

dictionary will quickly realize. The polysyllabic is not necessarily a correlate of the esoteric or even the pretentious. In any event, that the author considers "deem" and "apprise" to be "big words" (p. 86) and "think" and "inform" their respective simpler near-synonyms is an opinion like so many others that needs to be substantiated.

Lest I seem to be unduly undermining the credibility of a truly good book (that is now in its third edition), I will restrict my criticisms to one final and minor observation. The author rightly emphasizes the need to use verbs to express action rather than to express static conditions (unless of course one is speaking of static or immutable things). He calls changing verbs into subjects nominalizing; the results are nominalizations. Examples are regulate and regulation, establish and establishment, express and expression. But we cannot assume that if a noun and a verb are cognates, the noun is a nominalization of the verb. On the contrary, it may be that the verb is a verbalization of the noun. For example, formula is not a nominalization of "to formulate"; table is not a nominalization of "to tabulate" or to "tabularize" or even "to table"; context is not a nominalization of "to contextualize," and so forth.

I will close this exercise by noting that there are a number of qualities of good writing that are more important than either clarity or grace; one of them is accuracy. I may not need to say that even if one writes with the sparkle and pungency and elegance of Hemingway, it is of less importance than making the fine distinctions and nuances characteristic of scholarly writing. The cost of doing the latter is to make our prose heavier, more tedious, and less pleasurable than would otherwise be the case. *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace* will help you minimize those costs.

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Cynthia Solomon.
COMPUTER ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILDREN.
Cambridge: MIT Press (1988).
192 pp. \$9.95.

Over the last decade, the area of educational computer applications has been rapidly evolving. While only a few years ago it was difficult to find any books pertaining to the topic of educational computing, today we find a number of top researchers in this ever growing field who have authored books ranging from practical applications of the technology in the classroom to more theoretical, research-oriented manuscripts.

Computer Environments for Children by Cynthia Solomon (1988) offers a unique view of computers in education. From an historical perspective, Solomon presents an excellent overview of some of the pioneering work in educational computer research and applications. Solomon devotes a chapter to each of four prominent researchers in the field. The first of these is Patrick Suppes who was involved in the development of drill and practice programs in the 1960s. She then discusses the Plato system and the paradigm teaching strategy of Robert B. Davis. The next two chapters deal with programming. Solomon first discusses the work of Tom Dwyer and his use of BASIC programming to give students mastery over the computer. Last, but certainly not least, she devotes a chapter to a discussion of Seymour Papert's work on LOGO.

While the book does present this historical overview, that is not its primary focus. Rather, it serves as a framework for the discussion of these four researchers' theories of learning, in particular, their philosophy of elementary mathematics education and their vision of computers in education. If her idea is not original, her format is, and she presents some good critiques of their work.

Solomon's LOGO background is quite apparent, and while she does make some very good points about what she calls the "innovative research of the 60s and 70s," her criticisms are more valid for today's use of educational computing than at the time at which those research projects were carried out. She also fails to discuss the contribution of this research to current developments in software.

One criticism of the book is that it is somewhat biased towards LOGO. This is understandable since Solomon's own research was on LOGO and she was a student of Seymour Papert. However, it is unfortunate, because it is not reflective of the current state of educational computer use. LOGO failed to really achieve its goals. An influx of educational software and a shift away from the programming aspect of computers towards word processing and the use of the computer as a tool has left LOGO in limbo in so far as its classroom use.

Solomon does address some of the questions educators have concerning educational computing with suggestions that are more theoretical than practical. Her discussion of the "Computer Educator" is based on a series of what she calls models (reminiscent of Papert).

Unfortunately, it does not contain much information which would be considered of value to the classroom teacher. Sadly, one feels that her view of computers in education has been presented before. This is perhaps the biggest criticism of the book.

This is not to say that she has not made some very good points about educational computing. Solomon is a very good writer, and her extensive background in educational computing is evident. Some of her views on computers as an expressive medium and teacher reactions to learning about computers are right on target. Indeed, the last two chapters in which she discusses her vision of computers in education, based on the framework which she has provided, are probably the best.

Solomon has included an extensive reference list, particularly valuable for anyone interested in reading more about this popular area of research. Although the title of the book would suggest that it might be a practical manual for classroom use, the text is probably better suited as a good theoretical book providing an excellent historical framework of particular interest to researchers as well as educators.

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Lorri Neilsen.

**LITERACY AND LIVING:
THE LITERATE LIVES OF THREE ADULTS.**

Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1989.

143 pp.

“Literacy, like an organism, only manifests itself in action” (p. 139). At a time when parents, communities, and governments are hotly debating the issue of literacy, Lorri Neilsen’s work provides a valuable perspective on the ways in which literacy grows and changes in the daily lives of three adults in her community of Hubbards, Nova Scotia.

Neilsen, a writer, researcher, and literacy consultant, provides us with detailed descriptions of the lives of her three participants and their community. Emerging as it does from her doctoral dissertation, this book is a research report; it is also a story of the village of Hubbards (population 750) on the Atlantic coast, thirty miles from Halifax.

As a participant observer (this is her community, too), she reveals the evolution of her own learning “to read, write, and see Hubbards in the ways the adults who worked with me do” (p. 11). The impulse for the research grew as she witnessed shifts in theory from a product to a process orientation, as