1985

A Review: Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts

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Recommended Citation

Allen, Diane (1985) "A Review: Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts," *Language Arts Journal of Michigan*: Vol. 1: Iss. 2, Article 9.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.9707/2168-149X.1763>

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In speaking of her creative talent, Alice Walker spoke of how it often served as an antidote to depression and even suicidal urges. In fact, she dedicates the book thus:

To the Spirit:
Without whose assistance
neither this book
nor I
would have been
written

At the end of the novel she adds a page:

I thank everybody in this book for
coming.

A.W., author and medium

In the O'Brien interview Walker expressed the hope that someday a generation of men and women would read her work because, as she says: "It is a true account of my feelings, my perceptions and my imagination, and because it will reveal something to them of their own selves." And she concludes: "The gift of loneliness is sometimes a radical vision of society or one's people that has not been previously taken into account."

I believe the gift of loneliness that produced this remarkable book is a precious gift to the world and ultimately will be a gift to immortality.

This article is a reprint from the **Illinois English Bulletin** 72 (Winter, 1985), with author's revisions for **LAJM**.

A Review: Measures For Research and Evaluation In The English Language Arts by Diane Allen National Council of Teachers of English

A second volume of a book widely used by education researchers is now available from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills and the National Council of Teachers of English. Volume 2 of **Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts** reveals trends in the language arts since 1975, when Volume 1 appeared.

Authors William T. Fagan, University of Alberta; Charles R. Cooper, University of California—San Diego; and Julie M. Jensen, University of Texas at Austin, have included some 86 measures in the new collection. They cite the age range of students with which each instrument has been used (from preschool through post-secondary and adult), describe its purpose, and explain the instrument itself. They include sample items, data on the directions given to those taking the tests, and procedures for scoring.

The book is useful for researchers considering instrument designs for their own research, for faculty conducting research seminars, and for graduate students seeking topics which can be expanded or replicated with other groups for dissertation research. It brings together descriptions of unpublished instruments from scattered sources, obtained through the ERIC database and inquiry within the profession.

Volume 2 reflects increasing emphasis on developing theoretical positions as a framework for interpreting research data. It shows how researchers have broadened their view to see reading as a constructive, rather than a reproductive, process and documents the recent interest in studying both reading and writing as processes. It reveals a new emphasis on children's language behavior in natural contexts.

(Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts, Volume 2, by William T. Fagan, Charles R. Cooper, and Julie M. Jensen. 245 pages, paperbound. Price: \$16.75; NCTE members \$13.00. NCTE Stock No. 31018.)