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Main Ideas and Important Details

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How would you like a chance to get back some of the tax money you have been paying out over the years? The Tri-University Project, sponsored by the United States Office of Education, is currently accepting applications from elementary school teachers and college professors. The project involves a full year's study at one of three campuses, The University of Nebraska (English and Language Arts), New York University (Behavioral Sciences) and The University of Washington (Social Studies). A unique feature of the project is that twelve elementary teachers and twelve college professors will be selected to work together as participants in the year long institute. The year is spent in academic study, practical teaching experiences, and conducting special projects. The basic stress of the entire program is on the discovery of new and practical ways to change and improve the teaching of teachers and to improve basic teaching strategies. Stipends include tuition and fees plus seventy-five dollars a week and a dependency allowance for elementary teachers. College participants are paid their full salary. For further information write to: Mr. Gene Hardy, Coordinator, Tri-University Project, Seaton Hall, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

Harper and Row, Publishers, have recently announced the publication of two new reading textbooks. Russell Stauffer, long time

editor of **The Reading Teacher**, has authored **Teaching Reading As A Thinking Process** and **Reading As A Cognitive Process**. Both books are excellent and each is designed with a different audience in mind. The first book was prepared primarily for graduate students and experienced teachers. Both books handle reading problems in a sensible yet sophisticated and scholarly fashion. Both deal with the practical considerations involved in the teaching of reading yet a proper theoretical foundation upon which to base the practical suggestions is clearly established. The chapters on concept development, language experience, word recognition and directed reading activities are particularly noteworthy. Both books abound with explicit examples of teaching reading, and there are chapters that will challenge the best thinkers at any depth they wish to explore the reading process.

Confused about the creativity controversy? One of the finest considerations yet published is to be found in the recent publication, **Creativity in English**, edited by Geoffrey Summerfield. This sixty-five page booklet contains a scholarly and thoughtful discussion on the concept of creativity and lists numerous examples of what the contributors consider to be creativity in English. Cost: \$1.50. National Council of Teachers of English, 508 South Sixth St., Champaign, Illinois, 61820

Have you ever thought of the possible uses of myth in the elementary or secondary classroom? Not many of us have. For an interesting view of the possible uses of myth in education see the recent NCTE publication entitled, **The Uses of Myth**, edited by Paul Olson. Cost: \$1.50.

This column has never recommended a book which is fundamentally a philosophical treatise. It's not that we have anything against philosophy, it's just that such books seem out of place in a column dealing with language arts. We think it's time to call your attention to a philosophy book simply because we think it's one of the most significant books published in this decade. Levi Strauss' **Savage Mind**. The strength of the book, for those who are willing to plow through its very difficult passages, lies in its formalist treatment of pre-literate cultures. Strauss concludes that there is no difference in the intellectual sophistication of the systems elaborated by pre-literate cultures from those elaborated by literate western cultures. The book may provide a new frame for examining those questionable concepts often held regarding the intelligence of minority groups.

James Moffett has authored an exceptional book entitled **A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K-6: A Handbook for Teachers**. Moffett outlines a curriculum modeled on Chomsky's theory regarding language performance (as opposed to language competence). By language competence Moffett refers to the individual's actual use of

language for communication purposes. Moffett properly recognized the importance of oral language and the essential dependence of written language on the command of oral forms. Those who read this book should be cautioned to examine the reading section critically as it is an unsophisticated treatment. Nevertheless, we think it deserves initial scrutiny and a selective reading to digest those parts which are indeed excellent.

As firm believers in the idea of evaluating prior to teaching, we were pleased at the most recent IRA publication, **Evaluating Reading and Study Skills in the Secondary Classroom** by Ruth G. Viox. Essentially this is a guide for content area teachers and it is most welcomed. In addition to explaining the reasons for evaluation, Miss Viox presents a number of specific examples of evaluation procedures as well as some guidelines for the preparation and development of informal reading tests in specific content areas such as art, business education, driver education, home economics and other more basic subjects. Following this is a short section of the uses of classroom evaluation in planning daily instruction, to better understand and motivate students, and to help students unable to read the textbook.