

not operate against it. I couldn't gather however, where Rose would place the canon. He does not offer a compromise in a practical way-Shakespeare for dinner, *People* for dessert? - but does raise the thorny issue of where and how to teach the classics.

Rose, who also wrote *Possible Lives* and *The Mind at Work*, brings to life a compassionated and convincing call to truly democratize our schools, but I wish he would talk more about how the canon can be used not as a measuring device but as a point of departure, a participant in the great discussion of education. This mild (perhaps intentional?) oversight invites soul-searching for teachers, epitomizing one of Rose's well turned phrases: "Error marks the place where education begins" (63).

Reflective Teaching, Reflective Learning: How to Develop Critically Engaged Readers, Writers, and Speakers

Edited by Thomas M. McCann, Larry R. Johannessen, Elizabeth Kahn, Peter Smagorinsky, and Michael W. Smith. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2005. 223 pp. ISBN 0-325-00852-3.

Reviewed by Heidi Pierce

Reflective Teaching, Reflective Learning:

How to Develop Critically Engaged

Readers, Writers, and Speakers

identifies its own purpose as "to help teachers enact the standards' vision of critically engaged students and teachers by sharing a coherent model of instruction and a wide range of applications of that model" (McCann et al, xxiii). A tribute to the professional life and work of George Hillocks, Jr., the contributing authors and editors have all been influenced by the pedagogy of this University of Chicago MAT Professor, and this book is a collaboration of their combined experiences bringing that pedagogy to life in their classrooms.

Reflective Teaching reads like a journal, with articles organized into five parts:

An Introduction to Inquiry; Writing Instruction; Discussion and Activity; Literature Instruction; and Inquiry, Learning, and Reflection. In each of these articles, the authors discuss their classroom practices in light of relevant research to guide the reader toward more reflective teaching practices that will engage students and create meaningful instructional environments. By including not just personal analyses of their own experiences, but also guidelines for classroom activities, and models of inquiry in practice, *Reflective Teaching* successfully answers the why and how questions of implementing critical inquiry in the instruction of high school English.

This reviewer found the book to be especially relevant in our age of standards-based instruction. In contrast with a traditional model of teacher-centered instruction, *Reflective Teaching*

argues that students learn more from their interactions with each other, especially when the teacher is able to successfully scaffold their learning. Many teachers, whether new to the field or experienced veterans, may find themselves wondering how to move away from this teacher-centered model and get their students to do the work of learning, and this book serves as an effective handbook. Sections dealing with teaching writing, teaching literature, and using discussion and activity in the classroom are the strongest parts of the book, providing in-depth discussions of specific classroom activities and how to use them with your own students.

Joseph M. Flanagan has an outstanding article, "Inquiry, Dialogue, and the Teaching of Writing," wherein he describes how he uses several case studies and role playing activities to foster critical thinking about complex

arguments. He includes the text of one case study that he uses with his students about a controversial high school football game, and then transcribes some of the conversations that occur in the role playing portion of this activity. His students demonstrate considerable critical thinking and engagement in the task, ultimately being able to read the subtext of the argument and determine each character's motivation and rhetorical strategies. Flanagan argues that his students are then better prepared to read complex literature, and be able to "evaluate the behaviors and motivations of characters in the texts they later read in class" (McCann et al, 66). Other outstanding articles include David A. Rasdale and Peter Smagorinsky's "The Role of Play and Small-Group Work in Activity-Based Instruction," a discussion of the importance of peer interaction and ritualized rowdiness to foster meaningful

engagement with classroom texts. Kevin Perks's "Dialogue Folders: Creating Space to Engage Students in Conversation About Their Writing," is an in-depth analysis of using dialogue folders to respond to student writing. These articles stand out because they are practical, thoughtful, and supported by educational research.

Where Reflective Teaching

falters a little is in the articles with no immediate application to the methods of teaching English. While certainly valid scholarly discussions, articles such as Jeffrey Conant Markham's "Inquiry Versus Naïve Relativism: James, Dewey, and Teaching the Ethics of Pragmatism" and Carol D. Lee's "Cultural Modeling in the Hillocks Tradition" provide little concrete application to the practice of teaching English. Despite these few seemingly out-of-place articles, *Reflective Teaching* remains an excellent

resource for professional teachers who strive to develop the critical thinking skills of their students, and hone their own instructive practices.

Pirie, Bruce. *Teenage Boys and High School English*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2002: 1- 152. ISBN: 0-86709-536-9

Reviewed by Amanda Rowe

In *Teenage Boys and High School English*, Bruce Pirie addresses the stereotype that teenage girls are more successful in English than teenage boys. For the most part, Pirie believes this stereotype is true, even though he admits there are a few exceptions here and there in academic classrooms. Pirie's book not only discusses the possible psychological and sociologic reasons for boys' apparent dislike of the English subject, he also gives strategies to break down the barrier between boys and English. He states that the most powerful barrier is the boys' view that English is a feminine subject and that teachers have

to find masculine ways to teach to reach these boys. Even though I find the book very interesting and full of great teaching ideas, I think Bruce Pirie might be a little biased in his strategies throughout the book. His goal seems to improve boys' learning, but what about the girls?

In the very first chapter of the book, I believe Pirie shows his, perhaps unrealized, bias against women when it comes to the English subject. Pirie tells his readers about a female teacher who dislikes the idea that he is writing a book to improve solely teenage boys' grades and interest in English. The first line of his book repeats the female teacher's words, "You're writing a book about helping boys? Why would you bother? Don't men have advantage enough already?" (1). He also states another colleague's words to another teacher: "I can't stand it! All that 'boy' stuff is just