

**Daisy Marvel Jones.**  
**TEACHING CHILDREN TO READ.**  
 New York: Harper and Row,  
 1971. 423 pp. \$9.95.  
 and  
**Dolores Durkin.**  
**TEACHING THEM TO READ.**  
 Boston: Allyn and Bacon,  
 1970. \$8.50.

*Teaching Children to Read* is intended for use as a text in courses in the teaching of reading at the pre-service level and also for use as a reference for teachers in service (p. xi).

The clearly organized table-of-contents and complete index facilitate the reference use by in-service teachers. The practical suggestions relating to specific areas of developmental reading, particularly those on oral and silent reading, may also provide some insights and/or "action ideas" for these teachers. However, two major features make this text inappropriate for pre-service teachers.

First: The vocabulary and concept load are very high and the explanations vague. For example, on page 44, the following phrases occur within five lines of print: *Intellectual ability, linguistic maturity, meaningful patterns, linguistic patterns, intellectual level and rate of intellectual growth.* True, the author has explained some of these terms but the lay language merges into sophisticated language so rapidly it becomes educational jargon.

Second: The approach to reading instruction throughout is analytical rather than developmental. After briefly, and properly, putting reading into the context of language, Jones presents it as a problem, complete with multiple causes and approaches. The problem idea persists as a part of the approach and often negative considerations precede the positive ones which are being recommended, e.g. *mechanics or meaning* (pp.

174-5). In this reviewer's opinion, Daisy Marvel Jones' *Teaching Children to Read* is not an appropriate text for one who has not taught.

On the other hand, Dolores Durkin's *Teaching Them to Read*, which was written for those preparing to teach, is a welcome addition to the literature. It features appropriate developmental organization, the use of minimal specialized vocabulary, and clear expository language.

Since the author has done significant research in the field of early reading, the three chapters "Readiness to Learn to Read," "Preschool Reading" and "Reading and the Kindergarten" speak with more than usual authority, yet fit unpretentiously into the total text. The bibliographical listings after each of these chapters are especially complete and pertinent. Chapter 6, "Materials for Teaching Reading," is timely and useful. The reader is first told what is meant by the term, *instructional materials*. Next, in a series of descriptive definitions, he is introduced to multiple types of these. Clear illustrations of some are included. e.g. reading skill charts, personal language charts, narrative charts, pages from high-interest low vocabulary books, and multi-racial readers.

In the chapter entitled "Teaching Beginning Reading," practice with words using games and word cards seems to be given undue emphasis. Meaningful use of words both in reading very-early-reading books, and use of the child's own writing to help him practice words are not nearly so well clarified.

In the chapter "Teaching Comprehension Skills," a working definition of *reading comprehension* is particularly well developed and illustrated. As much meaning of this highly ambiguous term as a beginning teacher can assimilate is included. The concept development is open-ended without being vague.

Edna C. Himeline  
 McGill University