



Published WORKS

College of Education
and Human Services
Utah State University

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Dear Colleagues:

Featured in this issue of *Published Works* are several publications by the talented faculty in the Department of Secondary Education. The Department of Secondary Education offers the professional education framework leading to secondary teacher certification. The department also sponsors the social studies composite major and the ESL endorsement/minor program, as well as M.A., M.S., and M.Ed. degrees in secondary education. We hope you enjoy this sampling of literary and academic talent.

Carol Strong, Associate Dean for Research

Roundtable Discussion Seeks Understanding

Grace Huerta conducted a roundtable discussion at the 2003 American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting concerning the identity, beliefs, and perceptions of female LDS secondary preservice teachers as they prepare to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse secondary student population. Seeking to better understand the interrelationship between identity, religion, education, and community, this roundtable discussion explored how LDS preservice female teachers recognize the LDS religion as an element of their cultural identity, and yet, are sensitive to cultural mismatches present in schools and communities.

Often times, LDS preservice teachers express an interest and desire to non-judgmentally serve students and families whose culture, beliefs, language, religion, and economic status are not like their own, but are uncertain how to do so. This roundtable focused on strategies needed to develop culturally relevant core curricula, while discussants acknowledged the challenges LDS preservice teachers at times face as they prepare to work in diverse environments. Strategies discussed included the design of culturally relevant curricula, field experience and service in diverse communities, foreign language coursework, and sociocultural research.

Deadline

Nominations for CEHS
Scholar/Researcher of the Year
due January 26, 2004

Submit to the Office of Research Services



The Hidden Curriculum

In "Writing Across the Hidden Curriculum" (*The Quarterly of the National Writing Project*, vol 25, no 1 Winter 2003), Bill Strong describes a curriculum

that isn't found in state frameworks or in national standards. This is a curriculum of subtle, hidden messages—ones that often contradict, or subvert, the official goals of instruction. Generally, these messages have great staying power, undermining the regular curriculum.

Strong identifies a dozen lessons that many children learn in school, sometimes from well-intentioned teachers. One such lesson occurs when writing is used as a management threat or as actual punishment for misbehavior. Another powerful lesson results when teachers dictate strict "formulas" for successful writing—for example, insisting on five-paragraph formats, even though this genre exists only in school. A third insidious lesson, Strong believes, is that "writing in school is something you do to get a grade" and that "the main purpose of writing in school is tell the teacher what the teacher already knows." Relentless reinforcement of such messages blocks many students from using writing as a tool for learning or for discovery of personal insights.

Strong distinguishes between ungraded writing-to-learn activities and conventional work with process writing. In ungraded daily writing, students might prepare for a lesson by jotting down what they already know about a topic—or making predictions based on several key words. Following reading, they might summarize ideas for an imagined friend—or apply what they've learned in a problem scenario. Inviting students to exercise creativity in newspaper stories, song lyrics, and "you are there" scripts are just a few ideas for helping students use writing to learn curriculum content.

Strong makes the case that writing-to-learn activities not only improve writing fluency and integration of content knowledge but also motivate better writing in traditional essays and reports. The ungraded activities serve as "rehearsal" for more formal types of writing by paralleling what real writers do in the real world. And, last but certainly not least, they often make writing "fun" again.

Who You Dissin',
Dude?

“Who You Dissin’,
Dude? At-Risk Stu-
dents Learn Assertive
Communication Skills”
is an article that resulted
from a 4-week unit in Barb

Cangelosi’s English classes at Logan South Campus, an alternative high school here in town where she had taught for eighteen years. Because teens, especially at-risk students, often communicate inappropriately, assertive communication needs to supplant the typical passive-aggressive cycle. Based on this premise, this unit is designed around a number of different learning activities that guide the students through reflective and introspective assessment of their interpersonal skills culminating in the acquisition of specific assertive communication strategies (e.g., fogging, negative assertion, and workable compromise). Teachers could incorporate these skill-building activities into Life Skills classes, anger management or peer mediation instruction, or any professional in-service that deals with issues of violence prevention in the schools. (Barb Cangelosi is an instructor in Secondary Education)

Do You Understand What You Read?

Kay Camperell has coauthored a chapter with faculty from the Department of Elementary Education (Drs. Ray Reutzel and John Smith) published in *Improving Comprehension Instruction* edited by Cathy Collins, Linda Gambrell, and Michael Pressley. The chapter focused on problems experienced by students who have difficulty understanding what they read.

The chapter begins with an overview of comprehension research, tracing changes that have occurred in the field in the past 20 years. Essentially, early comprehension research focused on what students could do after reading while current theories focus on cognitive processes that emerge during reading. These theories depict comprehension as a constellation of processes that vary depending on features of the text being read and the background knowledge readers use to understand it. Because background knowledge exerts a pervasive effect on all aspects of comprehension, the authors then focused on the kinds of experiences and knowledge that influence comprehension development.

This research indicates that the foundation for comprehension development begins at home. Children who live in homes where they are frequently read to acquire awareness of the differences between spoken and written language, and they are exposed to the more complex syntax and vocabulary characteristic of written material. Children who struggle with comprehension have not had such experiences and, therefore, do not develop the expressive and receptive language skills that under gird comprehension.

The authors then turned to research on preparing

teachers to teach comprehension. This research suggests that teachers can be taught how to teach comprehension strategies, and such instruction has a direct and positive effect on children’s learning. Unfortunately, the research also reveals that too many teachers still are not being prepared for the complexities of comprehension instruction. Finally, three comprehension strategies that students can be taught to improve their comprehension performance were presented. And strategies were described that teachers could use to promote self-efficacy and self-regulated use of strategies.



The Role of Partnerships in Educational Reform

Educational Partnerships and the State: The Paradoxes of Governing Schools, Children, and Families, edited by Barry M. Franklin of Utah State University, Marianne N. Bloch of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Thomas S. Popkewitz of the University of Wisconsin-Madison brings together a collection of essays that provides a critical exploration of the role of partnerships in educational reform. The focus of the book is on the expanding role that collaboration between the public and private sector has come to play in response to the array of worldwide economic and social changes associated with globalization. In their essays, the contributors to this volume highlight the new relationship between civil society and the state through partnerships and what they come to mean for educational issues.

The volume explores partnerships in educational reform as not merely organizational processes to bring people together but as reform practices in reconstructing the contemporary state. Taken together, these essays explore the strengths and weaknesses of partnerships as a vehicle of what has come to be called the politics of the “Third Way.” This political orientation seeks to transform the state from its traditional role as a governing institution to a new position as an enabling structure that governs through such agencies as business, the church, and the voluntary sector.

Dr. Franklin’s contributions to the book include a coauthored introductory essay and a chapter with Gary McCulloch of the University of London that explores the lack of receptivity in England of two partnership initiatives, City Technology Colleges and Education Action Zones.

COE Research Council: Jim Dorward • Nick Eastmond • Rich Gordin • Grace Huerta • Richard Roberts • Lori Roggman • Julie Smart • Carol Strong • Karl White

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