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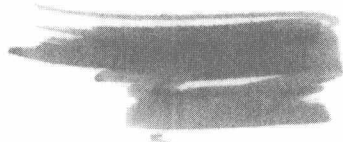
Creating Literacy Instruction for All Children

Thomas G. Gunning



Creating Literacy Instruction for All Children

THIRD EDITION



Thomas G. Gunning

Central Connecticut State University

and

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To my grandchildren, Alex and Paige

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Preface

This book will not tell you how to teach reading and writing. Teaching literacy is in large measure a matter of making choices: Should you use basal readers or children's books, or both? Should you teach children to read whole words or to sound out words letter by letter, or both? Should you have three reading groups or four, or no groups? There are no right answers to these questions. The answers depend on your personal philosophy, your interpretation of the research, the level at which you are teaching, the kinds of students you are teaching, community preferences, and the nature of your school's or school district's reading program.

What this book will do is help you discover approaches and techniques that fit your teaching style and your teaching situation. Its aim is to present as fairly, completely, and clearly as possible the major approaches and techniques that research and practice have indicated to be successful. This book also presents the theories behind the methods, so you will be free to choose, adapt, and/or construct those approaches and techniques that best fit your style and teaching situation. You will be creating literacy instruction.

Although approaches and techniques are emphasized in the text, methods are only a portion of the equation. Reading is not just a process; it is also very much a content area. What students read does matter, and, therefore, recommendations for specific children's books and other reading materials have been provided. The basic premise of this book is that the best reading programs are a combination of effective techniques and plenty of worthwhile reading material.

Because children differ greatly in their backgrounds, needs, and interests, a variety of suggestions is provided for both techniques and types of books to be used. The intent is to provide you with sufficient background knowledge of teaching methods and children's books and other materials to enable you to create effective instruction for all the children you teach, whether they are rich or poor; bright, average, or slow; with disabilities or without; urban or suburban; or from any of the diverse cultural and ethnic groups that compose today's classrooms.

This book also recognizes that reading is part of a larger language process; therefore, considerable attention is paid to writing and the other language arts, especially as these relate to reading instruction. Whether reading or writing is being addressed, emphasis is on making the student the center of instruction. For instance, activities are recommended that allow students to choose writing topics and reading materials. Approaches that foster a personal response to reading are also advocated. Just as you are encouraged by this text to create your own reading instruction, students must be encouraged to create their own literacy.

Changes in the Third Edition

The third edition emphasizes the *all* in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Children*. Most children learn to read and write without any major problems. Unfortunately, about one child out of every four will experience some difficulty with reading and writing. Over the years, there developed a belief that these students need some sort of specialized help in order to become proficient readers and writers. Responsibility for their instruction was often turned over to the learning disabilities teacher or reading specialist. Classroom teachers came to feel that they didn't have the expertise need-

ed to help these youngsters. They believed that these students needed special techniques. However, highly successful intervention programs, many conducted by classroom teachers, have demonstrated that most struggling readers and writers will learn, if given some extra support and instruction. In addition, the intervention techniques that were successfully applied are those that are used or could be used by well-prepared classroom teachers.

This edition endorses the viewpoint that a well-prepared classroom teacher is capable of effectively instructing most struggling readers and writers. Even when students have such severe problems that they need specialized help, it is the classroom teacher's responsibility to coordinate with the specialist and, after the student has been discontinued from the special program, to extend the student's literacy development. To provide some direction for assisting struggling readers and writers, a new section has been added to all chapters except Chapters 1, 12, and 13. Entitled "Help for Struggling Readers and Writers", the section suggests ways in which the teacher might adapt instruction or assessment to meet the needs of underachieving readers and writers.

A change in the title from *Creating Reading Instruction for All Children* to *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Children* also signifies a change in emphasis in the third edition. Although the focus of the text is still on reading instruction, there is more attention paid throughout the text to the relationship between reading and the other language arts. Throughout the text, integration is stressed. Instead of providing a balance between skills and holistic reading, this third edition proposes integrating systematic skills and strategy instruction with reading and writing for real purposes.

Assessment is also stressed. Sample lessons have been expanded so that they contain an assessment component. In addition, Appendix B contains two highly useful assessment measures that readers are free to photocopy and use: Word Pattern Survey, and Syllable Survey.

One of the major intents of the third edition is to increase the usefulness of the text. One way of doing this is by highlighting specific books that may be used with elementary school students. The third edition provides updated and expanded reading lists for students. In Appendix A, a graded list of more than 500 high-quality children's books that readers may use with their students is presented. At each grade level, books are classified as easy, average, or challenging so that books appropriate for struggling, average, and above-average readers may be selected.

Other changes in the third edition include:

- Expanded coverage for teaching diverse students who are still learning English
- Exploration of the role of the preschool in early literacy instruction
- Exploration of the concept of early versus emergent literacy
- Exploration of the standards movement and performance testing and a listing in appropriate chapters of Essential Objectives
- Additional emphasis on assessment. Each instructional chapter has suggestions for assessing students, with emphasis on ways of assessing essential objectives.
- Fuller discussion of the use of technology, especially the role of the Internet for teachers and students, including a list of sites for teachers and students.

To assist you as you construct a framework for teaching reading and writing, a number of features that readers and reviewers found most valuable have also been revised or expanded.

- Each chapter begins with an Anticipation Guide, which invites you to take inventory of your current ideas and opinions about chapter topics. Review your answers to this guide after reading the chapter, and note how your ideas may have changed.
- Using What You Know is a brief introduction to each chapter that helps you relate your prior knowledge and the information presented in previous chapter(s) to the chapter you are about to read.
- Additional model teaching lessons have been provided. Set off by the heading Lesson, they now encompass nearly every area of literacy instruction.
- Key strategies, such as analyzing unknown words or summarizing a paragraph, which students can use to become independent learners, are outlined step by step and highlighted by the heading Student Strategy.
- Practice and application activities have been identified as Reinforcement Activities. Activities that involve reading and writing for real purposes have been stressed.
- To help make the descriptions of teaching techniques come alive, examples of good teaching practices have been placed throughout the book in a feature entitled Exemplary Teaching. All are true-life accounts; many have been drawn from the memoirs of gifted teachers, while others were garnered from newspaper reports or the author's own observations.
- Marginal annotations throughout the text provide the reader with interesting, practical, handy advice and guidance. Because of the movement toward inclusive classrooms, suggestions for teaching students of varying abilities—including students with reading or learning disabilities—are presented in the body of the text and in marginal annotations with the heading Adapting Instruction for Struggling Readers and Writers. Suggestions are also made throughout the text for assisting students who are still acquiring English. Marginal annotations for these students are entitled Adapting Instruction for English Language Learners. Other headings include Using Technology, Assessing Student's Progress, and Involving Parents. These headings, which are new to the third edition, emphasize three important elements in literacy instruction. Also, key terms are highlighted in the text and appear, with their definitions, in the margin.
- Each chapter concludes with a brief summary and two types of activities: Classroom Applications are to be done on your own or with your classmates; Field Applications are designed for your use in an elementary school classroom.

Organization of the Text

The text has been organized in an attempt to reflect the order of the growth of literacy. Chapter 1 stresses constructing a philosophy of teaching reading and writing, and Chapters 2 and 3 discuss emergent literacy and basic decoding strategies, including phonics, syllabic analysis, and high-frequency words. Chapter 4 presents advanced word-recognition skills and strategies: morphemic analysis and dictionary skills and

techniques for building vocabulary. Chapters 5 through 7 are devoted to comprehension: Chapter 5 emphasizes comprehension strategies that students might use; Chapter 6 focuses on text structures and teaching procedures; Chapter 7 covers application of comprehension skills in the content areas and through studying. Chapter 8 takes a step beyond comprehension by focusing on responding to literature and fostering a love of reading.

Chapters 2 through 8, which emphasize essential reading strategies, constitute the core of the book. Chapters 9 through 13 provide information on creating a well-rounded literacy program. Chapter 9 describes approaches to reading. Chapter 10 explains the process approach to writing and discusses how reading and writing are related. Chapter 11 suggests how previously presented strategies might be used with children from diverse cultures and those with special needs. Chapter 12 presents techniques for evaluating individuals and programs. Chapter 13 pulls all the topics together in a discussion of principles for organizing and implementing a literacy program. Also included in the final chapter is a section on technology and its place in a program of literacy instruction.

This text, designed to be practical, offers detailed explanations, and often examples of application, for every major technique or strategy. Numerous suggestions for practice activities and reading materials are also included. It is hoped that this book will furnish you with an in-depth knowledge of literacy methods and materials so that you will be able to construct lively, effective reading and writing instruction for all the students you teach.

Supplements for Instructors and Students

Instructor's Manual with Test Bank: For each chapter, the instructor's manual features a series of Learner Objectives, a Chapter Overview, suggestions for Before, After, and During Reading, a list of suggested Teaching Activities, and suggestions for Assessment. There is a Test Bank, which contains an assortment of multiple-choice, short essay, and long essay questions for each chapter. This supplement has been written completely by the text author, Tom Gunning.

Power Point™ Presentation: Designed for teachers using the text, the PowerPoint™ Presentation consists of a series of slides (10–20 per chapter) that can be shown as is or used to make overhead transparencies. The presentation includes the following items for each chapter: Key Concepts, Sample Lesson Outlines, Essential Student Objectives, and Key Charts.

Companion Web Site: Designed for students reading the text, the web site includes the following features:

- *Chapter Overview:* This section will preview the chapter's contents and explains the significance of the chapter in terms of understanding literacy instruction.
- *Online Study Guide:* In addition to general suggestions for studying the text, the online study guide will preview key concepts; provide focus questions and core questions for students to keep in mind as they read the chapter; and offers suggestions for using a graphic organizer to help students organize and remember material. The Study Guide includes 10 multiple choice questions for each chapter.
- *Update:* This section will provide updated information and research on key

topics covered in the text and will offer additional titles for the Children's Reading Lists in the text. This area will be updated monthly.

- *Discussion Corner:* This is a Listserv in which the author will post questions concerning key issues and readers will respond and carry on discussions. Students may, for example, discuss how a suggested teaching technique worked for them.
- *Links:* This key section provides links to other relevant and useful web sites.

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T.G.

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