

**Bardige, B.S. 2009.** *Talk to Me, Baby! How You Can Support Young Children's Language Development.* Baltimore, MD: Brookes. 293 pp. ISBN 9781557669773. \$24.95.

Endless hours of television, computers, and cell phones deprive children of opportunities for playful conversation. Bardige captures the excitement of the language-learning process for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and their caregivers and shows how frequent informal conversations are essential to healthy development. She traces language development from birth to preschool and beyond, supported by discussions of current research that are easy to read.

Teachers and parents will learn about *play talk*—the kind of talk between young children and adults that leads to children's communicative, social, and cognitive competence. Bardige demonstrates how to tune in to children and engage them in playful, informal interactions that build on their curiosity. She describes how communities across the nation are supporting children's early language by providing language-building activities for parents and children in libraries, maternity wards, and children's museums.

In addition to poignant vignettes showing interactions between caregivers and children, chapters include creative strategies and games. This is one of the most comprehensive and practical books in recent years on children's development of language.

**Cooper, P.M. 2009.** *The Classrooms All Young Children Need: Lessons in Teaching from Vivian Paley.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. ISBN 9780226115238. 235 pp. \$29.00.

Still actively writing, Vivian Paley already has an impressive legacy, and Cooper captures it in this book. The author's goal is not to restate what Paley has communicated in her many books. Her purpose is to present the underlying theory and moral underpinnings of Paley's teaching philosophy and the implications for early childhood teacher education.

The text focuses on two areas of Paley's practice: helping young children use play and story to explore the things they find meaningful, and what it means to be a fair teacher. This analysis shows how Paley addresses key issues in the early childhood field—issues important both historically and in the twenty-first century.

Beyond sharing keen insights about the lives of children, Paley speaks out about sensitive issues like the role of race in school and takes an uncompromising position on early literacy. This thought-provoking volume can be used in teacher education classes to stimulate important discussions about teaching.

**Heard, G., & J. McDonough. 2009.** *A Place for Wonder: Reading and Writing Nonfiction in the Primary Grades.* Portland, ME: Stenhouse. 178 pp. ISBN 9781571104328. \$20.00.

This is a "how to" book—how to create a landscape of wonder in the classroom, where children enthusiastically explore nature and learn to read and write nonfiction. A literacy expert teams up with a first grade teacher to show how nonfiction writing begins with children's questions and observations and ends with children drafting, editing, and publishing their own nonfiction. Classroom examples, samples of children's work, and teacher reflections bring to life practical teaching strategies and activities to help children become skilled in exploring, researching, and writing about their wonder questions.

This step-by-step guide includes creative ideas like wonder centers and whole-class research on the wonder question of the week. It offers strategies for teaching challenges like helping children learn to use their own voice and create a think sheet to guide their writing. It is an exciting approach to literacy for primary teachers and children.

**Howes, C. 2010.** *Culture and Child Development in Early Childhood Programs: Practices for Quality Education and Care.* New York: Teachers College Press. 203 pp. ISBN 9780807750209. \$31.95.

This book portrays how exemplary early childhood programs for children from cultural minority families with low incomes define and implement quality care and education. In a unique project, child advocates—insiders from African American and Latino (Los Angeles) and rural mountain and coastal plain (North Carolina) communities—identified good programs in their communities. These insiders joined with outside researchers to study the many factors that make up the complex relationship between a cultural community and quality in early childhood programs.

The text details each step of the project, beginning with the innovative conceptual framework and methodology developed using Rogoff's framework for examining everyday practices in cultural communities, and drawing on Bowlby's attachment theory to explain how children form relationships based on cultural practices. Howes provides vivid portraits of the teaching and cultural practices, the children and their relationships, and the way each program relates to the larger community.

The book sheds new light on discussions about quality and school readiness and on child development and culture. It informs our thinking about how to provide culturally sensitive early childhood programs that are consistent with professional standards.

**Nemeth, K.N. 2009.** *Many Languages, One Classroom: Teaching Dual and English Language Learners.* Silver Spring, MD: Gryphon House. 96 pp. ISBN 9780876590874. \$12.95.

This timely guide is designed to aid preschool teachers and administrators in supporting children's home language while helping them learn English. Nemeth's teaching suggestions offer a range of options that can be tailored to the individual needs of children and families in any early childhood setting. Linked to early learning standards, the suggestions are integrated into engaging activities that will appeal to all children, regardless of home language.

The book includes creative designs for the classroom environment, interesting ways to enhance language in outdoor play, and effective uses of technology. Nemeth offers strategies for empowering the families of dual language learners and involving them in the curriculum. She recommends forming a language advisory committee of parents, staff, and community members to collaborate in activities like translating a family newsletter and obtaining from their home countries books, music, and classroom props.

This invaluable teaching resource makes a critical contribution to our understanding of this topic and the ability to teach dual language learners.

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

This column is available online at [www.naeyc.org/yc/columns](http://www.naeyc.org/yc/columns). Visit New Books, January 2010, to read reviews of more good books from 2009.