

reading achievers will be high achievers in most curricular areas with the possible exception of mathematics. Why is this? Is it perhaps because we teach health, science, English, and social studies as though they were basal reading lessons?

The area of American education which is the most highly criticized by our neighbors overseas is our over-reliance on textbooks. We have reached the point where publishing houses determine the content of the curriculum and teachers follow guides and manuals, dispensing information, like robots on an assembly line. Social studies, science, and health are areas of the curriculum where teachers can generate student enthusiasm, excitement, and even love of learning, if only they would stop treating these areas as though they were reading lessons. Teach social studies in such a fashion that children are being trained in the skills of the social scientist and they will come to realize the relevance of reading as it applies to the content area.

Elliott has taken a group of 15 fourth-grade and 17 fifth-grade children and presented social studies through an independent study and small group learning mode. Capitalizing upon the idea of developing a study guide to direct independent study activities, Elliott expands the concept by developing learning packets consisting ". . . of questions and activities incorporating multi-media aids such as filmstrips, records, transparencies, library books, and social studies textbooks." This idea is what Veatch (1959), (1969) and Barbe (1961) called for during the '60s when writing about individualized reading instruction. Elliott concluded that the 32 fourth- and fifth-grade children maintained a consistent high or low relationship between reading and social studies achievement scores on the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS). She cautions that further research is needed before generalizing that the results will be consistent time after time.

In times of competency based testing and competency based promotion standards it is refreshing to read that someone is attempting to teach children through creative, highly stimulating activities.

#### REFERENCES

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## REACTION: TEACHING MULTI-AGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS COMPREHENSION SKILLS

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It has been stated in beginning reading methods courses and in the literature that reading is taught in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers have the responsibility to insure that the necessary reading skills; word recognition (unique vocabulary) and comprehension skills are presented in each curricular area. Joan Elliott has concluded that high achievers in reading comprehension are high achievers in social studies regardless of the approach used to teach the subject. For Elliott, this is justification to use independent learning packets in social studies. She found that reading comprehension and social studies gains remain high or low depending upon the individual student's ability.

Principals and teachers have said many times that high