

**Feeney, S. 2012. *Professionalism in Early Childhood Education: Doing Our Best for Young Children*. Upper Saddle River, NJ : Allyn & Bacon/Pearson. 100 pp. ISBN 9780137064700. \$20.99.**

Both practical and thought-provoking, this book is designed to help teachers and students in teacher preparation programs reflect on the professional status of early childhood education and understand what it means to be an early childhood professional. The author begins by defining the term *profession*, including a discussion of how early childhood education measures up to eight criteria that distinguish an occupation from a profession. Throughout the book, Feeney draws from her own exemplary work in and commitment to the field as a teacher educator and author to discuss what constitutes professionalism in a teacher's day-to-day work with children, families, colleagues, and members of the community. She details the essential knowledge, skills, values, and personal attributes and describes how they come together in the practice of accomplished early childhood educators. Pertinent quotes from teachers and the literature illustrate how teachers internalize and develop professional values over time and communicate them through collaborative relationships with children and adults.

The author highlights the role of morality and professional ethics and the importance of a code of ethics—a written, collective vision of what a profession should be—in addressing ethical issues and garnering public trust. This timely book is an excellent resource for preservice and in-service educators and makes a valuable contribution to the early childhood literature.

**Zaslow, M., I. Martinez-Beck, K. Tout, & T. Halle. 2011. *Quality Measurement in Early Childhood Settings*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes. 431 pp. ISBN 9781598571615. \$44.95.**

What are the key features of early care and education programs that support learning and positive outcomes for children? How well are we measuring quality in early childhood settings, and how can we improve the assessment of quality? More than 60 researchers and early childhood leaders respond to these critical questions in a wide-ranging, in-depth examination of the professional and research literature. They describe key components of quality in both home- and center-based settings and review the capacity of current assessment tools to measure these dimensions.

Chapters address conceptual and methodological issues in specific domains like literacy, math, and health and broad developmental areas like social and emotional competence. The volume includes topics such as family-sensitive and culturally responsive practices, considered key dimensions of quality in early care and education settings but often not included in assessment tools or the research on child outcomes.

The authors make recommendations about what to consider when bringing quality measurement to scale in statewide systems and in developing new approaches to measuring quality or modifying existing assessment tools. The thoughtful and coherent summaries in this comprehensive volume provide

invaluable insight toward understanding and strengthening this central component of our field.

**Brooks, J.G. 2011. *Big Science for Growing Minds: Constructivist Classrooms for Young Thinkers*. New York: Teachers College Press. 179 pp. ISBN 9780807751954. \$26.95.**

Brooks presents an approach to science education that engages preschool, kindergarten, and primary children in long-term investigations of real-life problems and in constructing key scientific knowledge. At the core of this process is children's thinking and learning. The author shows teachers how to put constructivist principles into action in challenging learning experiences: children work collaboratively to solve open-ended problems and to generate and discuss their own findings. In the process they struggle intellectually with fundamental science concepts.

The curriculum is framed by a set of five science concepts identified in the National Research Council's *National Science Education Standards*, which begin in the everyday experiences of young children. Descriptions of the concepts are illustrated by multiple examples of teachers and children using everyday objects as they enthusiastically engage in investigations that bring biology, chemistry, physics, and earth science to life, such as in the chemistry unit "Science in a Shopping Cart" and in exploring earth science in "Water, Sand, Soil and Salt." Brooks shows teachers how to prepare for this deep learning of science content by children and teachers alike and ways to foster learning across the classroom curriculum, in the community, and in nature.

This book offers an innovative approach for teachers who are serious about helping children cultivate knowledge about their world through science.

**Lickey, D.C., & D.J. Powers. 2011. *Starting with Their Strengths: Using the Project Approach in Special Education*. New York: Teachers College Press. 164 pp. ISBN 9780807752340. \$29.95.**

This book offers a refreshing, dynamic alternative to a traditional special education approach focused on correcting children's deficits. The approach is based on the belief that teachers who have children with special needs in their classrooms should discover and nurture children's capabilities, which are often overshadowed by their disabilities. The authors show that teaching to children's strengths and unique interests through meaningful curriculum projects helps children forge connections to the school environment and with their teachers, staff, and peers. All children in the class benefit as they work together, become familiar with one another's abilities, and are more comfortable with each other's differences. They learn from their diverse strengths and interests.

The authors present strategies and tools for getting to know the children and identifying their strengths and interests. They help teachers use this information to inform their interactions with children and in project planning and implementation. Enriching the text are examples of projects-in-action and vivid descriptions of children's individual journeys as they gradually develop an emotional investment in their learning and gain newfound competencies. The authors also describe how teachers, therapists, and families work as a team in this approach and carry out necessary tasks, such as writing individualized education programs (IEPs) and reviewing and assessing children's progress.

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.

**New Books** is available in an online archive at [www.naeyc.org/yc/columns](http://www.naeyc.org/yc/columns).