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## From the Editors...

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## From the Editors...

If we are to be at all honest, then we must confess that when confronted by questions of how well a student is doing and why, of whether a particular teacher is performing effectively, of how successful a program has been, we frequently have inadequate basis for our reply.

We nevertheless do respond; and our response, typically, is a mixture in varying proportion of test data and personal impression, presumed authoritative and insightful if delivered confidently.

Such responses are consistent with our practices. For it is on these very bases and with this same aura of confidence, insight, and authority that we assign, deny, promote, and retain; that we appraise teacher effectiveness—even competency; that we expand, do away with, or modify our reading programs.

Our responses, like our practices, however, are too often in contradiction of what we know.

We know the limitations of reading tests and test situations, and the consequent limitations of reading test scores. We know the limitations of personal impressions. We further know that such indices do not in themselves afford a sufficient basis for the many decisions that must be made in this complex business of teaching kids to read.

We make such decisions anyway, and through what we do and say grant test scores and personal impressions extraordinary and many times undeserved credibility.

As the articles in this issue which focus on program evaluation or some aspect of it make clear, good evaluation is not accomplished readily. The considerable work involved is more than justified, however, by the sound basis such evaluation provides for making necessary educational decisions.

P.L.S.