
Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

Vernon, Ann. (1989). *Thinking, Feeling, Behaving: An Emotional Curriculum for Children*. Champaign, IL: Research Press, 251 pp.

Reviewed by: Carl Krause, Educational Consultant.

Thinking, Feeling, Behaving is a resource book designed primarily but not exclusively for classroom teachers of children, grades one to six. Using Rational-Emotive Therapy as her theoretical foundation, Ann Vernon has developed 90 classroom and group activities that teachers can use when approaching the emotional side of learning. The reviewer sees these activities as being especially useful if and when difficulties or areas of concern arise, such as dealing with fears, theft, welcoming a newcomer, exploring views of self and of others, cause and effect, and so forth. The reviewer does not recommend these as activities scheduled for a particular time of the day or week. Emotional matters tend not to work that way.

Divided into three major sections—Grades 1-2, Grades 3-4, and Grades 5-6—each section further sub-divides into five areas—Self-Acceptance, Feelings, Beliefs and Behavior, Problem Solving/Decision Making, and Interpersonal Relationships. The distinctions from area to area are arbitrary, and reflect more the author's choices than any major theoretical divisions. These distinctions, however, are by no means problematic and appear to have been done to ensure that each of the five areas of emotional education was indeed addressed.

Vernon's emphasis throughout her publication is on activities for children. Only five pages are committed to describing the theoretical base on which these activities are founded, including a brief section of the appropriate use of these activities. In other words, the reader, even the one unfamiliar with Rational-Emotive Therapy, can rest assured that Vernon's work is short on theory and long on practice.

Vernon presents all material in a succinct yet readable style. Activities are either one or two pages long and all follow the same layout: Objective, Materials, Procedure, Discussion, and To the Leader; and imbedded in this layout is a pattern of stimulus activity and discussion.

This is not to suggest that the publication is problem-free. Indeed there are several problems. This reviewer has spent the last several years working with aboriginal children in northern Saskatchewan. Given this population, the reviewer found a number of activities to be difficult if not impossible to use. For example, many of the activities for Grades One and Two assume that children can read. Not so, for many aboriginal children whose first language is a language other than English but whose school-based instruction is in English. Some activities assume that children can write. Again, the same limitation. Not only would one encounter these difficulties with aboriginal children in remote regions of Canada, the same would in all likelihood apply to many inner-city children and to many mildly handicapped children integrated into mainstream programs. In other words, some activities are

appropriate only with modification, a problem that Vernon acknowledges in the Introduction. And, of course, the material being in English eliminates all Canadians whose language of instruction is French, unless first translated.

Some activities use references that are essentially urban—e.g., a trip to the supermarket—and, therefore, require modification. Units of measurement are in imperial units and thus inappropriate for Canadian children. Some activities assume children to be Caucasian. For example, Self-Acceptance Activity 1 for Grades 1-2, the first activity in the book, asks children to identify children with brown eyes as a distinguishing characteristic or children with freckles as a distinguishing characteristic. Again, these kinds of activities, although interesting and useful, require modification and adaptation, if not elimination.

In conclusion, Vernon has produced a useful resource for teachers of children in Grades 1-6. Although many of the activities cannot be used with adaptation, such adaptation does not take away from the purpose of the book—to address the emotional well-being of children in a world that is, in the author's words, not as predictable and secure as it once was.

Gray, Peter, Miller, Andy & Noakes, Jim (Eds.). (1994). *Challenging Behaviour in Schools*. New York, NY: Routledge, 271 pp.

Reviewed by: John Stewart, University of New Brunswick.

This book, a collection of edited articles deals with solutions to the challenging behaviours presented by students. It focuses on ways in which both pupil and teacher achievements in the resolution of challenging behaviours can be encouraged, supported and valued at all levels of the public education school system. The book is written by authors who are directly involved with the British school system, a feature which will enhance its credibility among practitioners. While there are terms and references with which North American public school personnel may not be familiar, the ideas presented are practical, and easily abstracted to any school and/or district. The book is based on the premise that a variety of approaches work best when working with challenging students and that it is necessary to involve their support systems in remediation. Its presentation is overwhelmingly positive and contains current research, and practical information of use to a variety of school professionals. The chapters are well-organized, and written with clarity.

The book is divided into two parts: one which focuses on schools, parents, and support systems, and one which focuses on whole-school and specific methods for improving pupil behaviour. This book would be of interest to a variety of school professionals and belongs in the professional library of a local school and/or a school board office. For example, there are several chapters which would be of interest to teachers. These chapters deal with peer support among teachers as a strategy for improving instruction, conflict resolution on the play ground, doing activity analysis as a means of clarify-