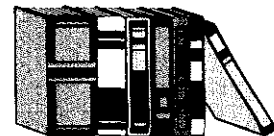


The Blumenfeld Education Letter



"My People Are Destroyed For Lack Of Knowledge" HOSEA 4:6

Vol. 9, No. 7 (Letter # 95)

EDITOR: Samuel L. Blumenfeld

July 1994

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide knowledge for parents and educators who want to save the children of America from the destructive forces that endanger them. Our children in the public schools are at grave risk in 4 ways: academically, spiritually, morally, and physically — and only a well-informed public will be able to reduce these risks.

"Without vision, the people perish."

Are Teachers Underpaid? The Statistics Say "NO"

According to the defenders of public education, one of the chief reasons why our public schools are failing so miserably is because we simply do not pay teachers enough. These dedicated teachers would be more than willing to reverse the trends in public education, if only our miserly taxpayers would pay them more money. Indeed, it is suggested that poor salaries have so discouraged and demoralized teachers that they can barely make it through the day, let alone teach effectively and creatively.

Yet, it is only after a close study of actual salary figures that one comes away with the knowledge that, as usual, the public is being deceived by the education establishment. The notion that teachers are underpaid has become the kind of popularly accepted "truth" that nobody bothers to challenge because virtually everybody believes it to be so. "Teachers are underpaid" is bedrock to the profession.

What is the truth? Here it is (from *Teacher* magazine, May/June 1993; *USA Today*, 10/8/93, and *Parade*, 6/20/93):

In 1991-92 the Average Beginning Teacher Salary was \$22,171.

In 1991-92 the Average Teacher Salary

was \$34,213.

In 1992 the Average Per-Capita Income in the U.S. was \$20,114.

In 1992 the median wage for workers in the U.S. was \$23,140.

In other words, the salary of *beginning* teachers is now higher than the per-capita income of Americans as a whole and slightly lower than the median wage for workers in the U.S. The per-capita income is arrived at by adding up the gross wages, salaries, interest earnings and income from other sources divided by the population. The average teacher now earns \$14,000 more than America's per capita income, and many of these teachers get additional income from other sources.

The state with the highest average teacher salary is Connecticut: \$47,510 — which is \$24,370 more than the median wage for American workers. The average per-capita income in Connecticut is \$27,137.

The state with the lowest average teacher salary is South Dakota: \$23,291. The average per-capita income in that state is \$17,081.

Here is a state-by-state breakdown on teacher salaries in 1992 (column 1: average

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beginning teacher salary; column 2: average teacher salary; column 3: average per-capita income):

	1	2	3
Alabama	\$21,400	\$26,954	\$16,496
Alaska	30,429	43,800	22,419
Arizona	21,750	31,176	17,323
Arkansas	19,500	27,168	15,765
California	24,700	40,425	21,472
Colorado	20,906	33,072	20,648
Connecticut	26,718	47,510	27,137
Delaware	21,532	34,548	22,201
DC	23,325	39,673	26,485
Florida	21,398	31,070	19,494
Georgia	21,144	29,539	18,485
Hawaii	24,208	34,488	21,779
Idaho	16,721	26,345	16,523
Illinois	22,899	36,528	21,980
Indiana	21,081	34,247	18,405
Iowa	19,873	29,196	18,526
Kansas	19,438	29,101	19,348
Kentucky	20,559	30,880	16,848
Louisiana	17,686	26,411	15,874
Maine	19,288	30,097	18,100
Maryland	24,069	39,073	23,249
Massachusetts	22,889	37,256	23,811
Michigan	23,250	40,700	19,680
Minnesota	22,039	33,700	20,427
Mississippi	18,664	24,368	14,128
Missouri	20,652	28,923	19,058
Montana	18,407	27,590	16,264
Nebraska	18,779	27,231	18,957
Nevada	23,228	36,989	21,285
New Hampshire	22,500	33,170	22,596
New Jersey	26,162	41,027	26,969
New Mexico	19,499	26,244	15,563
New York	27,166	43,335	23,842
North Carolina	19,810	29,334	17,986
North Dakota	16,897	24,495	17,193
Ohio	18,705	33,198	18,860
Oklahoma	18,660	26,514	16,452
Oregon	21,303	34,101	18,419
Pennsylvania	23,750	38,715	20,385
Rhode Island	21,692	39,397	19,895
South Carolina	19,706	28,209	16,197
South Dakota	17,496	23,291	17,081
Tennessee	20,371	28,621	17,632
Texas	21,100	29,719	18,333
Utah	17,804	26,524	15,624
Vermont	20,758	33,200	18,834
Virginia	23,200	32,243	21,170
Washington	21,533	34,880	21,088
West Virginia	19,278	27,366	15,332
Wisconsin	22,141	35,227	19,162
Wyoming	19,925	30,425	18,330
United States	22,171	34,213	20,114

What Other People Earn

According to *Parade* magazine of 6/20/93, in 1992 a 36-year-old Multicultural Education Specialist in Lincoln, Nebraska, earned \$45,000 a year while a 30-year-old theater manager in Hollywood, California, earned \$11,000. A 27-year-old desk clerk in Las Vegas, Nevada, earned \$23,000, a 35-year-old racehorse trainer in Wynnewood, Oklahoma, earned \$20,000, a 56-year-old pharmacist in Smyrna, Georgia, earned \$46,000, a 39-year-old registered nurse in Columbus, Ohio, earned \$41,000, a 51-year-old timber cutter in Hood River, Oregon, earned \$30,000, a 29-year-old female police officer in Louisville, Kentucky, earned \$25,000, a 34-year-old Lutheran minister in Sioux City, Iowa, earned \$35,000, a 72-year-old farmer/vintner in Bingen, Washington, earned \$40,000, a 23-year-old newspaper reporter in Springfield, Ohio, earned \$18,000, a 33-year-old photo researcher in White Plains, New York, earned \$30,000, a 44-year-old psychotherapist in Helena, Montana, earned \$40,000, a 55-year-old Special Ed Teacher in Sioux City, Iowa, earned \$41,000.

In 1992, Bill and Hillary Clinton had an income of \$290,697—of which \$203,172 came from her law practice and \$34,527 from his governor's pay, plus some investments. Of course, they lived very well in the Governor's mansion free of charge.

So, the notion that teachers are underpaid is one of those clichés that are kept current by the teachers themselves for obvious reasons. Of course, there was a time when teachers entered the profession out of a love of teaching rather than a love of money. And during that time those dedicated teachers taught millions of children to read, write and do arithmetic competently. Is it not interesting that the more teachers have been paid, the less competent has been their teaching? And the idea that paying them even

more is going to improve education is one of the great consumer frauds of our time. The simple truth is that the quality of education has more to do with a philosophy of education than with how much teachers are paid. As long as that philosophy is false, nothing in education will improve no matter how much more teachers are paid or how much more money is poured into the system.

Letter From Kentucky: An Inside View of KERA

The following letter is from H. Hughes Farmer of Henderson, Kentucky, an old friend of your editor. Being in a perfect position to observe Kentucky's education reform as it is being implemented locally, he sent us the following detailed report written in April 1994:

I decided that right under my nose was a source of information on KERA and all the other educational garbage that we are being fed here in Kentucky. I live within sight of the new Jefferson School. As a child, I attended the old Jefferson School, a modest, old-fashioned, two-storey building with wide cross halls where assemblies were held, the children standing, and oiled floors to control the dust. The playground was paved with cinders thrown out of the furnace. Some poor kids came to school barefoot in the depression, and the woman principal shod them with funds she raised privately. She also bathed them in an old tub in the basement, and gave them new clothes. On festive days she gathered us together in the cross halls and read to us from the Bible. We also recited the Lord's Prayer. This old school occupied a relatively small lot. It had six grades plus an office for the principal. That meant seven rooms.

The new school, still named Jefferson School, covers an entire square block. It has a huge parking lot to accommodate a fleet of school busses which meet to exchange students going to and coming from all points of the compass. The main hall runs almost the entire length of the block. From one end it appears to narrow to a small point of light as though one were within a long automobile tunnel. There is a reception desk (where one is stopped and quizzed), an outer

office for the principal, an inner office, meeting rooms, a large gym, a cafeteria, and of course a library, termed a "media center." Naturally, there are additions to meet the new and future demands of KERA, including, of course, the "family resource center" where school bureaucrats and psychologists will examine the psyches of the whole family, and medical and other interventions will take place. Referrals to other health facilities will be made, to get around the provisions of our laws which forbid counseling on birth control measures in the school system. The local county health department can do that little job.

Getting Into the School

I trooped down to the school and brazenly asked the receptionist for directions to the library. She asked me my business. I told her I was doing research on education and wanted to read their text books. She said that they did not keep copies of the text books in the "media center," and that I would have to get that from the teacher. I also would have to get permission from the principal to visit the classroom, and the principal was in a meeting. I made an appointment to see the principal two hours later, and got myself to a friendly printer who whipped out an appropriate calling card identifying me as a "field researcher in education, science & government."

I returned to the school after lunch. I gave my card to the receptionist who in turn gave it to the principal, who met me in the hall with a smile and a handshake. She took me to the primary teacher *du jour* (or perhaps I should say *de l'heure* since they seem to change them during the day). Team teaching is the thing. In fact, more than one teacher can be in a classroom at a time.

I arrived at the school about 1:30 p.m. School ends at 3 p.m., but not for all. (At 3 p.m. students go home on buses or stay for tutoring or stay for daycare until parents call for them afterwards.) I was conducted to a pleasant woman who was in a large room filled with tables (no desks) cosily arranged in cute little conversational groups. Children sit in circles of three or four or so, looking at each other, not at the teacher particularly. It is all so warm and friendly. Pictures are put up all over the room. The place was a riot of color. The warm carpeted floor lures one to lie or sit on the floor, which is encouraged. There are three age groups together in one room [in conformity with KERA policy of nongraded primary schools]. Shades of the old one-room school, but without the discipline. Kindergarten, grades one and two are all together. It was not explained why this arrangement was made. The room was not called the "first grade"

I was told. I didn't get what they called it. I called it confusion, verging on bedlam!

The Teacher's Lot

The poor teacher, the wife of our local Presbyterian minister, spent the entire hour and a half trying to get the attention of the students. (I use the word "student" loosely.) About every fifteen minutes or so she would send a child to the principal's office. Obviously, this was just to get the disrupting influence out of the room for a few minutes. The child would return, none the worse for the disciplining, five minutes later. Of course, no corporal punishment is administered. In desperation, in order to quiet the children, she finally asked them to close their eyes and imagine that they were standing in an open field and seeing something or other. I understand that this is a frequently used visualization technique that is considered occultic by many Christian parents. The teacher has the kids sing a silly little song. What they were trying to do was learn to *read*!

Whole Language Program

Let me get to the reading instruction materials based on Whole Language theory. They were using a "first grade" program published by Houghton Mifflin, senior author John J. Pikulski, with a 1991 copyright. I looked over the *Teacher's Book*, Level 1+, entitled "Bookworm." In this collection is a story entitled "The Surprise," with an "Instant-Recognition Vocabulary" [formerly known as a "Sight Vocabulary"] which included such words as: already, box, burn(ed), idea, nothing, open, plain, present, seem(s ed), send, spent, still, store(s), sure, town.

Then follow sentences from which the student is to recognize, read aloud and explain the meaning of a single underlined word. For example:

"The man put his books into the box."

The student is told to think as follows: "First, I'll reread the other words in the sentence, then I'll try to think of a word that makes sense and has the right sounds. The word chest makes sense in the sentence, but doesn't have the right sounds. The word bikes begins and ends with the right sounds but doesn't make sense. I think the word is box because it has the right sounds and makes sense in the sentence."

The teacher is advised that "Children should read the paragraph silently and then discuss how

they figured out the underlined words. Encourage a variety of responses. Accept all reasonable explanations."

Throughout the teacher's manual there are "skills" listed that the students are to master. Under "skills," however, are "major outcomes." For example, in the story "People Who Write," the outcome is described as: "Understands how authors and illustrators work together to create books." The major outcome for a series of nursery rhymes is: "Understands how traditional tales use sequence of events and repetitive language." [Which is what all children really want to think about when listening to nursery rhymes!] The major outcome for "Problems, Problems" is: "Understands that solving problems is a common theme in stories." [For a reading program that purports to create great interest in literature, the outcomes seem calculated to bore the children to tears.]

Because Kentucky is the one state with an openly declared Outcome Based Education system, Houghton Mifflin has produced an inexpensive collection of papers stapled together with the title: "Kentucky . . . Learning Goals and Valued Outcomes Correlated with Houghton Mifflin Reading: The Literature Experience." The book contains a long list of outcomes correlated with the stories in the readers.

In order to hype the authors of the stories in this program, Houghton Mifflin has published in the teacher's manual several pages of biographies of the contributors along with photographs. A cursory reading reveals that many of these people have worked at or are currently working at a large number of liberal establishments including UNESCO.

Attitudes and Habits

Teachers are also expected to be concerned with the "attitudes and habits" of their students who are, in turn, expected to respond "to stories and information about authors and illustrations by creating their own books." The writing of a book by this K-2 student who cannot even read is part of a major project: the keeping of a journal or scrapbook for the year, upon which a major part of the grade is based.

Throughout the teacher's manual the "Instant-recognition vocabulary" is given for each group of stories. In other words, the principle teaching method is word memorization, pure and simple.

Teacher instructions include: "Using content to determine word meaning." "Learning about sign language." "Anticipating a character's feelings."

"Teacher-guided reading" in which the teacher reads the material to the student who can't manage to figure it out. Here's a great one: "Shared reading for children having difficulty decoding." Here they get another student to read it to them! "Rereading old stories to see if the student can still recognize words. [Apparently students easily forget infrequently used sight words.] "Look at pictures for clues." [And the people of Kentucky are paying through the nose for this phony reading program!]

Among the "Old Favorites" is the well known "Three Little Pigs." Twenty pages are given over to this old favorite and its analysis. These are large-size pages replete with large full-color illustrations on each page. The teacher is instructed to "share a different version of the story. What would the Three Little Pigs be (sic) if the wolf had been a rabbit?" "Ask the children what the wolf does after he stops huffing and puffing, and why they think the wolf does this."

There are 66 pages given over to these "Old Favorites." I would say that the text could easily be put into 10 pages if it weren't for the copious illustrations.

This series of books for primary reading instruction has to be seen to be appreciated. There are a large number of separately bound books of stories for the students, including "big books," measuring about two feet on a side. The teacher's manual has all of these stories plus all of the "outcomes" and other crazy stuff. There is no telling what all of this costs for this class. I did not see it all. I did not have time to investigate it all in the three hours I was there.

Kentucky Distinguished Educator

The new education law takes all local control away from the local school boards. If the teachers or school superintendent or school board members are not cooperating with the state school commissar, if the objectives of KERA are not being met in the local schools, the schools can be declared to be "in crisis." (This is well put!) A "Kentucky Distinguished Educator" is then appointed from some other school district and sent to the offending school district for up to two years to straighten them out. If persons do not shape up, at the recommendation of the "KDE," he will recommend to the "chief state school officer" (the Commissioner of Education), that they be removed and replaced. The Commissioner of Education can remove anyone, including school board members in local districts. He may do so on his own, or the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education may remove people at the lower level on their own. The State Board is composed of eleven people, all ap-

pointed by the Governor. The State Board then hires the "chief state school officer" as the chief executive of education in the state. This man has total control of education in the state. Local boards of education can be overruled or removed. All educators at the lower level, hired by local boards, can be removed. This can occur following an investigation by the Kentucky Distinguished Educator, a Soviet-style commissar if there ever was one!

The Power to Destroy

A sop has been thrown to the people with the establishment of "site-based management" or "school-based decision-making" councils. (The use of more than one term for various offices in our laws is very confusing.) These local councils are teacher dominated. Each council has six members — two parents of children in the school and four teachers. Enough said. Further, they can all be removed by the Kentucky Distinguished Educator or his boss, the Commissioner of Education. This gray eminence, this "distinguished educator," has the power to destroy, and all his power comes from the red eminence, the Governor. We have a virtual dictatorship in education in Kentucky now, working through a series of commissars, and only a popular rebellion will be able to get the legislature to repeal the law that has created this monster.

Clearly, what the educators have in Kentucky today is what they would like to impose on every state in the union, and the purpose of Goals 2000 and H.R. 6 is to do just that. The fact that whole language is the official reading instruction program for the entire state of Kentucky and is integral to the success of OBE is proof that the citizens of Kentucky are actually paying to have their children deliberately dumbed down. Their new higher taxes are being used for the intellectual crippling of their own children! If the parents of Kentucky have any common sense at all they will remove their children from the public schools and serve the state notice that they will not be accomplices and collaborators in the destruction of their children's minds. If they do not assert their responsibilities as parents to safeguard their children from the harm that will surely be

done to them in the public schools, then they will only have themselves to blame for the ruined lives they will have to deal with in the years ahead.

Retarding America: The Imprisonment of Potential

The above is the title of a new book by literacy researcher Michael S. Brunner that proves beyond a doubt that a strong correlation exists between reading failure and delinquent behavior. As a researcher at the National Institute of Justice, Brunner collected convincing evidence from studies of juvenile offenders indicating that the frustration these individuals experienced in not being able to learn to read was a direct cause of their anti-social behavior. Brunner writes (p.30):

What brings about the delinquency is not the academic failure per se, but sustained frustration which results from continued failure to achieve selected academic goals. When frustration can find no resolution into constructive or productive activity, one response, although not necessarily the only one, is aggressive, anti-social behavior. Other responses, which are equally counterproductive academically, are regression, resignation and other maladaptive behaviors that result in fixated responses. These reactions to frustration are not only possible but predictable. They have been well-documented from clinical research conducted with animals and humans.

Brunner then cites laboratory experiments by Pavlov on dogs and humans in Russia in which the famed psychologist was able to artificially produce anti-social aggression through frustration. Brunner then states:

The anti-social aggression that Pavlov was able to create in the laboratory is also being created in tens of thousands of classrooms across our nation as a result of schools of education providing reading

pedagogy based upon theories of teaching and learning that cannot be validated by experimental research.

All the ingredients necessary to create this anti-social aggression through sustained frustration are present: There is an unachievable goal, in this case academic achievement. It is unachievable because the means of achieving it, the ability to read and comprehend text material, is, in many cases, absent due to whole-word reading instruction. Though the means of achieving the goal are absent, the student, nevertheless, is continually pressured to achieve it by teachers, parents and peers. As a result, frustration ensues. Finally, the student not only has no alternative for achieving the goal, but he is not allowed to leave the failure-producing environment as a result of compulsory attendance laws.

Brunner quotes many studies to back up his statements. One research paper entitled *Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency; Urban Delinquency and Substance Abuse*, issued in 1991 by the U.S. Justice Department, states:

Low reading levels tend to predict the likelihood of the onset of serious delinquency. Longitudinally, poor reading achievement and delinquency appear to mutually influence each other. Prior reading level predicted later subsequent delinquency . . . [moreover] poor reading achievement increased the chances of serious delinquency persisting over time.

Brunner cites E. E. Gagne who wrote in the *Journal of Special Education* (1977):

[The] compulsory school attendance law . . . facilitates delinquency by forcing youth to remain in what is sometimes a frustrating situation in which they are stigmatized as failures The longer learning-disabled students stay in school, the more likely they are to become involved with the police.

In a Report to the Congress issued in 1977 by the Comptroller General of the United States we read:

In our society, school is the only major legitimate activity for children between the ages of 6 and 18. If a child fails in school, generally there is little else in which he can be successful. . . . Delinquency and

misbehavior become a way for the failing child to express his frustration at those who disapprove of his academic underachievement. This disapproval comes not only from parents and teachers, but also from other children who are keenly aware of the school status based on performance.

Brunner writes (p. 33):

Significant research has been conducted that investigates reading failure as the major source of frustration that leads to delinquency, based upon three hypotheses:

1. Continued failure in the most significant educational task challenging the child (reading) is a deeply frustrating experience when permitted to continue for several years, [especially] when such failure begins prior to the child's developing ability to think rationally (approximately age seven and one-half).

2. Continued frustration over prolonged periods of time will result in aggressive behavior directed outward toward society (delinquency) or inward toward the self (neurosis).

3. Confined delinquent boys who have failed in reading will have behavioral histories showing more anti-social aggression than confined delinquent boys who were able to read.

In investigating two groups of incarcerated delinquents, 48 in each group, in two different states, a significant correlation between reading underachievement and aggression for both groups was found. Though IQ scores correlated with reading success in both groups, it will be shown shortly that IQ scores are not reliable predictors for determining if one will be able to learn to read, rather the ability to read will to some extent determine IQ scores! But this study is remarkable in what it didn't find:

"... [T]he present study was unsuccessful in attempting to correlate aggression with age, family size, or number of parents present in the home, rural versus urban environment, socio-economic status, minority group membership, religious preference, etc. Only reading failure was found to correlate with aggression in both populations of delinquent boys.

"It is possible that reading failure is the single most significant factor in those forms of delinquency which can be described as anti-socially aggressive. I am speaking of assault, arson, sadistic acts directed against peers and siblings, major vandalism, etc."

The study quoted above was done by Dennis Hogenson and published in the *Bulletin of The Orton Society*, vol. 24, 1974, under the title, "Reading Failure and Juvenile Delinquency."

That frustration can cause anti-social behavior was also demonstrated in the laboratory experiments of Kurt Lewin, the social psychologist who invented sensitivity training. Lewin came to the United States from Germany in 1933, founded the Research Center for Group Dynamics at M.I.T. and shortly before his death in 1947 established the National Training Laboratory at Bethel, Maine, under the sponsorship of the National Education Association. One of Lewin's most important experiments was aimed at determining the behavioral effects of frustration on children and how these effects could be artificially produced in the laboratory. Lewin's biographer, Alfred J. Marrow, writes (p. 122):

The experiment indicated that in frustration the children tended to regress to a surprising degree. They tended to become babyish. Intellectually, children of four and a half years tended toward the behavior of a three-year-old. The degree of intellectual regression varied directly with the strength of the frustration. Change in emotional behavior was also recorded. There was less smiling and singing and more thumbsucking, noisiness, and restless actions. Aggressiveness also increased and some children went so far as to hit, kick, and break objects. There was a 30 per cent rise in the number of hostile actions toward the experimenter and a 34 per cent decrease in friendly approaches. . . .

The authors summarized their main findings as follows: "Frustration as it operated in these experiments resulted in an average regression in the level of intellectual functioning, in increased unhappiness, restlessness, and destructiveness, in increased ultra-group unity, and in increased out-group aggression. The amounts of increase in negative emotionality were positively related to strength of frustration."

Can anyone seriously believe that American psychologists are unaware of the frustration and failure that the look-say and whole-language methods are causing among millions of children? Yet, this wholesale

educational malpractice not only goes on with impunity, but any attempt to eliminate it is met with a hostility and viciousness generally associated with attack dogs. And now these methods are being mandated by state governments in the name of Outcome Based Education!

Brunner also made a survey of reading instruction methods presently being used in prisons to help functionally illiterate prisoners learn to read. He discovered that the vast majority of teachers of prisoners have a very poor knowledge of how to teach reading via intensive, systematic phonics and tend to rely on the very same instructional methods that caused the reading problem in the first place. Obviously, this is a prescription for continued failure and frustration on the part of the prisoner.

Brunner therefore recommends that juvenile correctional institutions "Seek out and employ private sector literacy providers that can train the reading and language arts teachers in intensive, systematic phonics as well as provide post-inservice technical assistance as it relates to implementing research-based reading instruction."

Will it ever happen? Unfortunately, prison officials are more inclined to rely on the "expertise" of the reading establishment than on the expertise of its critics. The result is that even though we know how to solve the problem of functional illiteracy among prisoners, it will not be done. What a tragedy for the prisoners and for America!

Brunner's book can be obtained by writing to Halcyon House, P.O. Box 8795, Portland, Oregon 97207-8795 or by phoning 800-827-2499. The list price is \$14.95.

Parent Praises Alpha-Phonics

The following is a letter from a parent who has been using our Alpha-Phonics tu-

toring book in her home school. We publish it not only to give ourselves a little pat on the back but also to demonstrate how utterly easy it is to teach a child (or an adult) to read if the proper method and materials are used.

June 17, 1994

Dear Mr. Blumenfeld,

I just had to write to tell you how thrilled I am with Alpha-Phonics. It is incredibly easy to use! It works marvelously! What a joy it is to teach my own child to read. It adds a special dimension to our relationship.

You have made Alpha-Phonics so simple, it's brilliant. I started homeschooling my five year old son, with four children and a brand new baby. With Alpha-Phonics, any time I had fifteen minutes to spare, I'd just turn to the next lesson and we'd do it. Michael was progressing beautifully and so naturally. Reading was not difficult. It was just systematic and took time and attention. It did not require strain.

One day I found my three year old at the kitchen table reading S am, Sam; m an, man, and so on, completing Lesson 2 all by himself. I had not taught him. I had just taught him his letter sounds. He picked it up and did it himself. And that's just how simple this book is.

As we got along in the book, we would review, daily, earlier lessons and then do a new lesson. With your book, reading can be mastered, without stress or strain.

Your approach also totally fits my style. I am a busy person, like most of us today. I don't like a lot of fuss and unnecessary frills. This one book does it all.

My sister-in-law showed me a reading program she recently purchased. There was this book and that book and this tape and that tape. And it was over \$200! I didn't have the heart to tell her all she needed was Alpha-Phonics, this unassuming looking book [which] is brilliant, not to mention a small fraction of the cost compared to the other.

A thousand times thank you. You have made it simple and economical for any mom to impart to their own child the most important skill they will ever learn.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Kathryn Colasante

Wyoming, Rhode Island 02898

Need we say more?