



# Teacher *to* Teacher

BALANCED PERSPECTIVES IN EDUCATION

## What's New?

### ELEMENTARY MATERIALS

**Math 1, Backyard Math with Zac (Video)**—Reviews the more difficult first-grade math concepts. Twelve 15-minute segments cover twelve topics (159277, \$29.95)

**BJ Booklinks, On Yonder Mountain**—For use with Reading 1. Offers reproducibles and creative activities that coordinate with the guided instruction; teaching guide and novel (188524, \$15.00); teaching guide (188508, \$9.00); novel (037358, \$7.49)

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**Student Text**—Includes discussions of the communication process, audience analysis, message, and public-speaking guidelines. Speaking projects include introduction

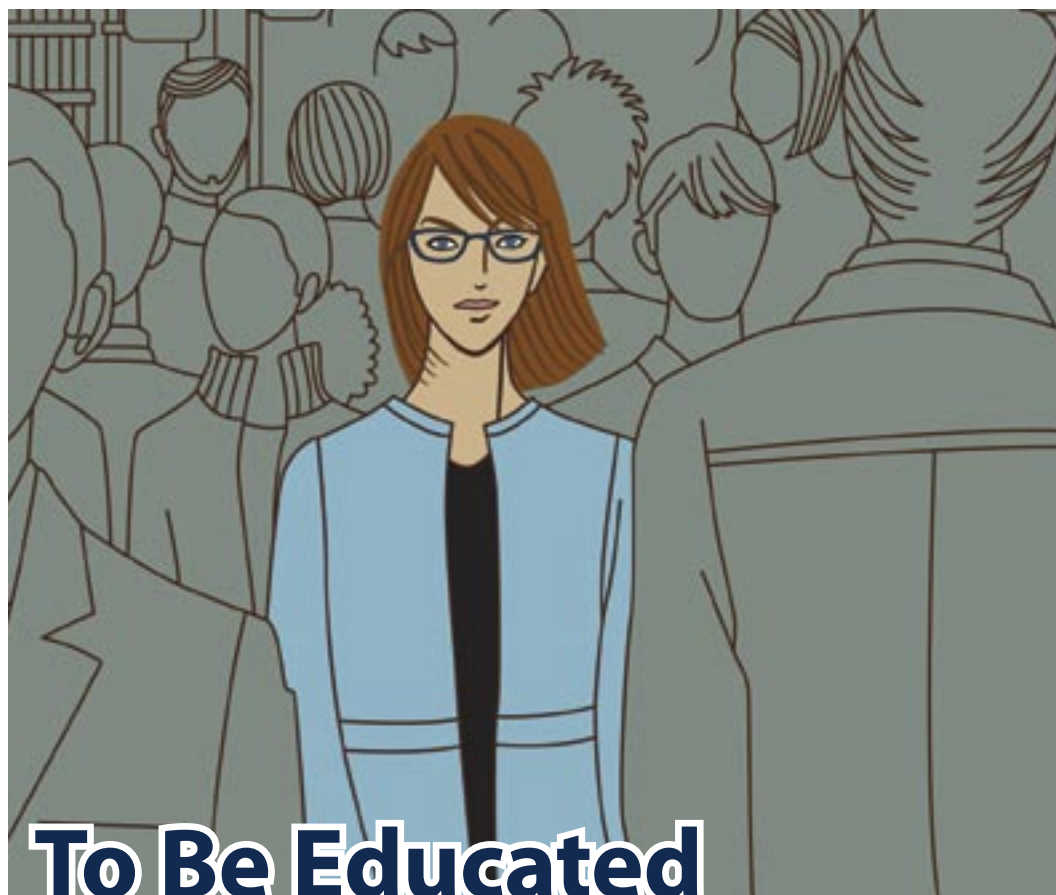
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If I can learn my ABCs, can read 600 words per minute, and can write with perfect penmanship, but have not been shown how to communicate with the Designer of all language,  
*I have not been educated.*

If I can deliver an eloquent speech and persuade you with my stunning logic, but have not been instructed in God's wisdom,  
*I have not been educated.*

If I have read Shakespeare and John Locke and can discuss their writings

with keen insight, but have not read the greatest of all books—the Bible—and have no knowledge of its personal importance,  
*I have not been educated.*

If I have memorized addition facts, multiplication tables, and chemical formulas, but have never been disciplined to hide God's Word in my heart,  
*I have not been educated.*

If I can explain the law of gravity and Einstein's theory of relativity, but have

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# Old Problem, New Solution

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*Is there a schoolteacher on the planet who has not faced this challenge: a student is not doing well in class because he doesn't read well? Probably not.*

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Reading, that crucial skill, is often the hardest to teach and to evaluate. It is even more difficult to determine what a student's reading problems are and to plan remedial steps.



But the results are really stunning. Students improve by 2.5 grade levels or more—and the improvement is permanent.

Thus, enters the myriad programs and processes, aimed at helping teachers get students reading better and faster. Many of the programs, however, assume that one remedy cures all. Very few try to determine the causes of the problems, and even fewer tailor the process to the individual.

Passport Learning™, a program based on The Academy of Reading®, is different. This reading remedial program targets the roots of reading weaknesses and eliminates them. A student takes a series of skill evaluations that pinpoint any problems. Next, a personalized course of instruction is assigned to close those “reading gaps.” This computerized instruction makes the sessions enjoyable for the student, and a trained instructor is always on hand to encourage the student and answer questions.

The individualized course is drawn from a 20,000-page database, selecting just the right combination of exercises, checkups, and drills for each person. The extensive research is impressive enough.

What makes Passport Learning™ work so well? For one thing, the Academy of Reading® is the only company that has done the research, assessment, and training. The three elements together make the program unique and successful.

For another, it targets key reading components. In “The New Science of Dyslexia” (*Time*, July 29, 2003), Christine Gorman outlines needs of poor readers. Gorman states that scientific evidence suggests that “the most successful [reading] programs focus on strengthening the brain’s aptitude for linking letters to the sounds they represent.”

The helps listed in the article for students battling dyslexia is also a list of the components of the Academy of Reading®. For example, the auditory-visual module, one component of Passport Learning’s Academy of Reading®, assists the student in developing an automatic response to the sound of certain letters or combinations of letters. The automaticity of the auditory-visual development allows the student to focus his attention on the comprehension of an entire sentence

**Teacher to Teacher**

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**G**orman also says that “there are over 3 million students in special-education classes specifically because they can’t read.” The intention of President Bush’s *No Child Left Behind Act* was to help all children, but instead, students with reading difficulties are being placed in special-education classes, allowing schools to appear successful in President Bush’s initiative. The public schools may then score well on the individual state accountability test because fewer students are expected to take the test. Besides not being evaluated, the students with the greatest needs also may receive less training.

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and paragraph rather than on the individual elements of syllables or words.

Does Passport Learning™ sound too good to be true? BJU Press was a bit skeptical at first. So in the summer of 2002, BJU Press conducted a pilot of the Academy of Reading® with nineteen students of varying ages and reading needs. All of them made dramatic progress and left loving to read. BJU Press decided to take the academically solid Academy of Reading® and create Passport Learning™, using some Christian literature excerpts and removing some passages dealing with topics like movies and evolution. Now this remarkable reading improvement program is ready for Christian schools to use.

To find out more about Passport Learning™, visit  [www.passportlearning.com](http://www.passportlearning.com) or call Rich Kohler at 866.727.7576. With Passport Learning™ your school can become the answer to many students’ call for reading help. ■

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never been instructed in the unchangeable laws of the One Who orders our universe,  
*I have not been educated.*

If I can classify animals by their family, genus, and species and can write a lengthy scientific paper that wins an award, but have not been introduced to the Maker’s purpose for all creation,  
*I have not been educated.*

If I can recite the Gettysburg Address and the Preamble to the Constitution, but have not been informed of the hand of God in the history of our country,  
*I have not been educated.*

If I can play the piano, the violin, six other instruments and can write music that moves men to tears, but have not been taught to listen to the Director of the universe and worship Him,  
*I have not been educated.*

If I can run cross-country races, star in basketball, and do 100 push-ups without stopping, but have never been shown how to bend my spirit to do God’s will,  
*I have not been educated.*

If I can identify a Picasso, describe the style of da Vinci, and even paint a portrait that earns an A+, but have not learned that all harmony and beauty comes from a relationship with God,  
*I have not been educated.*

If I graduate from high school with a perfect 4.0 and am accepted at the best university with a full scholarship, but have not been guided into a career of God’s choosing for me,  
*I have not been educated.*

If I become a good citizen, voting at each election and fighting for what is moral and right, but have not been told of the sinfulness of man and his hopelessness without Christ,  
*I have not been educated.*

However, if one day I see the world as God sees it and come to know Him, Whom to know is life eternal, and glorify God by fulfilling His purpose for me,  
*then I have been educated!* ■

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*Carolyn Caines is a teacher at Columbia Heights Christian Academy in Longview, Washington.*

# Reading Well, Reading Right

*Everyone knows that reading is the crucial skill to success in school. And nearly everyone is interested in ways to help students read better.*

For example, a variety of computerized software programs have been developed to supplement basal reading programs. Some of these programs focus on developing a love for leisure reading. Others help the classroom teacher diagnose and remediate weaknesses in literary skills.

One of these reading management programs is Accelerated Reader®. The process is simple: the student selects a book from a list of approved AR titles, and after he reads the book, he takes a computerized quiz on the book. The results of that quiz are available to the classroom teacher to diagnose weak or missing skills and to help the teacher guide the student in future reading choices. AR is not intended to be used in place of a reading curricu-

lum but rather to supplement the curriculum in the area of leisure reading. The program is intended to maximize teacher effectiveness, especially where class size might otherwise prohibit the level of individualized assistance that is most beneficial to each student. The concept is good and the immediate feedback is beneficial to the busy classroom teacher.

In the early years, the approved AR titles recommended by teachers and librarians were limited in scope and included virtually no titles from Christian publishing houses. And so, even though children were reading some fine works of children's literature, it was clear that some readers were bypassing books that they might choose to read only because there was not an AR quiz available for the title.

While it is important to read, it is equally important to read the right stuff. Several years ago Accelerated Reader® broadened its scope and began to include not only a va-



riety of types of reading material including periodicals for young people but also quizzes on titles from Christian publishing houses. The result is that students in Christian schools that use AR can now select books that are written from a Christian worldview. The students benefit from a broader range of materials while the diagnostic benefits remain at the classroom teacher's disposal.

*JourneyForth Books* has provided AR with copies of our novels that have appropriate reading levels for the quizzes, and there are currently AR quizzes available for almost eighty JF titles. These titles are marked with a red AR icon in the JF catalog and in the BJU Press Christian School Catalog. Teachers and librarians can also go to the AR web site [http://www.renlearn.com/store/quiz\\_home.asp](http://www.renlearn.com/store/quiz_home.asp) and find all of the JF titles with an advanced search by entering Bob Jones University Press as the publisher. ■

*Nancy Lohr is the Acquisitions Editor for JourneyForth Books, an imprint of BJU Press.*



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# What's Fair?

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*“That’s not fair!” What teacher has not heard that complaint? And, if we are honest, who among us has not asked the same question at some moment when our desire has been thwarted?*

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What is *fair*, anyway? It is perhaps easier to determine what is unfair. I remember my grandmother pointing out, with very little sympathy to sweeten the message as she gave my older cousin the last cinnamon roll, that life is not fair. No doubt, all of us have had that pointed out along the path or come to know it first-hand. (And the fact that we already had a cinnamon roll that morning doesn't seem relevant.)

The word *fair* seems to imply that things are “equitable.” If the third grade gets ten extra minutes of recess and the fifth grade does too, that is fair, right? If I get a raise and everyone else gets one as well, that is fair, right?

Actually, it is *equal*. It may or may not be fair.

*Fair* is more than mere *equality*. *Fair* carries with it a sense of justice, of individual consideration, and of far-sightedness. *Equality* is an easily administered sameness for all. *Fair* is not usually the same as *equal*.

For example, when a teacher spends extra time helping a student who is struggling in math, is she being unfair by not spending the same amount with everyone else? No. Not everyone needs the extra help. She is not treating everyone equally here, but she is treating the students fairly.

If there were two students struggling with the same math concept and she helped one but not the other, then we might have a case for unfairness. But even then, maybe not. The one she did not help may have a private tutor in math, and he may not have time or want to get extra help from her as well.

When students (or we) send up the cry “Unfair!” and lament how we have been dealt what seems a unique blow, the first thing to do is ask whether we want justice or equality.

When the Lord sent manna to the wilderness wanderers, He was treating them both fairly and equally. When He sends rain on the just and

the unjust, He is treating all equally. But when He gives another teacher only seventeen students and I get twenty-five, then I might think He is treating me unfairly.

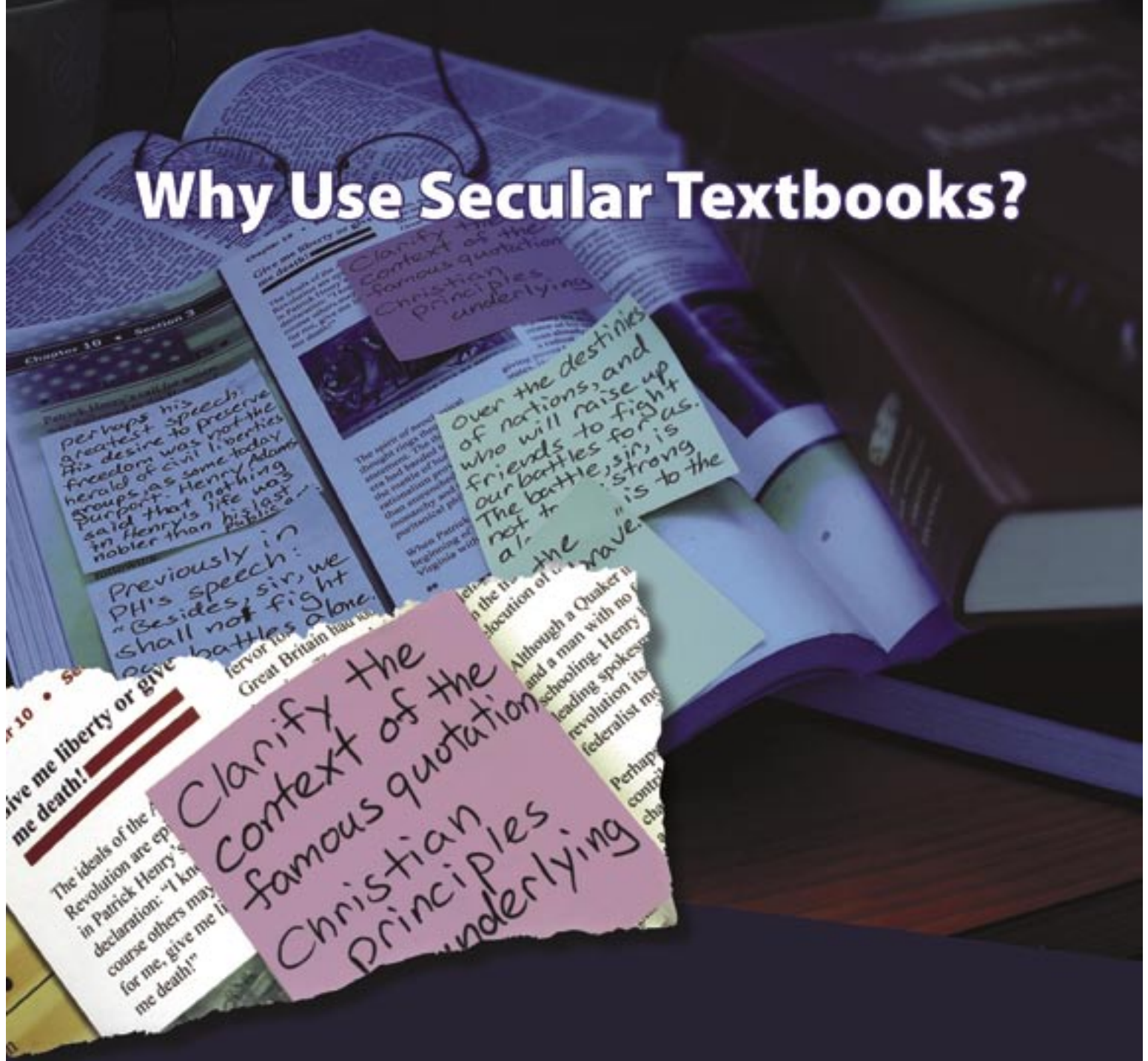
What I am really wanting is equality. But what He gave me is fairness. He knows far better than I do what is to be accomplished by my having those students—in them and in me. And the other teacher has her seventeen for reasons known to Him. If I could see the end of the year from eternity's balcony, I would know that equality would not have been nearly as good for me as fairness. But my view is not that good at present. I just have to trust.

Trusting that what happens to me is in God's control is not the easiest thing I do day by day. It is really hard to believe that when life seems so unfair that I want to cry. If only I could remember that God is always fair, then I could remember to be content. All things being equal. ■

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*Alice Bronson is an English teacher and a freelance writer.*

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