

Sandra Chapman, M.A. Curriculum & Reading Specialist

I am writing in support of the use of the educational texts published by Effective Education Publishing (the publishing arm of Applied Scholastics International) which are based on the works of L. Ron Hubbard. I believe these texts to be a valuable supplementary curriculum addition.

I have a Master of Arts degree in Curriculum and Instruction (specifically in reading instruction) and was certified as a state Reading Specialist. I am a member of the International Reading Association. I currently design curriculum that trains underemployed adults for a technical profession.

I have worked with students at the elementary level through the college level and have found the secular educational materials of L. Ron Hubbard quite useful as curriculum supplements with a broad range of educational populations. The *Basic Study Manual*, *Study Skills for Life* and *Learning How to Learn* published by Effective Education Publishing are excellent curriculum supplements. Specifically, they can be used in a one-on-one basis with young students as an intervention method, and in tutoring situations or independently with low literacy adult readers. The principles are extremely useful in enhancing the academic skills of adults. They are effective in providing study strategies for both students performing at high and low levels.

The Study Technology materials are secular and their use is international. The texts best fit under the subject of reading and specifically study skills or academic skills instruction. Though we often acknowledge that such reading strategy instruction is essential in a balanced reading program, basal textbooks only address this area in a cursory fashion. There are very few academic or study skills texts at a level below high school that address reading comprehension and self-monitoring of the reading process in depth. This is also true at the high school level. At the college level, more materials are available. But, as the new educational standards for many U.S. states suggest, such reading strategies and comprehension tools should be provided to students early on in their academic years.

With the popularity of whole language instruction over the past few years, the emphasis has been on motivation and promoting enjoyment of narrative texts. At the third grade level and beyond, students are challenged to assimilate expository text. If they are taught reading

strategies in the earlier years (such as skipping words in text and reading ahead or hypothesizing the word's meaning by context) they will find these strategies simply inadequate for the cognitive demands of expository text. Limited reading and study strategies particularly backfire on the student when he or she is required to have a higher order comprehension of text in the various content areas, such as science or math. Students simply need a collection of dependable reading strategy tools.

Resources are needed that provide teachers and parents with materials to teach students deeper reading strategies. The Study Technology materials, such as *The Basic Study Manual*, provide such a resource. Also, while presented in a fashion simple enough to be used by the young student, the techniques are in no way simplistic and are adaptable for students at many different grade levels.

As an example of the method and some of the principles, the content of one book, *The Basic Study Manual*, covers such topics as:

- barriers that a student may encounter before, during or after studying
- having a purpose for study
- monitoring one's own and another's reading process and comprehension
- backtracking to locate areas of noncomprehension
- dictionary skills
- constructing concepts in clay
- demonstrating concepts with manipulatives
- cooperative learning in pairs
- fluency and miscue analysis (through word clearing)
- comprehension checking
- questioning and responding (both orally and in writing)
- direct instruction of concepts (learning drills)
- methods of evaluation of data and of judging its validity

At the word and sentence level of text, the methods in these books provide a new avenue for monitoring comprehension. Study Technology provides a way for students to do a type of comprehension analysis cooperatively. Students locate non-comprehended words on one another and gain understanding by using a dictionary and questioning one another and responding. The use of pairs working together to check understanding and fluency on one another is both helpful to the teacher

and instructional to the student. The read-aloud method of clearing up words provides an additional means for the teacher to maintain the role of observer/evaluator as students work together.

There are a number of additional advantages to the cooperative learning model used in the texts. The drills in which students pair up together as “twins” help both students to see the importance of monitoring their comprehension in an ongoing way. Though there have been some models of direct instruction that pair students together in metacognitive tasks, none specifically address the step-by-step reading process toward the goal of increased comprehension.

The use of manipulatives promotes understanding in mathematics. The recent trend to increase textual understanding through concept maps and diagrams is an effort to have students construct meaning for themselves and demonstrate what they have understood. The use of demonstration kits in Study Technology provides a way to use manipulatives to check understanding by having the student manipulate paper clips, objects, etc. as symbolic representations of concepts.

The books also provide drills of a performance nature that require students to apply what they have learned. Such drills align with new performance based objectives and assessment measures being designed by U.S. states as a result of the emphasis on new educational standards. The use of clay for students at all levels as a tool to represent concepts is an innovative method of permitting students to construct concepts for understanding. This method of showing one’s understanding provides an additional performance assessment for the teacher, as does the use of sketching and manipulatives suggested in the books.

All in all, the publications are an important resource that fills a definite need for deeper reading strategy instruction.