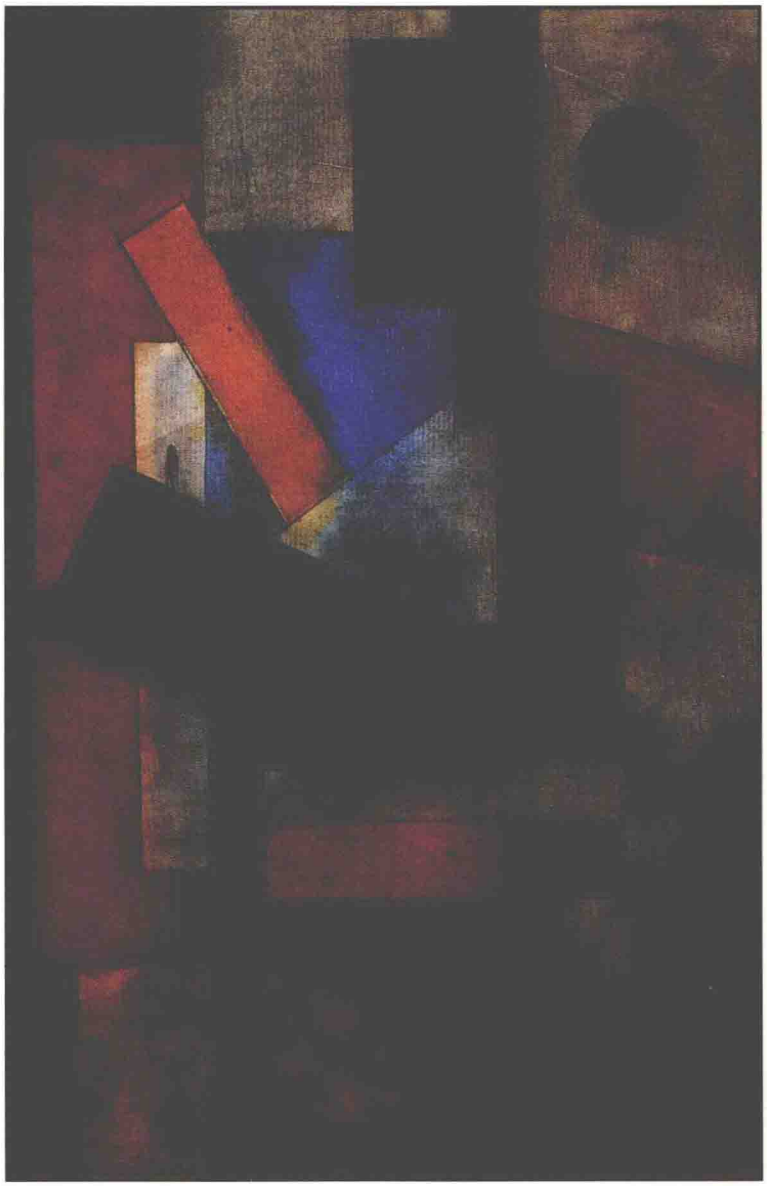
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH • FIFTH EDITION



NORMAN A. SPRINTHALL AND RICHARD C. SPRINTHALL

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A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

FIFTH EDITION

Norman A. Sprinthall
North Carolina State University

Richard C. Sprinthall
American International College

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A Developmental Approach

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Norman and Richard Sprinthall were born and grew up in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, graduating from the same public high school and undergraduate college, Brown University. After completing his doctorate in psychology at Boston University, Richard took an assistant professorship at American International College in Springfield, Massachusetts, and soon rose to department head in psychology and a full professorship. He currently serves as director of graduate studies.

Norman completed his doctorate in counseling psychology at Harvard and, upon graduation, remained there to eventually rise to the position of program head in counseling. He eventually left Harvard to accept a position as chair of the counseling psychology program at the University of Minnesota. More recently, he accepted a position at North Carolina State University.

Both Norman and Richard have been prolific writers throughout their careers. In addition to being a regular contributor to professional journals, Richard has authored other texts in the field of statistics and research design. Likewise, Norman has co-authored another successful McGraw-Hill text, *Adolescent Psychology: A Developmental View*, as well as other books and numerous journal articles. Finally, both have received Outstanding Teacher Awards for their classroom teaching.

To children

Ye are better than all the ballads
That ever were sung or said
For ye are living poems
And all the rest are dead.

H. W. Longfellow

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PREFACE

Twenty-five years have now elapsed since *Educational Psychology: A Developmental Approach* first appeared. At the time of its publication in 1974, it represented a radical departure from existing educational psychology texts, all of which seemed to us to fall into one of three categories: outdated, exclusively scientific, or solely educationist.

The Developmental Approach

Our choice of a developmental perspective as a means of giving theoretical coherence to our new text was motivated by both professional and personal considerations. From a professional standpoint, the research of such giants as Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg, and David Hunt was captivating the minds of teachers and researchers across the country. Closer to home two young professors were raising five children between their two families. It was not hard to become a developmentalist when we both saw growth and change almost every day.

The problem we faced as authors of an educational psychology text was how to reconcile the older, more traditional views of the field with our new developmental framework. No easy task. After all, schools of thought such as behaviorism, individual differences, instructional theory, and trait/factor psychology had long traditions that we simply couldn't ignore. What we found, and we're still working on this problem, was that the developmental framework is large enough to comprehend much of what previous theory had to offer. For example, it is obvious that at a particular stage of development, a behaviorist approach is quite appropriate both for instruction *and* classroom management. Similarly, at a different level, the concepts and practices of social psychology come into play. In short, the developmental framework helps identify students' strengths, needs and current problem-solving strategies and becomes the basis for choosing among various instructional strategies. This matching of needs and strategies is followed by a constructive mismatch procedure to facilitate student growth.

More recently we have found that the meta-analysis procedure aided our efforts at synthesizing research results and thereby avoiding any singular point of view. The meta results indicated quite clearly that effective teaching strategies are best conceptualized as a repertoire of different models. Even the currently popular direct-teaching model, which has apparently now peaked, will give way in the 1990s to a renewed focus on multiple models of teaching. Understanding where the pupil is coming from in developmental terms means that the teacher now has a firmer theoretical base for instructional and managerial decision-making.

Another aspect of teaching that is central to the developmental approach concerns the teacher's ability to reflect upon practice. In practically every current educational journal there is at least one article stressing the importance of educating reflective practitioners. The developmental model is based on the concept

of growth potential not only for pupils but for teachers as well. Thus the information offered here should aid teachers in becoming more complex and reflective in their actions. Although it may sound like a contradiction in terms, teachers really can "think and do " simultaneously. Such a process nurtures both more complex thought and more flexible action.

Changes in This Edition

As for changes in this edition, you will find that each chapter has been reviewed and carefully updated beginning with Chapter 2. We've added over 200 new references. At the same time we have tried to discipline ourselves by omitting some previous work. It is always difficult for authors to draw magic marker lines through their own prose, but otherwise the new additions would bulk the volume into an educational version of the egg plant that ate Chicago.

The most important new feature is the creation of a Theory into Practice section at the end of each chapter. These units are designed to help students understand concepts through application. One of the most distressing research findings of the 1980s was the National Assessment results, which indicated that although students may have been learning skills, their ability to understand and apply material was actually declining. Students in 1988 were less competent in comprehension than were students in 1978. So much for the latest educational revolution.

In view of this, we decided to follow a major prompt from our editor, Lane Akers, to create these special end-of-chapter application units. Their goal is to help students go beyond memorization of information and aid them in becoming more reflective. The units themselves vary considerably. Examples include such diverse activities as how to observe infants in a day-care center, how to use information processing to improve study habits, how to keep a journal, how to self-supervise as a teacher, how to understand the elements of intelligence tests, how to set up a peer-tutoring program, and many others. By placing such units within the text itself, we hope to encourage students to *use* the material as well as reflect on it. It may take some reinforcement on your part (positive naturally) to help them employ this new method.

Our final means of making the work more "user friendly" is to further encourage the use of the Glossary–Study Guide at the end of Chapter 21. We have cross-referenced all the key concepts and names at the end of each chapter and keyed them to the Glossary–Study Guide. And we've included in some of the Theory into Practice units procedures to help the students do more than merely memorize concepts and names.

Thus, what we've tried to do is to build a comprehensive text for the 1990s that not only provides intellectual coherence through a unique developmental schema, but also helps students actively experience key concepts and ideas through the new Theory into Practice units. To aid in the review process, we have tightened the interaction between the text and the Glossary–Study Guide. It is also conveniently under one cover and aimed at maximizing learning and understanding.

Acknowledgments

When there are so many to thank, it's hard to know where to begin. We shall begin with our midwestern friends: Jim Rest, Jim Ysseldyke, Maynard Reynolds, Andy Collins and Martin Haberman. Closer to home in Raleigh, Don Locke has helped with the cross-cultural issues, Sam Snyder on developmental transitions, Barbara and Tom Parramore with inductive teaching material, Cathy Crossland with the special education issues, and "Bo" Page, from Duke, on path analysis. In Massachusetts, valuable contributions were made to the information-processing section by Carol Spafford and Joanne Carlisle, now at Northwestern. Bob MacLachlan and Lee Sirois provided invaluable help in the learning and intelligence chapters, and Greg Schmutte and Art Bertrand added their expertise to the measurement sections. Finally, we thank George Grosser for his comments on the chemistry of learning and both Paul Quinlan and Brian Cleary for their insightful contributions in the areas of learning problems and dyslexia.

Also, the technical help we've received in typing and proofing has been very much appreciated. Robin Hughes and Pat Knowles in Raleigh have been unusually helpful since one of us has already retired the trophy for creative speller of the year. In Springfield, we thank Patti Cushing, Kris Savage, Cheryl Pitts and, especially, the Leading Edge spell-checker.

A last note is to thank our spouses. Lois, a professor of teacher education, has been particularly helpful in the sections on teacher effectiveness and has provided useful feedback from the experiences of teachers. Dianne, an art educator, has also continued with substantive help. Her drawings and artwork are central and a reminder of the value of pictures versus words. Their continued professional and personal support is a combination that is hard to find and almost impossible to beat. We do appreciate it deeply.

Norman A. Sprinthall

Richard C. Sprinthall

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