
May 1974

Message From the President

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Recommended Citation

Hughes, Anne E. (1974) "Message From the President," *Michigan Reading Journal*: Vol. 8 : Iss. 2 , Article 8.
Available at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mrj/vol8/iss2/8>

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Message From the President



It is my sincere hope that you were among the over three thousand teachers who spent two days together in Grand Rapids, this month. If you were, I am sure you grew both personally and professionally from that experience. The Michigan Reading Association Conference is the planned event of the year which attracts so many of us who have one special goal in mind. That goal is the improvement of our teaching skills for this specific objective: All children and youth in our state will read up to their maximum intellectual potential for personal pleasure and social profit for themselves and others.

I know it is the sincere hope of the conference committee that your personal objective was attained.

As this is my "swan song" as President of M.R.A., may I share my personal thoughts about reading with you? For what they are worth:

Real and Effective Reading Instruction includes:

1. An informed and open-minded teacher who *aspires* for each and every child with whom she works . . . This teacher is one who loves children so well that she organizes and plans for her teaching carefully; she conducts her class in such a manner that all youngsters know the limits that are set for the class in terms of behavior; she inspires so that the class knows she believes in them and that there are no limits to their aspirations — the mastery and appreciations of knowledge.

2. An effective program of excellence in reading instruction includes many methods of instruction. As learning occurs differently in different individuals, no one method works for all. The good teacher is open-minded and courageous enough to try many methods until the right one works for the right child.

3. Finally, a good reading program includes many different kinds of materials. Those materials may be basic texts of hard covers, of supplementary books of paperback format or they may be technological in substance. The creative, seeking teachers are those who will try new things even if they have never used tape recorders, reading viewers, over-head projectors and the like. Children of today are growing up with many different means of communications, teachers, too, must employ every aid within reach, for the reading instruction of that "particular" child who could not master the skills by other means.

As a last word, may I suggest every good reading program includes delightful, stimulating literature. That literature must be different as children are different. Tales of folk and fact as well as the fairy tale, the fable, the story of humor and adventure, to say nothing of the beauty and imagery of

poetry, must all be part of a classroom library.

One thing we must never do: Once a converted reader is turned-on to reading, we must never turn them off by boredom.

We all learn affectively as well as cognitively. Let us always remember that a happy, involved reader is one who is both intellectually and emotionally in love with reading for the personal pleasure it gives.

ANNE E. HUGHES