

learning center approach is more likely to be tried with teenagers who for whatever reason have demonstrated some lack of facility with the educational process. Their "brighter" counterparts, who are more adept at playing the game of "school," are more likely to encounter traditional teacher-centred methods. The "special" or exceptional teenagers, as any classroom teacher will attest, are very sensitive about, and will reject out of hand, any material that even hints of a watered-down or deliberately juvenile approach. Hopefully, since the book is intended for teachers and not students, the former will use Beach's excellent ideas, and modify the illustrations to a level appropriate to secondary school.

There are other small problems. Some of the teaching ideas, for example, are presented in that obtusely American fashion which assumes that there are no other education systems, or even other countries, in the world. But this is a minor irritant to most of us who are accustomed to regarding the habit with a bemused chuckle.

These objections aside, *Reaching Teenagers* is a compilation of excellent principles and practical ideas. If you are a classroom teacher, it is definitely worth your time.

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**Peter Whitehead.**  
**HOW FISHES LIVE.**  
London:  
Elsevier Phaidon, 1975.  
160 pp. \$11.95.

*How Fishes Live* is an easy-to-read, fun book on a large subject. Although it is not possible to include examples of the ways of life of all 30,000

known kinds of fishes, the book presents a great deal of general and very useful information. The color photographs and diagrams are clear and easy to understand.

However, the organization of the book is somewhat confusing. In many areas, the reader is referred to another section after being stimulated about a particular subject, only to find that, later in the book, the discussion of original interest is treated in a cursory fashion.

Although many sections of the book, particularly those on deep-sea distribution, feeding, breeding, and development, are well-written and correct, obvious errors and contradictions in other parts of the book detract significantly. Some examples are easy to point out. On page 33, the tail of the shark is described as producing lift, whereas on page 35, it is described as creating a downward thrust, with fins providing lift.

In another section, the myth of the African butterfly fish's flying capability is once again affirmed. The large fins are not used for flying; instead, they function as hydrostatic stabilizers which enable the fish to float nearly motionless near the surface of the water, waiting for insects to fall in. Although known as a jumper in aquariums, this fish has never been recorded as flying by flipping its fins.

Contradictions in biology and physics are noted in the chapter, "Life Under Water and the Senses." On page 24, the discussion about the use of the air bladder to maintain buoyancy states that when a fish is rising, it burps out a bubble of air to control its equilibrium. For many species this is true, but in the same paragraph, the author mentions that air is swallowed as the fish descends. To me, this seems to be a rather fascinating phenomenon: Where does a fish get the air to swallow when it is totally submerged and descending in the sea?

In the chapter on senses, a basic error has been made in referring to

the electrical discharge as being a "60 volt current". In every beginning physics class, one learns that current is expressed in amperes. Names are sometimes used confusingly and the uninitiated reader may not know which species, or that the same species, is being discussed: in two pages, the African knife fish is referred to as a mormyrid, and then by the generic name.

Overall, the book has attempted to take on a very large subject, and its organization includes unnecessary duplication and confusion, perhaps because it was hastily written. It is not a book for the specialist; and, in spite of its beautiful illustrations, it is difficult to recommend it for the beginner because of errors which appear between those chapters that are well written.

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**Joseph Gold, ed.**  
**IN THE NAME OF LANGUAGE!**  
Toronto:  
Macmillan, 1975.  
209 pp. \$5.95.

The jauntily superficial attitudes of "experts" that brought about many "with it" programmes and curricula in the sixties were bound to get their come-uppance, and this book is one instance of the counter attack. Editor Joseph Gold unfurls the battle banner in his Preface when he says, "For too long we have given our Discipline into the hands of 'educationists'." However, the eight essays that constitute the book do not join in direct confrontation with the exponents of permissiveness in language. Despite the origin of the book, in a 1973 gathering of Ontario teachers of English to discuss "The Survival of Literacy", the book is not a collection of apologetic diatribes

against "newfangledness". Instead the writers offer a thoughtful presentation of ideas on various facets of language and on its relation, not to academic endeavours alone, but to life in general.

The character of the book can be sensed from the authors: F. E. L. Priestley, George Whalley, Geoffrey Durrant, Michael Hornysky, Maurice Elliot, Philip H. Smith, Jr., and Joseph Gold himself. Their topics range from Priestley's "English: An Obsolete Industry?" to Smith's "The Failure of the Machine and the Triumph of the Mind".

With so many commissions and journalists providing analyses of the alarming rate of illiteracy in the country (as well as giving innumerable reasons for the inability of almost everyone to read and write), it is worthwhile to hear the personal views of those who live by and love language. Those who also love language will nod in approval at Gold's remark that "It is through the acquisition of language that human beings realize themselves as humans"; those for whom language is a social and a political as well as a humane instrument will recognize the implications of Durrant's comment, "...those who are incompetent in the use of language are forever condemned to believe that language is ineffectual, since they never experience its effective use."

Many aspects of the particular problems of literacy in Canada are not touched upon in these essays, and few directions are given to those who genuinely wish to solve at least the grosser effects of ignorance. However, Durrant has indicted, not too gently, High Priest Marshall McLuhan for his role in making popular "the mystical notion" that language is going out of style, and Smith makes a brief but interesting case against the idea that computers can handle language as well as