



Favorites



FROM THE FIELD

Building a Knowledge Base in Reading

by Jane Braunger and Jan Patricia Lewis

A Book Worth Reading!

The International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) recently released the second edition of *Building a Knowledge Base in Reading* by Jane Braunger and Jan Patricia Lewis. The authors acknowledge a need for literacy instruction at all levels based on solid research. In contrast to the narrow criterion of “scientifically-based” research (terminology derived from the National Reading Panel report, *Teaching Children to Read* [National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000] which presents the findings from a meta-analysis of experimental/control studies on five topics [phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension]), Braunger and Lewis follow the tenets of “evidence-based” research as proposed by the IRA. This recognizes many types of research. In its position paper (IRA, 2002), IRA asserts that reading research supports the idea that “there is no single instructional program or method that is effective in teaching all children to read.”

Braunger and Lewis propose that research supports thirteen “core understandings about reading.” These core understandings relate to the process of learning to read and continuing to grow as a reader. A good deal of the book elaborates on these ideas and provides some classroom applications. Notice how their understandings listed below relate to and support the CRISS Principles and Philosophy.

- ▶ Reading is a construction of meaning from text. It is an active, cognitive, and affective process.
- ▶ Background knowledge and prior experience are critical to the reading process.
- ▶ Social interaction is essential at all stages of reading development.
- ▶ Reading and writing are reciprocal processes; development of one enhances the other.
- ▶ Reading involves complex thinking.
- ▶ Environments rich in literacy experiences, resources, and models facilitate reading development.
- ▶ Engagement in the reading task is key in successfully learning to read and developing as a reader.
- ▶ Children’s understandings of print are not the same as adults’ understandings.
- ▶ Children develop phonemic awareness and knowledge of phonics through a variety of literacy opportunities, models, and demonstrations.
- ▶ Readers learn productive strategies in the context of real reading.
- ▶ Students learn best when teachers employ a variety of strategies to model and demonstrate reading knowledge, strategy, and skills.
- ▶ Students need many opportunities to read, read, read.
- ▶ Monitoring the development of reading processes is vital to student success.

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