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The Lutheran Educator

The WELS Education Journal

The Lutheran Educator

The education journal
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Changes, changes

A new school year is often a time for changes. Imagine this: standing at the door of a classroom at the beginning of the school year. New books. New people. New bulletin boards. New tablets of paper. New, perfectly cylindrical pieces of chalk.

The stomach churns with anticipation. Will they like me? Will I act like an idiot? Is my lunch bucket the right kind? Do I know what to do? When is recess?

And that's only the teacher. Think of how the children feel.

Changes are also occurring at the campus where this journal is edited. If you look carefully, you will see one of those changes in our masthead on the facing page. Luther has lost his doctorate; your journal is now edited by the faculty of Martin Luther College. The institution in which the editors serve is a new and different one.

There are new buildings on campus, new roads and parking lots, new faculty, new classes, new roads and parking lots, new food service, new classrooms, new students, new offices. Everything seems different and a bit strange. The stomachs of students and teachers churn with anticipation.

What do you do when you are faced with changes? Try to put things back the way they were? Spend your time and energy romanticizing the past? Rejoice in change just because it is change?

The way to live with change is to look for and find the changeless. Your first class in the morning has the unchangeable Word. You can use that Word to measure the changes in your life. You use that Word to determine which changes are good, bad, or indifferent. You can use that Word to help your students evaluate changes in their world.

The stories in that changeless book are the ones David's mother told to the future king, the ones Mary told to the incarnate God, the ones Eunice told to Timothy. Tell them also to your students. Show them that God's grace and love are for all people in all times. Tell them that God never changes; he is with us now and forever.

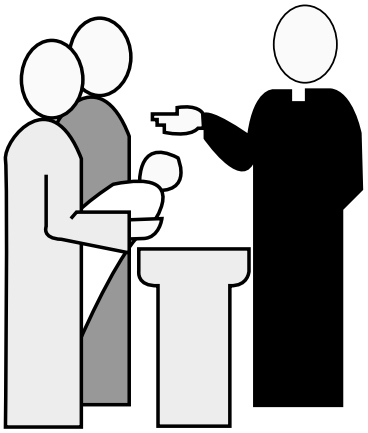
That makes a difference.

Face the new school year with anticipation. Rejoice that God has given you another year to serve his people. Revel in the good changes you make in your life and ministry so that you can serve better. But also keep things in perspective. In the eternity of our changeless God a new school year and a new college is no big deal.

JRI

The Baptism of the Children of Non-members

Lawrence O. Olson



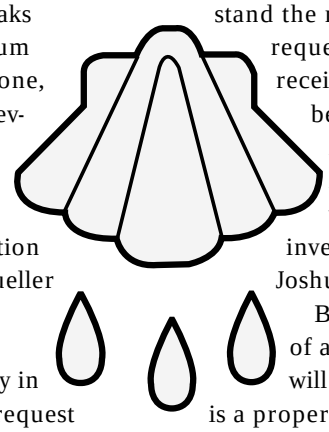
A RECENT ARTICLE in this journal (Isch 1995) drew attention to "the disappearing children"—the fact that over the last 23 years, WELS congregations have never confirmed more than 80% of the number of children baptized 14 years earlier. That phenomenon is not unique to the WELS; the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has experienced that same phenomenon.

One of the possible explanatory factors cited in that article is the baptism of non-member children, although the author did not consider it to be a significant one. Several readers have suggested that this factor may be a larger part of the explanation than the author anticipated. That may or may not be the case, and a definitive answer would require gathering data that is not currently available. Those responses, however, did prompt this article on the practice of, and procedures for, the baptism of the children of non-members.

The *WELS Catechism* (Kuske 1982) asks, "What does Jesus' command to baptize all nations mean?" The answer: "We are to baptize all who request baptism for themselves or for their children." That is similar to the answer given in the *Catechism* (Gausewitz, revised 1956) many of us cut our eye teeth on: "We baptize all who request Baptism as a means of grace, either for themselves or for their children."

An informal and decidedly non-scientific survey of some dozen pastors in a variety of different kinds of congregational settings revealed that all of those pastors contacted respond positively to requests by non-members for the baptism of their children. A caution in the pastoral theology textbook used at our seminary, however, suggests that this may not always be, or have been, the case. "Baptism as a 'washing of regener-

ation' is a means of grace and brings immediate blessing. It is not administered in the hope that sometime in the future the gospel as it is taught to the child will work faith. Hence the pastor should not categorically refuse to baptize a child if the parents do not promise that the child will in the future receive biblical instruction" (Schuetze and Habeck 1974, 73). This speaks against having a general policy like, "Millennium Lutheran Church baptizes only members," but it also speaks against a policy like, "Millennium Lutheran Church baptizes anyone, no questions asked." For whatever reason, the recent LC-MS pastoral theology text—in general an excellent work—does not explicitly address the question of baptizing non-members (Mueller and Kraus 1990).



The pastors I contacted displayed a remarkable uniformity in responding to a non-member request for baptism. Since the request usually comes by phone, the first step is affirming the value of the request, e.g., "I'm really glad that your concern for your child includes his/her spiritual welfare. Baptism is such a wonderful gift from God, and I'd love to have the opportunity to discuss it further with you." Then an appointment is made to do just that, sometimes in the church office or more commonly at the parents' home.

My preference is for a home visit. In the case of a newborn, that allows the parents to be more relaxed, since they can avoid all the details involved in even a short trip out with a little one, and that reasoning could well be offered in suggesting a home visit. The parents will probably appreciate your consideration and thank you for it. Even more importantly, a home visit is more conducive to establishing rapport, which is important, since, God-willing, this initial contact will be the first step in a process of ministry to the family.

The initial meeting will begin with diagnosis. After the usual introductory comments, begin by seeking to understand the motivation for their request. "I truly was happy to receive your phone call, because baptism is such an important thing. I'd be interested in knowing, what prompted you to investigate baptism for Joshua?"

Be prepared for a variety of answers. Sometimes you will find that the motivation is a proper one. You may be dealing with people who have drifted away from active membership in a congregation, but they still know and value baptism as a sacrament. They want it for their child for the right reasons. But you may also find those who view baptism as a kind of magic "inoculation," and think that it is the only real religious need that kid is going to have till it's time to get buried. You may even find those who view baptism as a cultural thing—America is a "Christian" nation, so baptism is the "American" thing to do.

Diagnosis is always followed by instruction, which will then be adapted to the needs of the family. Those who

have a proper motivation will be encouraged through a reinforcement of the purpose and meaning of baptism. Those who have an improper motivation will be introduced to what the Bible teaches about baptism. In both cases, baptism will be placed in the broader context of an explicit law / gospel witness. Baptism will also be placed in the broader context of the Great Commission; parents are reminded that they, along with the congregation, also have a teaching responsibility toward that child. This can be done in a positive way as you describe for them the various opportunities your congregation has available for children and parents alike.

“Parents are reminded that they also have a teaching responsibility toward that child.”

In the case of the “raw unchurched,” where there is little or no understanding of the gospel or of baptism, more than one meeting may be needed prior to the baptism. Since parents are often considering a date four to six weeks in the future, this usually can be arranged by simply saying, “I’d like to get together with you once (twice, three times) more before the baptism, so that we can talk further about some of these things.” No one has ever refused me that opportunity.

A resource that I found quite useful was an extensive booklet called, *Welcome to the Family,* published by Concordia Publishing House (Meilheim 1989). I would leave it with all non-members who contacted our congregation about baptism, and I would use it as the basis for subsequent meetings with the family, where those meetings were warranted.

Since baptism is God’s gift not just to individuals but also to the Church, I would operate with the assumption that the baptism would occur as a part of a congregational worship service. I would ask not, “Would you prefer a public or private baptism?” but “Would you prefer that Jessica be baptized in the early or late service?” I never had anyone opt for the early service (!), but with few exceptions we did schedule the baptism for the late service. This underscores the corporate significance of baptism, and it allows the involvement of congregation members in the process of ministry to the family. Where there were valid reasons, of course, a private baptism would be arranged.

Subsequent to the baptism, the child should be placed on the Cradle Roll, and the family added to the evangelism nurture list of the congregation.

Are there times when a pastor should refuse to baptize? Perhaps. One pastor said, “In cases where I discover that the parents have absolutely no intention of nurturing that child, and they are not

open to further ministry from our congregation, I tell them that I could not in good conscience baptize that child." Another pastor said, "I've never had to say no to someone, but sometimes after I meet with parents and explain what baptism is all about, they decide not to pursue the matter."

There has been only one occasion in my own ministry when I refused to baptize a child of a non-member. In that instance, a young couple with a newborn got in touch with me. At our first meeting, I discovered that they were former Lutherans who were now Christian Scientists. We continued to meet and talk, and I spent many hours with them over the next several months. However, I was never able to get them to see that the teachings of the cult they belonged to were a direct denial of the gospel and of the baptism they were seeking for their child. I finally told them that I could not officiate at a baptism that would create saving faith in the heart of that infant, because I knew that it was their firm intention to kill that faith off with the anti-Christian teaching they would give their child.

It might be easier if we had a WELS Canon Law on baptism, but it would not be more biblical. Actually, Rome's Canon Law isn't so bad—it makes a healthy, and proper, connection between "baptizing" and "teaching" (*Catechism* 1994, ¶1267-1270). The circumstances of each situation must be taken into consideration. Given the kind of approach sketched out above and assuming that congregations will faithfully carry out the essential work of follow-through, the baptism of the children of non-members can be an opportunity for a congregation to "do the work of an evangelist."

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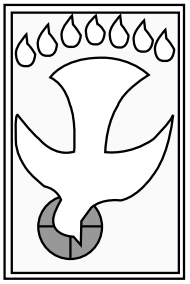
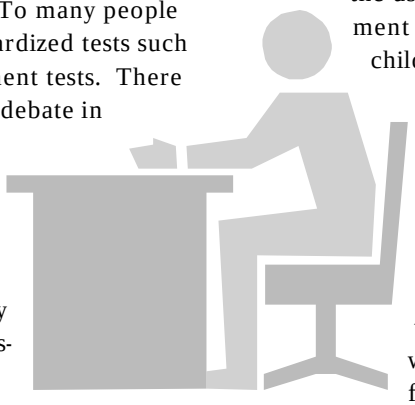


What Is The Value Of Diagnostic Testing?

Julia Averbeck

FIRST, IT IS IMPORTANT to define what is meant by the term "Diagnostic Testing." To many people this term means standardized tests such as ability and achievement tests. There has been considerable debate in recent years about the merit of such evaluations. However, diagnostic testing encompasses much more than ability and achievement assessments. Such measures are just a part of the overall evaluation for planning an academic program which meets the needs of the students in our classrooms.



In addition to ability and achievement tests, diagnostic testing also includes informal observations, curriculum-based measures, and authentic assessments of various types. The opinions and observations of the classroom teacher are also an important component in any thorough evaluation of a student's progress (or seeming lack of it).

Ability and achievement tests

Although there is some question about the use of ability and achievement testing in assessing a child's academic needs, both of these can be valuable. The National Association of Early Childhood Specialists has issued the following guidelines: Formal testing is appropriate (1) to plan instruction and communicate with parents, (2) to identify children with special needs, and (3) to evaluate programs (Shepard 1994). Any testing should benefit the child being tested. However, it is important to stress that these should not be the only measures used to determine a student's needs.

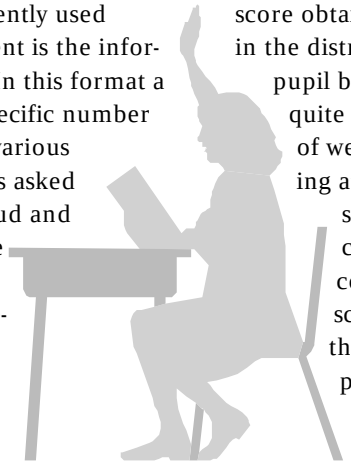
The issue of standardized testing becomes especially important when planning programs for children with special needs. It is critical to know whether or not a child's difficulty in school is related to a learning disability or to a low level of ability. In looking at

learning disabilities, J. D. McKinney stresses the importance of identifying a discrepancy between aptitude and achievement: "The goal of early identification and intervention is to reduce the risks associated with school failure" (Quoted in Mather and Healey n.d.). If no intervention has been undertaken before a child reaches third grade, then it becomes critically important to determine aptitude-achievement discrepancies in order to plan realistically for a pupil's specific needs. Also, while a teacher should never "give up" on a child with a low ability measure, it is very important to have reasonable expectations in planning a curriculum for such a child. None of this type of information is available to educators unless some type of standardized testing is done to compare a child's ability with his or her achievement.

Informal evaluations

Informal evaluations are another important component of diagnostic testing. The most frequently used example of this assessment is the informal reading inventory. In this format a reading selection of a specific number of words is prepared at various grade levels. The child is asked to read the selection aloud and the number of errors are counted.

The examiner also presents comprehension questions to the student. In this way the student's independent, instructional, and frustration reading levels can be determined—based upon the number of errors made. The teacher can then plan a successful program based upon a pupil's individual needs.



Curriculum-based measures

In the past three years, I have become acquainted with another very valuable tool for diagnostic assessment of children. It is called a Curriculum-Based Measure. This is a specially constructed measure based upon the individual curriculum in use in the school where the child attends. The areas of the curriculum which are assessed in my school district are reading, spelling, written expression, and mathematics. A standard for the number of correct responses was developed after giving the measure to a number of children in the district. This standard is the criterion against which each child's individual scores are compared. It is very easy to determine exactly how much of a discrepancy exists between the standard score obtained by most of the children in the district and the scores of the pupil being evaluated. It is also quite easy to determine the areas of weakness for a student by looking at the types of errors which she or he has made. Such a curriculum-based measure could be developed in any school situation based upon the curriculum taught in that particular school.

Authentic assessment

Authentic assessment can be another

valuable tool in building a diagnostic test profile on a child because it measures that student's progress over a period of time. It is thus possible to determine where improvement is occurring and to plan a different course of action where no gains are appearing. Such types of assessment have been described in previous articles (Menk 1994, Wendler 1993, Pelzl 1994).

Based upon all of this information it would seem to be very important to look at a variety of diagnostic tests in order to gather as much data as possible for planning a program to provide the most benefit for the child.

Testing, even diagnostic testing, is a sensitive issue in schools. Parents and children may see this testing as some kind of evaluation of the child's worth or the parents' work of raising that child. But it doesn't have to be so.

"It is very important to look at a variety of diagnostic tests for planning a program to provide the most benefit for the child."

God is the giver of all gifts, even those gifts or abilities we short-sightedly believe to be less important. He has placed you in a particular classroom. He wants you to understand those you teach as best you can. He wants you to help parents also understand. Most important, he wants you to do what is best for the children in your care. That seems to be a clear task. When diagnostic testing can help you in that task, it serves a worthy purpose.

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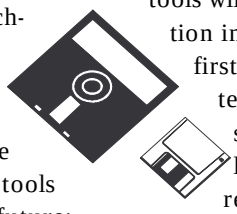
Integrating Technological Tools into Today's Classrooms

James V. Henrickson

FOR SOME TIME, parents, teachers, and administrators have been striving to bring technology into classrooms in an attempt to prepare students for the future. Yet in many cases, the technological tools purchased, primarily computers and software, have soon been relegated to the corners of rooms and computer labs. What often began as ambitious dreams for enhancing instruction often became little more than another curricula added to an already full schedule. Did the technology fail to meet our expectations, or have we failed to properly utilize the tools technology offers? Current technology in the classroom can provide powerful tools to train today's students for the future; however, to realize the full capabilities of technological tools, their introduction into the classroom needs be accompanied with pragmatic and ongoing teacher training. Just as library resources will have little impact upon a child's education unless they are regularly and appropriately utilized as tools by the teacher, the introduction of new technology in the form of computers, CD-ROMs, modems, software packages, and video discs will have little impact without first becoming as daily a tool to the classroom teacher as a text planbook, or white board marker.



Why technology fails

The five year research project, Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow (ACOT)[1], which began in 1986, sought to find answers to the questions which technology in the classroom commonly raised in the minds of teachers and administrators. After five years of study, it has become clear that new technological tools will have little effect upon education in the classroom unless there is first a personal appropriation of technology by teachers. In retrospect, this seems like a rather logical conclusion. Could we really expect new technology in the form of computers and software to dramatically affect learning if teachers are uncomfortable with the technological tools and unfamiliar with their applications to instruction? In such a setting, new technological tools often become pieces of burdensome equipment rather than helpful tools. When computers in our classrooms are utilized as little more than drill machines in a corner of the room, seldom drawn into practical use by the classroom teacher in lesson preparation, planning, teaching, or extension activities, we

should not be surprised that many individuals find themselves disappointed with the impact of computer technology upon education. David Thornburg, director for the Thornburg Center for Professional Development reminds us:

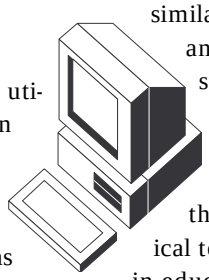
> ... Technology's not the driving force for education. If we allow technology to be the engine, we're going to end up being quite disappointed. We make a mistake if we just bring a bunch of technology into a room and then think that an excellent educational program is going to materialize. (Betts 1994, 22)

This common failure of computer technology in the classroom is not due to the limitations of the technology, but more often to the limitations of teachers who have not achieved a sense of ownership of the new technological tools in their classrooms.

Teacher control

The first step towards successfully utilizing today's technological tools in the classroom is to train teachers so that they feel competent to utilize computers and software packages as easily and intuitively as they have used textbooks, overhead projectors, and workbooks in the past. Such training is needed to overcome a common pitfall.

> A key obstacle to the use of technology in schools is the limited support teachers have for integrating unfamiliar technologies into instruction. As a result, teachers frequently avoid new technologies or use them for purposes other than those for which they were designed. (Hanckock and Betts 1994, 24)



In *Megatrends,* John Naisbitt discusses the stages at which technology is accepted and utilized. He states that in the first stage, technology follows the "line of least resistance," and that this is followed by a second stage in which individuals seek to improve or replace previous technologies with new technologies. In the third stage, individuals begin to find new uses for technologies which build upon the strengths of the technology. Currently, many teachers are just beginning to enter the second stage and simply see new technologies as futuristic tools with which to replace older and more conventional tools. An example of this would be the use of computers for simple drill and practice exercises which are little different from similar drills performed with pencil and paper. This second stage is a starting point, but it is essential that teachers begin to enter the third stage in their view of technology in order truly to utilize the strengths of today's technological tools. This third stage is evident in educators who, "... are searching for a paradigm shift, not just a way to squeeze technological tools between existing bricks of yesterday's educational practices" (Peck and Dorricott 1994, 12). These teachers look at technology and ask themselves, "What can we do now that was not possible before?" What can we do to assist teachers in reaching this third stage where they will actually begin extending instruction in

ways previously unimagined?

When we bring new technologies such as computers, CD-ROMs, software, modems, and on-line services into the classroom, we must realize that first the "Technology *must* be put in the teachers' hands" (Hanckock and Betts 1994, 29). It is essential that teachers have access to these technologies personally in the classroom and, if at all possible, in the home. In addition, in-service training which builds understanding of these technological tools and observation of these tools used in actual classroom situations is needed to build a sense of ownership with new technologies. Such technology-integrated instruction needs to be an integral part of the professional training of tomorrow's teachers as well as a part of the professional development of current teachers. As teachers become more informed about the educational opportunities which new technological tools can bring to their classrooms, they will begin to utilize these tools first for their own planning and personal management and then as tools for research, collaboration, class lessons, presentations, instruction, and active student learning. In a report on technology rich classrooms, Sandholtz, Ringstaff, and Dwyer concluded that

> The critical factor for engaging students seems to be not the novelty of the computer but rather how the technology is being used in classroom instruction. Technology has an enduring, positive impact on student engagement in classrooms where the teachers do the following:
>
> - Use technology as one tool among many
> - Integrate technology use into the larger curricular framework
> - Emphasize the use of tool applications such as word processing programs and publishing software
> - Adjust the technology to individualize differences in both interest and ability (1994)

"It is essential that teachers have access to these technologies personally in the classroom."

This research indicates the importance of carefully instructing teachers in new technologies and providing ongoing opportunities to learn about integration of these new technologies into their classrooms. Such training combined with administrative leadership and peer support will go far to stimulate teachers to make technology their own and to harness its potential for teaching within their classrooms.

Recent research supports that seven years of administrative support, staff development, and planning time are

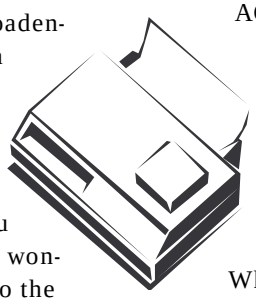
required before teachers fully integrate technologies into their repertoires. To move this process along, teachers must have timely opportunities to use technology for classroom and personal productivity. (Hanckock and Betts 1994)

Teacher change

Teachers will commit to change when they are able to see that change has a positive impact upon their own planning and preparation, and upon the learning taking place in their classrooms. Teachers need to see how technology can be utilized to produce such positive effects.

When teachers are given adequate training in new technologies and continuing opportunities for training and growth, research suggests that they eventually begin to broaden their teaching repertoire. One teacher in the ACOT study expressed the broadening of his teaching strategies in this way:

> As you work into using the computer in the classroom, you start questioning everything you have done in the past, and wonder how you can adapt it to the computer. Then, you start questioning the whole concept of what you originally did. I guess I have to realize that what I am doing is learning how to undo my thinking. (Dwyer 1993, 6)



The degree to which a teacher's view of teaching refocuses through the use of new technologies will vary, but I believe that it is in direct relation to the technology training which the teacher receives and the opportunity which that teacher is given daily to utilize and develop newly learned knowledge bases and skills. As teachers become more comfortable with the technological tools, they begin to incorporate them into their planning process as powerful and dynamic teaching tools. As teacher ownership of these technological tools grows, the teacher feels empowered to develop and employ a larger variety of instructional strategies for classroom instruction.

The teachers in the ACOT study found that as their personal understanding and familiarity with computer technology and software grew, so did their view of teaching:

> As a result of working with technology, getting support as well as professional development for ACOT, and reflecting on their experiences, the ACOT teachers have shifted their educational approach from one of knowledge transfer (instructionism) to one of knowledge building (constructivism). (ACOT 1994a)

What exactly does this mean? To illustrate the common instructional view of education, David Thornburg retells Phil Schelechty's story of Martians who visit an American school. "When the Martians go home, they are asked what happens in schools. They say they didn't understand the language, but it seemed to them that schools were places where young people go to watch the old people work" (Betts 1994, 22). The pure instructional

Balancing Methodology

Seeking a Balance	Pure Instruction	Pure Construction
Classroom Activity	Teacher centered Didactic	Learner centered Interactive
Teacher Role	Fact teller Always expert	Collaborator Sometimes learner
Student Role	Listener Always listener	Collaborator Sometimes expert
Instructional Emphasis	Facts	Relationships
Concept of Knowledge	Memorization Accumulation of facts	Inquiry and invention Transformation of facts
Demonstration of Success	Quantity	Quality of understanding
Assessment	Norm-referenced Multiple-choice items	Criterion-referenced Portfolios and performances
Technology Use	Drill and practice	Communication, collaboration, information access, expression

(Adapted Dwyer 1994, 9)

approach to teaching focuses upon didactic, teacher-centered learning. In such a learning environment, the teacher is the professor of knowledge and the student is the passive learner. Learning is viewed as the imparting of a specific body of knowledge commonly defined by a textbook and the teacher's knowledge base. Assessment is based primarily upon a student's ability to reproduce the body of knowledge which is presented through lecture and reading of the text. In this model of instruction, even seatwork is primarily focused upon a student's ability to restate and commit to memory a defined body of knowledge. Such didactic teaching methods will always be a necessary part of every teacher's repertoire in order to build the essential bodies of knowledge which students draw upon in developing and expanding higher level thinking skills, but an overdependence upon the instructional method is not desirable. An overreliance upon the instructional approach can result in students who gain a defined body of knowledge, but lack necessary skills to apply that knowledge in self-initiated learning tasks and higher level thinking. For many teachers, a textbook-based instructional approach is the primary means of teaching due to the time and effort required to collaborate with other teachers and experts, access pertinent

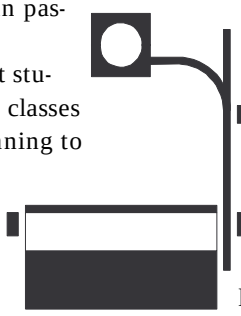
and up-to-date information, locate sources beyond the textbook, and guide active student research projects. However, today's technological tools can assist teachers in balancing their instructional teaching approach with constructive teaching strategies by greatly simplifying these previously difficult and time-consuming tasks and increasing the accessibility of teaching resources.

Balancing methodology

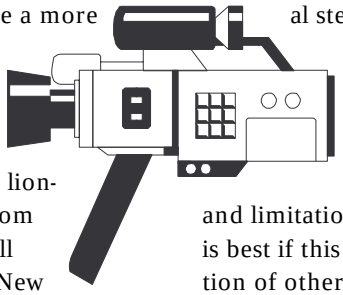
By the third year of the ACOT study, it was observed that the classrooms in which students were demonstrating the greatest achievement were those classrooms in which the teachers were balancing instructional and constructivist teaching methods. In these classrooms, teachers were more often utilizing constructivist teaching strategies in which students were active rather than passive learners.

> We saw that the greatest student advances occurred in classes where teachers were beginning to achieve a balance between the appropriate use of direct instruction strategies and collaborative, inquiry-driven knowledge construction strategies. In those classes, interaction among students was ordinary and purposeful; children were seen as learners and expert resources; and students were challenged by problems that were complex and open-ended. In assessing students' work, teachers looked for evidence of deeper understanding—statements of relationships, synthesis, and generalization of ideas to new domains. And, of course, students had opportunities to use a variety of tools to acquire, explore, and express ideas. (Dwyer 1994, 9)

This balancing of instructional and constructive teaching strategies can be enhanced by an understanding of new technological tools and the ease of their use in the classroom. This does not mean that former teaching methods are completely abandoned, rather new teaching techniques which utilize available technologies are added to other commonly used classroom tools and teaching strategies. "In ACOT classrooms, the operating principle is to use the media (textbooks, workbooks, whiteboards, crayons, paper, television, as well as computers) that best support the learning goal" (ACOT 1994b). In these constructive classrooms, you would still observe the use of many traditional teaching tools as well as a degree of continuing instructive teaching, but there is a primary difference. You would also see a great deal of student-led learning as students use the computers to explore, research, categorize, and evaluate information. Students become more active learners as they research and compile information and reports for themselves and others which may include pictures, videos, text, graphs, and charts. In this learning environment, you would often see students working collaboratively as they strive to complete a final product



which they would then share and present to the class. This reflects David Thornburg's view of the value of technology when he says, "To me the value of technology comes when we empower the student to take a more proactive role in the acquisition of information in the first place ... with new technology, the teacher is freed from having to be the lion-tamer in the front of the room who presents information all day long" (Betts 1994, 22). New technologies can better empower our students to take an active role in their learning and assist in training self-motivated knowledge seekers rather than passive information depositories.



Changes in assessment

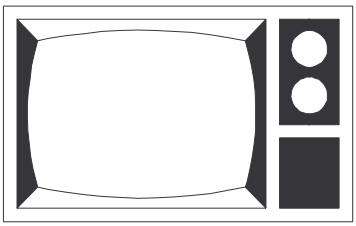
This balancing of teaching paradigms is not without conflict as teachers often realize that previously used methods of student and teacher assessment are limiting as indicators of the constructivist learning activities. As teachers develop a sense of ownership for the technological tools in their classroom and begin to balance instructional and constructivist teaching strategies, it also becomes necessary to enhance assessment methods. Without a review and enhancement of assessment methods, teachers will continue to rely most heavily upon an instructional approach in order to provide the type of data necessary for traditional assessment. Therefore, it is necessary to review assessment methods as teachers shift to the third level of acceptance of technology and begin to use more constructive teaching strategies within their classrooms.

Based on the research considered, it becomes clear that there are several steps necessary for the successful incorporation of technology into classrooms. First, teachers must receive training to understand the capabilities and limitations of new technologies. It is best if this training includes observation of other teachers actually making use of these technologies within actual classrooms. In addition, it is of great importance that teachers have access to these technologies as directly as possible, preferably on their desktops and in their homes. Second, teachers need to receive continuing in-service training as new technological tools are introduced into their classrooms. This training will be most profitable if the principal and school board provide strong leadership and the teachers share their efforts, ideas, and difficulties with one another as they work to utilize best the full potential of these new technological tools. In fact, research indicates that the new technologies help to enhance such peer sharing among teachers.

> Using technology encouraged teachers to be more collegial and to share instruction. In fact, teachers who already enjoyed a high level of collegiality embraced innovation in technology and instruction more quickly. (ACOT 1994b)

WELS schools

In our WELS schools, where there is already a high degree of collegiality and where one teacher already commonly teaches across the curriculum, we could anticipate teachers to embrace new technologies more quickly. In addition to these first two steps, teachers and administrators need to have a willingness to alter the traditional view of teaching as primarily an instructive process with active teachers and passive learners. This willingness will grow even among reluctant teachers as they begin to see the ease with which they can access



> *"Schools are places where young people go to watch the old people work."*

information, collaborate with others, and enhance learning opportunities within the classroom through the appropriate use of new technologies. Finally, teachers and administrators need to have the willingness to consider new methods of assessment which will better fit the types of active learning which develop within the classroom.

Are the results of integrating new technologies into classroom really worth the effort?

Results

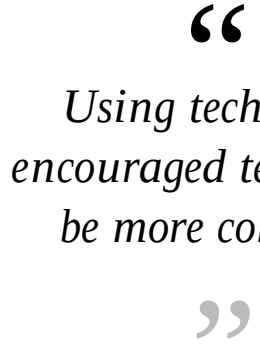
Researchers involved in the five year ACOT study found "Our research showed that ACOT students wrote more, more effectively, and with greater fluidity," in addition, ... a four-year longitudinal study of these students showed their greatest difference to be the manner in which they organized for and accomplished their work. They routinely employed inquiry, collaborative, technological, and problem solving skills uncommon to graduates of traditional high school programs" (Dwyer 1994, 6,8). This finding is worth noting when juxtaposed against the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) report in 1991 which reported that the U. S. Department of Labor desired high school graduates who were able to "organize resources; work with others; locate, evaluate and use information; understand complex work systems; and work with a variety of technologies" (Dwyer 1994, 8). Technological tools, properly utilized, will help prepare our students for the workplace of tomorrow as well as equip them with the skills that business deems to be essential in the marketplace of today and even more so in the market-

place of tomorrow. Furthermore, the addition of multimedia technology in the classroom strengthens our ability to reach children through their various learning modalities especially strengthening the education of those students who tend to learn more visually or through tactile means than aurally.

> Simply put, an array of tools for acquiring information and for thinking and expression allows more children more ways to enter the learning enterprise successfully. These same experiences provide the skills that will enable students to live productive lives in the global, digital, information-based future they all face. (Dwyer 1994, 9)

If properly integrated as a tool in the overall learning process, new technologies can benefit students in all grade levels. Kyle L. Peck and Denise Dorricott (1994) enumerated their top ten reasons to use technology:

1. Students learn and develop at different rates. Technology can individualize instruction.
2. Graduates must be proficient at accessing, evaluating, and communicating information. Educational technologies can—by design—provoke students to raise searching questions, enter debates, formulate opinions, engage in problem solving and critical thinking, and test their views of reality.
3. Technology can foster an increase in the quantity and quality of students' thinking and writing.
4. Graduates must solve complex problems. Higher -level skills cannot be taught in the traditional sense; they cannot be transferred directly from the teacher to the learner. Students need to develop these skills for themselves, with appropriate guidance.



5. Technology can nurture artistic expression.
6. Graduates must be globally aware and able to use resources that exist outside the school.
7. Technology creates opportunities for students to do meaningful work. Students need to produce products that have value outside school, receive feedback on their work, and experience the rewards of publication or exhibition.
8. All students need access to high-level and high-interest courses. Electronic media can bring experiences and information previously unimagined by students into the classroom.
9. Students must feel comfortable with the tools of the Information Age.
10. Schools must increase their productivity and efficiency. (12-13)

Technology can now be used in the classroom to increase administrative

effectiveness, access professional resources, enhance the curriculum beyond textbook sources, gain the benefits of teaching and learning through the use of multimedia resources, on-line services, and global communication. We are at a juncture in technology and education which already opens up a world of resources to teachers and students. Teachers can model the use of technological tools to delve beyond a surface knowledge of a topic and expose the multifaceted face of knowledge. Students who once only read or heard about far-off places, peoples, events, principles, and discovery can now virtually experience sights, sounds, and moments of discovery beyond the printed or oral word. Peoples and resources that once seemed remote are now available for discussion or consideration at the touch of a keyboard. Technology will continue to develop, and teachers will need time and training to implement the new avenues available for education, but this technology can already be utilized in many of the following manners as teachers continue to develop a sense of ownership for the new technologies in their classrooms:

- Enhancing presentations
- Enhancing and expanding the scope of class instruction
- Creating learning and research centers
- Creating collaborative learning situations
- Creating multimedia authoring centers
- Providing access to electronic references and on-line services
- Using simulations
- Conducting experiments
- Managing instruction
- Providing individualized learning opportunities
- Developing and reinforcing writing skills
- Communicating within the school, district, synod, and world

We need to realize that the new technologies brought into the classroom will not be a one-time investment, but that we will need to continue to update and expand resources as technologies continue to grow and change. Technology will not replace teachers, but it can allow teachers more time and tools to concentrate upon the more important aspects of teaching.

> Some things only teachers can do. Teachers can build strong, productive relationships with students. Technologies can't. Teachers can motivate students to love learning. Technologies can't. Teachers can identify and meet students' emotional needs. Technologies can't. Technology based solutions in education can, and must, free the teacher to do the important work that requires human interaction, continuous evaluation, and improvement of the learning environment. (Peck and Dorricott 1994, 13-14)

Today, just as yesterday, students need to have a firm grasp on the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic; however, students are preparing

for a workplace much different than that of the Industrial Age. Now more than ever before, students need to be able to think creatively and critically, access information, analyze and assess data, draw well-founded conclusions, and work cooperatively with others in pursuit of a common goal. These are the skills which will be essential in the Communication Age, and these are the very skills which can be fostered, strengthened, and sustained through the appropriate use of new technological tools in the classroom. New technologies dropped into the classroom will not in and of themselves create students prepared for tomorrow, but with well grounded and continued training, peer sharing, and time to develop and incorporate new teaching paradigms, technology can provide powerful tools in the hands of the classroom teacher to equip today's students for tomorrow. Let us always remember that teaching based upon the unshakeable wisdom of God's Word will always be the unshakeable foundation of an education for this world and for eternity. May God grant us the wisdom to use new technological tools in our classrooms in a God-pleasing manner as we train his lambs for lives of faithful service.

ENDNOTE

[1]Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow is a research and development collaboration among public schools, universities, the National Alliance for restructuring Education, and Apple Computer, Inc. Funding is provided by Apple Computer, Inc., the National Science Foundation, and through the National Alliance–the New America Schools Development Corporation and Pew Charitable Trust

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The Beginning and the End

Ramona M. Czer

Dear Teachers,

Our firstborn has graduated from eighth grade. So, I've been musing on something. My Alpha daughter at fourteen has ended her time with you, while my Omega son at three is not yet ready to begin his. Three more children fall somewhere in between. Thinking about this long, eleven-year stretch, I wonder, "Have you noticed how much I've changed?" I have exceedingly. But it occurs to me you may not have noticed because the change has been so gradual and because it is tempting for you to try to "get a handle" on us parents once and for all. What you may not realize is that our children mold us almost as much as we mold them.

Those of you not parents yourselves or with only wee ones yet may be especially confused at the changes in me that you have noticed. "Wasn't she the lady," you sputter, "who wanted more homework for her kids—not less!" And you're right. I was that first woman, a few years back, when I couldn't wait to plow through long division with my daughter, our shining heads bowed close together in concentrated harmony. I couldn't wait to read endless bedtime stories so that my daughter's reading worm could turn the most corners in her classroom. I couldn't wait to help her research the Pilgrims from five books at least, nor did I hesitate to chant with her over and over those hard lines of "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" until she could say it perfectly and understand it besides.

Eleven years later, however, I'm a different parent. I like to think I'm a parent just as committed to my child, to you, and to our school, but I am definitely different. It might be easy for you to mistake the attitudes of older parents like me who have done it all as blase. You may wonder why we don't rocket notes with perfectly legible signatures back to you the very next day, why we don't cheer wildly at B-team basketball games, why we don't call you at the first appearance of a C or D on a paper. You see, we have a sense of perspective now. We've mellowed. We still care—the notes get back to you eventually, don't they? We clap and smile in

the bleachers, right? After a few more poor grades, we do chat with you in the grocery store, true? But our caring is more like a mature marriage based on trust.

Remember when you fell in love the first time and how your flip-flopping heart pained and excited you at the same time. You scrutinized every word, every action of your love. What does he mean? Does she really care? You savored every moment together and lived at an intensity level far above normal. Gradually, as the relationship matured, your heart simmered down. You relaxed and didn't worry about every little thing any more. Between you and your beloved developed a comfortable easiness. I know it sounds a little boring—but it is also peaceful.

I believe the same thing has happened to me as a parent. At one time my heart flopped over every success or trouble my daughters experienced. I lived it with them. I also scrutinized your actions carefully, checking to see if you were fair, wise, kind, gospel-motivated, and firm. I mulled over whether your recess-time-punishing of the whole class was fair, whether my daughter really deserved to be passed over for room monitor, whether it is a good idea to give C's in art. Sometimes, I admit, I seethed inside. Once in a while I'd share my strong feelings, but generally I kept them to myself. Eleven years later I'm glad I did.

As more and more years of homework and basketball and friendships made and broken passed, I began to relax and get a sense of proportion. I still cared, mind you, but I knew better when to care, when to trouble you and make an issue of something. I also knew better the complexity of what you juggled daily and how your daily decisions involved every child and every parent—not just me and mine.

I guess the reason I'm telling you all this is to ask you to judge us older parents kindly. Don't jump on us too quickly when we're not there just as the bell rings to collect our child, when we don't volunteer to chair every committee, sell popcorn at every game, or drag our preschooler on a six-hour field trip. Tap into the younger, more energetic and excited parents for those things. Our strength is not our time or our energy; we're learning to parcel those out more judiciously. Our strength rather is our ideas and our judgment. Plus, I believe we are your greatest allies. We're the mellow ones, the ones who trust in you, the ones who have learned from caring for our Alpha child all the way to the Omega one that to win a marathon you have to be a plodder not a sprinter. May we pace ourselves together and enjoy a comfortable peace along the way.

A Slightly Winded but Smiling
Mother

Ramona Czer is a wife, mother, and teacher still living and writing in New Ulm, Minnesota.

We Need More

LeDell D. Plath

OUR SYNOD needs more principals to experience the joys and blessings of serving as the spiritual and educational leaders in our Lutheran elementary schools. Principals have the opportunity to make a significant difference in the spiritual lives of children, of parents, of teachers, and of the entire congregation. Because they are leaders, principals are uniquely positioned to help children grow as followers of Jesus, to help parents nurture their children, and to help teachers grow as called servants of Christ. Such growth will be a blessing to the entire congregation and to our Lord's church.

The Problem

At the beginning of the 94-95 school year 18 out of the 362 elementary schools had a vacancy in the principalship. At the middle of this summer, with only a month and a half to the beginning of school, there were still ten congregations facing the same situation. There are a number of causes for these vacancies. Thirteen principals resigned from the teaching ministry. The other vacancies occurred when the men accepted calls into non-administrative positions in WELS elementary schools, high schools, or at Wisconsin Lutheran College.

Filling a vacancy

When a congregation has a vacancy in the principalship, they have several options for filling that vacancy. (See below.)

The vacancies in the principalship which are not filled by permanent calls can be taken care of on an emergency basis. Congregations can call a teacher for one year to handle the classroom duties. The pastor can then serve as a temporary principal or some other male teacher on the staff may serve as interim principal.

Options for Filling a Principalship Vacancy

	Filled in 1995
1) call from the roster of principals now serving in a WELS school	16
2) call a man (non-principal) who is teaching in a WELS school	10
3) ask the Assignment Committee to assign a graduate of MLC	10
4) call a man who formerly taught in our schools	1

Some observations

When graduates of Martin Luther College (DMLC) are assigned to a principalship, they are generally in small schools of one, two, or three teachers. In 1993 nine men were assigned as principals, three went into a one-room school and four went into a two or three-room schools. Eight men were assigned to a principalship in 1994, five of those went into a two or three room school. In 1995 eight of the ten assignees to a principalship were in a two- or three-room school.

> *"Because they are leaders, principals are uniquely positioned to help children grow as followers of Jesus."*

Of the schools which began the 1995-96 school year with emergency arrangements to fill the vacancy in the principalship, at least eight are larger schools with four or more teachers. These are the schools which would likely not call a principal/teacher through the Assignment Committee.

Many principals prefer teaching over administration and believe teaching to be more important. This attitude is understandable, particularly in small schools where the principal does more teaching than administrating.

WELS high schools and preparatory schools call many of their instructors from the elementary school. A sizable number of these persons who are called are elementary school principals. These men are called because they have demonstrated high levels of commitment to their calling; they have also shown leadership and teaching skills. Secondary schools want and need such teachers on their staffs.

Few men now retire as principals. Over the past three school years only three men who retired were serving as principals. Older men who are serving as principals are more likely to resign from the principalship but continue teaching for several years before retiring.

The principal's position has become more complex and more time-consuming over the past 25 years. Numerous leadership and administrative responsibilities have been added. Examples of these additional responsibilities include the following: administering and promoting the Team Ministry Program, conducting the classroom observations and conferences related to the principal and teacher assessment, administering programs such as asbestos abatement and blood-borne pathogens, and dealing with issues related to child abuse.

The number of congregations which provide their principals with administrative time during the school day is

increasing. Even though congregations are encouraged to provide this time, financial constraints prevent some from doing it.

Help and encouragement for principals

The WELS Commission on Parish Schools (CPS) realizes that men who are trained as teachers also need to acquire specialized skills and knowledge peculiar to principals. The Commission provides various services and resources including a handbook for principals, biennial principal/board seminars, a mentoring program for beginning principals, and biennial workshops for younger principals. The CPS has organized the Leadership Committee to address the needs of principals. Finally, the CPS is continuing to plan ways of helping both novice and experienced principals.

In most areas of WELS, principals conferences provide opportunity to share, to discuss issues, to receive support from one another, and to gain information and skills through workshops and seminars. Martin Luther College continues to offer its Administration and Supervision Program for principals.

The Conference of Presidents (COP) has addressed the issue of the principal shortage in their April 1995 meeting and has offered some suggestions to the CPS. The Commission is working on these suggestions. The COP will continue to monitor the need for principals.

These plans, programs, and committees all serve an important function. The service of principals can be enhanced through these activities. But the bottom line is still men who are willing to commit to a service of providing leadership and supervision in our

> *"When the principal and the board set priorities for the work of the principal, they are actually setting priorities for the school's activities."*

Lutheran elementary schools, and, thereby, experience the joy and satisfactions such leadership provides.

Suggestions to the principal

The staff of the CPS has discussed with principals the challenges they face. Many principals give as their major concern the amount of time needed to complete all their work. But principals need not struggle with this alone. Each principal serves a school and congregation which also needs to be involved in setting priorities. Knowing that a board of education has helped him set priori-

ties can be an assurance and comfort to the principal.

In some congregations the board has taken the initiative and has discussed the principal's work load with him. Principals can also take the initiative. In doing this, the principal might consider these steps: First, he should list his administrative and teaching responsibilities and place those tasks in priority order, considering each one's importance to achieving the school's mission. When that has been done, the principal can discuss his concerns with the staff and the pastor. This gives everyone an opportunity to review this sensitive subject together. They can decide the best approach as the matter is presented to the board. The issues should be discussed with the chairman of the board and then the entire board. When the principal and the board set priorities for the work of the principal, they are actually setting priorities for the school's activities. Each of these activities in some way contributes to achieving the school's mission.

Another concern that principals express is having sufficient time to spend with their families. Principals do not want to neglect this part of their God-given responsibilities. Time for family must be included in the consideration as principal, pastor, and board discuss setting priorities in the principal's work.

Is the principal spending valuable time on secretarial tasks when he could better use his time working with teachers, students, or parents on spiritual/educational matters? Tasks such as answering the phone, especially during the first two hours of the school day, completion of forms, typing of letters, and maintaining statistical records are time-consuming and can be done by a secretary. Principals might consider working with the board, church council, and voters in providing secretarial help. If he has no help of that type, he likely spends several hours per week on tasks which are very important but which could be done by a secretary. Secretarial help for even several hours a week will help the principal.

The challenge which the Lord is placing before us will not be easily solved. It will require the dedicated efforts of all. We, therefore, ask this of each of you: Pray to our gracious Lord for a solution to this shortage of principals. We need leaders in our schools who possess solid spiritual, educational, administrative, and leadership qualities necessary for effectively serving as school leaders. We need to make it possible for our principals to experience all the joys and blessings of their ministries.

LeDell Plath is Associate Administrator, WELS Commission on Parish Schools, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

How to Have a Developmentally Appropriate Classroom

Cheryl Hochmuth

ONE OF THE LATEST phrases floating around in early childhood education is "developmentally appropriate." We all would like to think that we are doing everything correctly and that our classrooms have activities that are developmentally appropriate for the children entrusted to us. But are we doing things that are developmentally appropriate? How can we determine if we are?

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) believes the main way to determine the quality of the program is to ask whether it is developmentally appropriate. There are two parts to the definition of development appropriateness:

• *Age appropriateness.* Human development research indicates that there are universal and predictable sequences of growth and change that occur in children during the first nine years of life. These predictable changes occur in all domains of development—physical, emotional, social, and cognitive. Knowledge of typical development of children within the age span served by the program provides a framework from which teachers prepare the learning environment and plan appropriate experiences (Bredekamp 1987).

• *Individual appropriateness.* Each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style, and family background. Both the curriculum and adults' interactions with children should be responsive to individual differences. Learning in young children is the result of interaction between the child's thoughts and experiences with materials, ideas, and people. These experiences should match the child's development abilities while also challenging the child's interest and understanding. (Bredekamp 1987).

Using our knowledge of child development we can plan for the use of age-appropriate materials and activities for our classrooms. Keeping in mind that not only do we fulfill the needs of the child at the age level he is, but we also

provide activities that will stimulate him into the next levels of growth. In planning the curriculum it is important to have a variety of activities that are appropriate for the individual, keeping in mind that each child is a special unique child of God. We must know the child's cultural background, interests, developmental level, and home-life as we prepare for the individual. It has also been shown that children learn and grow physically, emotionally, and socially through child-directed and child-initiated play; therefore, play should also be an essential element in a developmentally appropriate classroom.

With this definition of developmentally appropriate, who can help you determine if your classroom is age and individually appropriate? Fellow teachers, your principal, and the Board of Education can observe in your classroom and offer suggestions. You can also use various scales, inventories, lists, and surveys to determine the development levels of the children (e.g. Isch 1994). Many of us, however, have not been adequately trained to use some of these inventories and we often do not have the time to use them properly. So how can we determine the levels of your class? There is an easy observational method that takes very little time, the 3-M Method for Observing Interaction. The 3-M method for observing child interaction with materials gets its name from the three stages, each of which begins with the letter M: manipulation, mastery, and meaning.

Manipulation is the first stage of a child's interaction with things in the environment. Children do not yet know what objects are for, how they work, or what they can do with them. This stage is sometimes known as the child's exploration with an object or activity with which he is unfamiliar (Beaty 1992). An example of how a child uses manipulation might be in the block center where the child picks up the blocks, puts them in a container, and then dumps them out. He may try handling the blocks but never really builds anything with them.

Mastery stage is also called the practice play stage. In this level the child will repeat the action again and again, almost like drilling himself (Beaty 1992). An example in the block center is the child who will begin to stack the blocks and make a tower, knock it down, build it up, and do this process again and again. Or he may take those same blocks, make a long line of blocks, and then make another row identical to it right on top of the original line, similar to a wall.

Meaning is the child's final stage of interaction with materials. Now he or she is ready to add meaning to the activity (Beaty 1992). Here the child will begin to use blocks and make complex buildings and even find new and innovative ways to use the blocks.

Through the 3-M observation method you can become aware of how the children are using the materials in your classroom. Obviously all the children will not be at the same level. You can set your curriculum up with activities for all levels so that children at each stage can be challenged, but not frustrated. A better understanding of how

your children are using materials will help you as you prepare your classroom with age and individually appropriate materials.

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Achievement Test Results
Spring 1995
WELS Elementary Schools

School Size		Subjects		
# Classrooms		Reading	Mathematics	Language
One	Grade 3	4.6	4.6	4.1
	Grade 5	7.3	7.8	8.5
	Grade 7	9.3	10.6	10.3
Two	Grade 3	4.5	4.5	4.5
	Grade 5	6.8	7.8	7.8
	Grade 7	8.9	10.8	10.0
Three	Grade 3	4.7	4.5	4.4
	Grade 5	6.8	7.3	7.3
	Grade 7	9.5	10.6	10.4
Four	Grade 3	4.7	4.3	4.5
	Grade 5	6.5	6.8	7.0
	Grade 7	9.5	11.8	10.4
Five	Grade 3	4.6	4.3	4.2
	Grade 5	6.7	6.8	7.1
	Grade 7	8.9	10.6	10.0
Six	Grade 3	4.7	4.4	4.5
	Grade 5	7.0	7.2	7.5
	Grade 7	9.4	10.8	10.3
All Schools	Grade 3	4.7 (3.8)	4.4 (3.8)	4.5 (3.8)
	Grade 5	6.8 (5.8)	7.0 (5.8)	6.6 (5.8)
	Grade 7	9.3 (7.8)	10.7 (7.8)	10.3 (7.8)

(National norms for this date of testing are shown in parenthesis.)

REVIEWS

Gaustad, Edwin S. *Neither King Nor Prelate, Religion and the New Nation 1776-1826.* Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1993.

Edwin Gaustad has written a concise book on an important chapter of church history in which he takes us back to the Founding Fathers who wrestled with church-state relations. This is done in such a way that we can better understand colonial religious perspectives and the struggle to escape imposed religious thought. The book could well serve as a guide for us today who still confront the tensions between personal religious freedom and public morality in the thorny issues of church-state relationships. The author's keen insights merit attention.

Edwin Gaustad has gained wide respect for his scholarly writings on American church history and in this brief paperback has provided us with yet another well-documented work. The helpful appendix contains some of the major religious documents of the colonial period.

The book is not only high on substance, it is eminently readable. Neither King Nor Prelate could well serve clergy and lay people alike and would be a valuable addition to any church library. (FW)

Satariano, Patricia. *Storytime, Mathtime: Math explorations in Children's Literature.* Palo Alto, CA: Dale Seymour Publications, 1994

The integration of different subject areas through common themes has been encouraged by various professionals for many years. Storytime, *Mathtime...* provides a resource for teachers particularly in the primary grades who are interested in integrating children's literature with mathematics. The resource includes over 60 activities in mathematics that can be used after many popular stories such as *Geraldine's Blanket, Caps for Sale, Millions of Cats, Curious George Rides a Bike,* and *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs.* A total of 18 stories and suggestions for mathematics activities to accompany those stories are included in this resource. As an example of the types of activities that one might find suggested for a story consider these which accompany *Millions of Cats.*

The first activity includes pictures of a scene from the book and pictures of various types of cats, all ready to be copied by the teacher. These are then used to create various number sentences like 4+1=5 or 4-1=3. The guide suggests how the teacher can make the best use of the pictures. The next activity emphasizes the concept of one-half by putting cats into two different groups. While doing this, the child investigates number patterns. The third activity suggested is making pictographs of the different types of cats that were pictured. Another activity emphasized

informal work with fractions such as 1/2, 1/4, and 3/4. All activities are followed with suggestions for extension of the work. While the mathematics activities suggested are good activities, they do not replace work the teacher would normally do in the mathematics class. Rather, the activities in this book give an enjoyable mathematical extension to common stories that children have read or will read in the primary grades. As a teacher resource book, Storytime, Mathtime... gives teachers thoughtful ideas for integrating children's literature and mathematics. (DP)

Leaf, VaDonna Jean. *A Father for Jason*. Illustrated by Liz Brenner Dodson. Minneapolis,MN: Augsburg-Fortress, 1994.

VaDonna Jean Leaf writes a very personal account for young single-parent children. She writes a letter to her readers explaining the purpose of this small book. As a child she was given the assignment to write a letter to her father. VaDonna Jean did not have a known earthly father. However, she did have a mother who daily prayed the Lord's Prayer with her. VaDonna learned that God, her heavenly Father, did all things well, and He gives constant care, security, and love.

This little text with its warm watercolor drawings can also satisfy today's parents and children as they deal with single-parenthood. (BH)

Reviewers: Beverlee Haar, Frederick Wulff, David Pelzl

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