

New books

Culham, R. 2005. *6+1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*. New York: Scholastic. 304 pp. ISBN 0-439-57412-9. \$26.99.

Children bring their unique and developing ways of looking at their world to their conversations, drawings, and text. As teachers encourage children to draw, write, and talk about things that matter to them, they help children become writers who understand the power of words and pictures to connect with readers and create images that last a lifetime. Culham demonstrates how this philosophy plays out in K–2 classrooms by presenting strategies teachers use to address the seven key characteristics of good writing—ideas, organization, voice (the writer’s personal stamp), word choice, sentence fluency, mechanics, and presentation. Using classroom samples, the author shows how to assess children’s writing and drawing for each writing trait. The assessment tool helps teachers give children useful feedback in writing conferences and gain information to guide the next teaching steps.

Chapters include activities and practical tools such as scoring guides, letters to parents, and recommended children’s books.

Derman-Sparks, L., & P.G. Ramsey. 2006. *What If All the Kids Are White? Anti-Bias/Multicultural Education with Young Children and Families*. New York: Teachers College Press. 192 pp. ISBN 0-8077-4677-0. \$24.95.

How do you help young children in all-white classrooms understand diversity? This book is for teachers and families working with or raising white children. It explores anti-bias issues from the perspective of early childhood educators. The authors’ goal is to launch new conversations and educational approaches that enhance the likelihood that white children will grow up to recognize and challenge stereotypes, prejudice, and discriminatory practices.

The authors describe how children construct white identities. They explore the ways that attitudes of racial superiority seep unnoticed into the social fabric surrounding young white children and are expressed unconsciously. The text addresses the historical roots of white identity and reviews the implications for young children.

Derman-Sparks and Ramsey present strategies to help teachers incorporate anti-bias activities into the daily curriculum and into their spontaneous interactions with children. They offer suggestions for working with staff and families to enhance awareness of racism and to facilitate discussion about and foster support for anti-bias attitudes and behavior.

Dischler, P. 2005. *From Babysitter to Business Owner: Getting the Most Out of Your Home Child Care Business*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf. 197 pp. ISBN 1-929610-68-8. \$17.95.

Choosing to undertake family child care as a career means bringing a professional outlook to every aspect of the business. Drawing from years of experience, Dischler addresses the steps necessary to establish and operate a quality home child care program for children and families and gain respect and appreciation as a professional caregiver. The author describes how to design a curriculum and how to organize space to create elements of wonder and surprise as well as find room for an office and storage. She offers practical business strategies such as using marketing techniques, setting long-term goals, selecting and retaining families, and developing a parent handbook.

Saracho, O., & B. Spodek, eds. 2005. *Contemporary Perspectives on Families, Communities, and Schools for Young Children*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing. 263 pp. ISBN 1-59311-185-1. \$34.95.

The latest in the series *Contemporary Perspectives in Early Childhood Education*, this volume summarizes the relevant research, directions, and dilemmas concerning relationships between families, communities, and schools for young children. The authors discuss the ways current social and political contexts and cultural beliefs about childrearing and schooling influence school readiness, achievement, and social-emotional development. The text examines family involvement in both schools and family relationships, such as how children’s ability to regulate their emotions serves to mediate the linkages between children and their parents.

There is a wide range of topics. One example is an examination of how the cultural scripts and educational philosophies of immigrants are at odds with developmentally appropriate practice. Another chapter addresses society’s shared responsibility for children—how the Italian model of collaboration between adults in schools, homes, and communities can serve as an example for creating more enduring, collaborative relationships in early education in the United States. The chapter authors present research implications for early childhood practice. The editors offer recommendations for future research on understanding the links between families, schools, and communities.

Titles are selected from the many new books received by NAEYC. Educator Gail Perry writes the brief annotations. The books are available from the publishers listed, your local bookstore, or online retailers.