specifically to the Reading Department. The fund is solely for use by the CSUF Reading Clinic. Over the years, the fund has supplied books and technology for use by clinicians and students. REG would like to thank the following members for their generous contributions to the Hancock Fund:

Cheryl Heene  
Pat Irot  
Mary Madison  
Betty Othmer  
Andrea Sward

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**Reading Educators' Guild Newsletter Staff**

Editor: Jan Bagwell

Faculty Footnotes: Kathi Bartle Angus

The Reading Connection: Janice Blanton

CSUF 40th Anniversary Celebration: JoAnn Carter-Wells

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, by being a regular column writer or just an occasional article donator, please contact Jan Bagwell at jbagwell@fullerton.edu. We need all of you to help make REG great!