Using Drama to Improve Reading
And
The Sociology of Childhood

Dr. Iman Mahmoud Abd E-Tawab

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Reeves (2004) wrote, "Reading literature is an art itself and needs not only extensive instruction and practice, but also instruction and practice in an environment in which education and imagination are not separate" (p. 255). To accomplish those goals, Farnan (1996) suggested that teachers show their students how to look beyond the literal text and "consider the big ideas

(themes) in reading...to reflect on their own feelings and attitudes in the context of ideas that emerge from a reading" (p. 439).

How reading literature can be meaningful, attainable, and enjoyable. We can discovered how reading for reluctant readers works best as a group activity. Success happens when they have opportunities to share delights, confusions, frustrations, and discoveries with peers, teachers, and adults. These students found value in reading. As a result, their motivation to read was reignited, revitalized, and celebrated. With any program, success is measured by results and the ability to replicate activities Could a series of theatre-based activities in which students closely interact with text and then see the literature adapted and produced in a theatrical facility with

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settings, costumes, lights, and sounds help a literate students comprehend, visualize, and find enjoyment in an assigned work of literature?

A significant difference between this study and studies that use drama to improve reading is the difference between the performing arts and creative dramatics presentations. Compared with dramatic experiences in classrooms, Sauter (2000) defined theatre as a "communicative intersection between the performer's actions and the spectator's reactions" (p. 53) that occurs in environments designed to facilitate the imaginative creations and interpretations of trained artists. This art form creates multisensory, imaginative experiences that transport students into deeply personal interpretations of what was formerly the printed word. Audiences see living collages of words, images, sounds, emotions, and ideas all presented at once.

Theatre activities done in the classroom and theatre field trips are pedagogically sound methods of addressing literacy issues. Teachers and students, however, need to see these experiences as more than drama and entertainment.

They should view theatre as "a virtual world—or mental model—from the textual symbols called words" (Wilhelm & Edmiston, 1998, p.31). By combining reading with seeing, students found ways to immerse themselves in the actions, thoughts, and dialogue of characters, as well as the settings, sounds, and symbols in the literature.

Global perspective to help broaden students' vision. Students need to comprehend the diversity in today's world and to understand the sources of

Diversity. This knowledge can challenge the limitations of conventional ways of thinking about social life. Finally, students need to grasp national boundaries—trends and processes that are supranational (for example, environmental degradation). Recognition of global processes stimulates student awareness of causal forces that transcend national boundaries economies and politics. Things are changing, however, new and important theoretical and empirical work has been done by a number of scholars who advocate the conceptual autonomy of children and childhood (Thorne, 1987). Their work focuses on children as the basic units and categories of study. Children and childhood become the center of analysis; they are no longer linked to other categories, such as families or schools, upon which they are supposedly dependent (Qvortrup, 1994a) Children's understanding of Conservation of Mass.

In a classic experiment, Piaget would present a child between the ages of four and nine with two identical balls of clay. The child would be asked if each ball contained the same amount of clay. If the child did not think so, he or she would be asked to take away or add some clay to make the balls identical. Then, Piaget would change one of the balls into a sausage shape as the child watched. The child would then be asked if the ball and sausage now contained the same amount of clay. This experiment can be seen as illustrating the process of equilibration, with the child attempting to compensate through a series of strategies. We can capture the nature of the series each child will go through by examining how children of different ages deal with the problem:

1. The very young child, age four or five, concentrates on one characteristic or dimension of the objects, usually length, and is apt to say with a great deal of conviction, "This one, cause it is longer!" The child is unaware of the notion of conservation of mass and refers only to one dimension. Again the child shows a great deal of certainty, and there is limited mental activity or thinking. In fact, the child may even claim that the problem is too easy, silly, or possibly a trick.

2. The slightly older child, age six or seven, tends to reverse her original claim because she notices a second dimension (width or thinness). At this point a new strategy becomes probable because the uncertainty of the child leads to more activity in dealing with the intrusion. In thinking about the intrusion the child oscillates back and forth in her thinking and may become vaguely aware of the interdependence of the sausage's elongation and its thinness Here a child might start out with confidence: "This one Cause it's longer. No, no wait this one cause it's fatter. Oh, I don't know!"

3. The seven-to-nine-year-old child acts on the insight of interdependence. She places a mental emphasis on the transformation rather than the static configuration with dimensions. She will make them both the same and now claim that they are equal. Here the child will often be very careful rolling the ball into a second sausage and holding the two next to each other to see if they match. If not she will go back to work, shortening one or lengthening the other until she convinces herself that they are the same. Here there is a maximum of activity in the

equilibration process as the child approaches the mental insight of conservation of mass.

4. For the nine-to-eleven-year-old the strategy begins with the discovery of the compensations of the transformation (that is, as clay lengthens it becomes thinner, as it broadens it becomes shorter). Here the child may scoff at the question, saying, "They are obviously the same!" or, "See, it makes no difference. I can make this ball a sausage or the sausage a ball," doing so as she talks. At this point conservation is accepted and the child understands reversibility. Certainty now returns and related problems in the future seem simple.

Typically, a alliterate students have not discovered how to lose themselves in a book. One reason, found by Sumara (2002), is that schools tend to implement curriculum in which students quickly read several books and then teachers create tests to assess the ability of students to recall facts from literature. He believed this approach to reading defeats any chance of students' finding enjoyment or meaningful experiences in literature.

Tovani (2000) also found that when reading strategies fail to incorporate things from students' personal lives, students assume they know very little about what they are reading. As a result, "they complete their assignments but get little out of the material because they aren't able to use it" (p. 14).When reading becomes frustrating, many reluctant readers typically give up. Tovani continued, "Decoding is not enough...learning how to employ comprehension

strategies will help [the student] understand the words he reads" (p. 16).

However, when teachers provide experiences in which students find themselves "absorbed by an aesthetic experience" (Sumara, 2002, p. 157) students become engaged in multilayered, positive literary experiences. Gangi (1998) wrote, "An encounter with a theatre production has the potential to emancipate students who may not participate in their own educations in any other areas" (p. 79). Using a defined series of easily adaptable theatre-based strategies along with providing opportunities for students to hear and see actors speak and to react to the narrative helped students understand the text. Teachers and students made discoveries by going beyond merely decoding words to decoding ideas. Students developed skills of building on prior knowledge either from reading the literature or recognizing universal truths in their own lives being expressed in the literature and in the performances. Nell (1988) believed the ultimate source of a book's power is that "which is inside the reader's head.

"Effective learning always involves the alternation of several states of arousal. One of the fundamental reasons schools fail is that they impose on learners a single state of unrelieved boredom.... Intelligent orchestration in teaching includes an understanding of these states of arousal and borrows from theatre such elements as timing and the ability to create anticipation, drama and excitement."

A dramatic text, unperformed is literature. It can be read as a story.... The element which distinguishes

drama from those types of fiction is, precisely, that of "performance,"enactment.Teachers show their students how to look beyond the literal text and encourage [them] to consider the big ideas (themes) in reading, not simply for the sake of identifying "theme" as a literary element, but to reflect on their own feelings and attitudes in the context of ideas that emerge from a reading. (p. 439).

Vygotasky's socio-cultural view of human development. Another important constructivist theorist is the Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky. Like Piaget, Vygotsky stressed children's active role in human development. Vygotsky, however, believed that children's social development is always the result of their collective actions and that these actions take place and are located in society Therefore, for Vygotsky changes in society especially changes in societal demands on the individual, require changes in strategies for dealing with those demands. For Vygotsky strategies for dealing with changes in societal demands are always collective; that is, they always involve interaction with others. These collective strategies are seen as practical actions that lead to both social and psychological development. In this sense, the child's interactions and practical activities with others lead to her acquisition of new skills and knowledge, which are seen as the transformation of previous skills and knowledge.

A key principle in Vygotsky's view is the individual's internalization or appropriation of culture. Especially important to this process is language, which both encodes culture and is a tool for participating in culture. Vygotsky argues that language and other sign

systems (for example, writing, film, and so on), like tool systems (for example, material objects like machines) are created by societies over the course of history and change with cultural development. Thus, argued Vygotsky, children, through their acquisition and use of language, come to reproduce a culture that contains the knowledge of generations. Vygotsky offered a quite different constructivist approach to human development than that of Piaget. Although both theorists viewed development as resulting from the child's activities, Vygotsky made no nativistic assumption similar to Piaget's notion of equilibrium to account for the motivating factor that generates the child's ctivities. Vygotsky saw practical activities developing from the child's attempts to deal with everyday problems. Furthermore, in dealing with these problems, the child always develops strategies collectively—that is, in interaction with others. Thus, for Piaget, human development is primarily individualistic, while for Vygotsky it is primarily collective.

Other differences exist between the two theorists. Piaget concentrated more on the nature and characteristics of cognitive processes and structures, while Vygotsky emphasized their developmental contexts and history. As a result, rather than identifying abstract stages of cognitive development, Vygotsky sought to specify the cultural events and practical activities that lead to the appropriation, internalization, and reproduction of culture and society.

How, specifically, do these processes of internalization, appropriation, and reproduction occur? Two of Vygotsky's concepts are crucial. First is the notion of internalization. According to Vygotsky, "every

function in the child's development appears twice: first on the social level, and later on the individual level; first, between people (inter-psychological) and then inside the child (intra-psychological)" (1978, p. 57). By this Vygotsky means that all our psychological and social skills (cognitive, communicative, and emotional) are always acquired from our interactions with others. We first develop and use such skills at the interpersonal level before internalizing them at the individual level.

Consider Vygotsky's conceptions of self-directed and inner speech. By self-directed speech, Vygotsky is referring to the tendency of yOung children to speak out loud to themselves, especially in problematic situations. Piaget saw such speech as egocentric or emotional and serving no social function Vygotsky, on the other hand, saw self-directed speech as a form of Interpersonal communication, except that in this case the child is addressing himself as another. In a sense, the child is directing and advising himself on how to deal with a problem. Vygotsky found that such increased when children were given a task like building a car with tinker toys or were told to draw a picture. Vygotsky believed that over time, Selfirected speech was transformed or internalized from the interpersonal to the intrapersonal becoming inner speech or a form of thought. We can grasp his ideas when we think about how we first learn to read. Most of our early reading as young children is done out loud as we read to ourselves and others. Over time we begin to mumble and then to mouth the words as we read, and eventually we read entirely at a mental level. In short, the intra-psychological function or skill of reading has its

origins in social or collective activity-reading out loud for others and oneself.. For Vygotsky internalization occurs gradually over an extended period of time.

In a second important concept, Vygotsky builds on his view of language as a cultural tool. According to Vygotsky, human activity is inherently meditation in that it is carried out through language and other cultural tools. A significant proportion of children's everyday activities take place in what Vygotsky calls the zone of proximal development: "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). Let's go back to our example of learning to read. A child's actual level of reading ability would be measured by her ability to read, summarize, and talk about a story like Cinderella or Snow White. A child's potential level of development would be estimated by her ability to read, summarize, and discuss the story with help from teachers, parents, jade more developed peers. The first indicates the child's full mastery of a particular ability or skill, while the latter indicates her potential level of mastery. The distance between the two levels is the zone of proximal development.

The child, in interactions with others, is always a step ahead in development of where she is alone. In this sense interactions in the zone of proximal development "are the crucible of development and culture, in that they allow children to participate in activities that would be impossible for them alone, using cultural tools that themselves must be adapted to

the specific activity at hand, and thus both passed along to and transformed by new generations" (Rogoff et al., 1989, p. 211). Thus, the model of development is one in which children gradually appropriate the adult world through the communal processes of sharing and creating culture (Bruner,1986).

Interpretive Reproduction:

Children collectively Participate in Society:

Sociological theories of childhood must break free from the individualistic doctrine that regards children's social development solely as the child's private internalization of adult skills and knowledge. From a sociological perspective socialization is not only a matter of adaptation and internalization but

also a process of appropriation, reinvention, and reproduction. Central to this view of socialization is the appreciation of the importance of collective, communal activity—how children negotiate, share, and create culture with adults and each other.

However, to say that a sociological perspective of socialization stresses the importance of collective and communal processes is not enough in contracting a new sociology of childhood. The problem is the term socialization itself.It has an individualistic and forward-looking connotation that is inescapable. One hears the term and the idea of training and preparing the individual child for the future keeps coming right back to mind.

Let's pursue this notion of interpretive reproduction further by looking at two of its key elements: the importance of language and cultural routines and the

reproductive nature of children's evolving membership in their culture.

Language and cultural routines. Interpretive reproduction places special emphasis on language and on children's participation in cultural routines. Language is central to children's participation in their culture both as a "symbolic system that encodes local, social, and cultural structure" and as a "tool for establishing (that is, maintaining, creating) social and psychological realities" (Ochs, 1988, p. 210). These interrelated features of language and language use are "deeply embedded and instrumental in the accomplishment of the concrete routines of social life" (Schieffelin, 1990, p. 19).

Children's participation in cultural routines is a key element of interpretive reproduction. The habitual, taken-for-granted character of routines provides children and all social actors with the security and shared understanding of belonging to a social group. On the other hand, this very predictability empowers routines, providing a framework within which a wide range of socio-cultural knowledge can be produced, displayed, and interpreted. In this way, cultural routines serve as anchors that enable social actors to deal with ambiguities, the unexpected, and the problematic while remaining comfortably within the friendly confines of everyday life (Corsaro, 1992).

Participation in cultural routines begins very early, almost from the minute children are born. Early in infancy, at least in Western societies, when children's language and communicative abilities are limited, social interaction proceeds in line with an "as-if"

assumption. That is, infants are treated as socially competent ("as if" they are capable of social exchanges). Over time, because of this "as if" attitude, children move from limited to full participation in cultural routines.

Do Chips Have blood on them?

To frustrate the power and importance of cultural routines, let's consider a real life example: an everyday interactive routine between a two-and-a-half-year-old boy, Buddy, and his mother talked every weekday at this time as she prepared lunch. In this conversation, Buddy is still curious about "blood" from his cut finger the day before:

Mother: What?

Buddy: Chips [potato chips] have blood on them? Do they hav blood on 'em?

Mother: No, I don't believe so.

Buddy: Kids and people do.

Mother: Um-hum.

Buddy: And monsters.

Mother: Yeah.

Buddy: Like Grover has blood on him.

Mother: Well, Grover's a pretend monster. He's really a puppet, you know?

Buddy: Yeah.

Mother: So he wouldn't have any blood on him.

Buddy: But Harry does.

Mother: Well, they're just like your puppets. Your

Big Bird and your Cookie Monster.

Ruddy: Yeah.

Mother: They're made out of cloth and furry things.

Buddy: Yeah, like

Mother: Somebody made them

Buddy: Harry has blood.

Mother: I don't think so. Pretend blood maybe.

Buddy: Yeah, maybe—maybe Grover and Cookie Monster and Harry have pretend blood. Maybe they do—maybe they have real blood.

Buddy: Mommy, someday I wanna go to Sesame Street and we can see if those monsters have blood.

Mother: You do?

Buddy: Yeah.

Mother: I don't know. We'll have to see about that. But you know what? Sesame Street is really a make-believe land.

Buddy: Oh, I didn't notice that.

Mother: You can pretend a lot of things about Sesame Street.

A number of issues are raised in this short episode that are relevant to interpretive re-production:

1. Why Is This Routine?

Everyday talk of this type and at this time of day is recurrent and predictable in this family. In fact, this recurrence and typicality provides an opportunity to pursue issues that are problematic and confusing in the

everyday activity of "having lunch." Through their very participation in this everyday routine the mother and child reaffirm their relation to one another and address problems and confusions about the world.

2. How is Buddy Using the Routine?

First, Buddy uses the opportunity to address his curiosity about blood and who does and does not have it. At a surface level his confusion

about blood concerns a distinction between animate and inanimate But soon the discussion moves beyond that distinction, to a discussion of "real" and "pretend" animate objects. Second, the routine allows

Buddy an opportunity to display his knowledge and to discuss interests with a receptive and supportive adult caretaker. In this sense, the repetitive enactment of such routines reaffirms these bonds

and Buddy's status as active member of the family.

3-How Does Buddy s Mother Use the Routine?

First on one level the routine provides her with information about a confusing concept that Buddy is trying to deal with (the distinction between animate and inanimate objects) However, on another level Buddy's mother gains insight into the tie-in (for Buddy) between this distinction and a more general and complex distinction between real and pretend in modern culture. Consider the complexity: animate versus inanimate, pretend animate objects (dolls, puppets, and so on) versus inanimate objects (potato chips, apples, a flower pot), and the

dramatic characters from a familiar television show. Second, the mother sees that the issue has a larger

cultural significance when Buddy proposes to go to Sesame Street. She sees that her knowledge of the Sesame Street culture is different from her child's: She knows it is a fabricated television culture; he doesn't. She must now decide how far to push in addressing these distinctions given our culture's beliefs and values (and her interpretation of and commitment to such beliefs and values) regarding the existence of certain pretend figures (such as Santa Claus, the Tooth Fairy, and Big Bird). Third, the mother uses the routine to reaffirm the close relationship and bonding she has with her son. She takes the opportunity to display openness to his curiosity and concerns. In fact, this routine of "talking at lunch" may have been created by Buddy's mother for this very reason.

4- The Emergent Nature of Routines?

This example demonstrates how the very predictability of routines provides a framework for producing, displaying, and interpreting cultural knowledge, values, and beliefs. We see how quickly the participants move from a basic question about blood to a discussion of a wide range of cultural facts, values, and relationships. Although the general framework of the routine itself (talking at lunchtime) is recurrent and predictable, what emerges in this talk (extensions and embellishments of the routine) is not. What we see here is that children, as they become part of their cultures, have wide interpretive latitude in making sense of their places in the world. Thus, almost any everyday routine interaction is ripe for children to refine and extend their developing cultural skills and knowledge.

5. Remaining Ambiguities

As in most cases involving young children confusions are addressed but not resolved in routines. In some cases, the confusion may increase. However, the structure of routines allows participants to move ahead(in this case to go on with lunch) while the confusions are left behind to be pursued at other points in time.

From Individual Progression to Collective Re-roductions:

Most theories of child development focus on the individual child. These theories take a linear view of the developmental process. In the linear view, it is assumed that the child must pass through a preparatory period in childhood before he or she can develop into a socially competent adult. In this view, the period of childhood consists of a set of developmental stages in which cognitive skills, emotions, and knowledge are acquired in preparation for adult life. Preschool preadolescent adolescent, and adult.

Although aspects of peer culture may be passed on to younger children by older children, peer cultures are not preexisting structures that children encounter or confront. It is in this sense that these cultures differ from the institutional fields (radii) upon which they are woven. While affected by the many experiences that occur through interactions with the adult world and encounters in institutional field(or crossings of the various radii), children's peer cultures are innovative - creative collective productions. In this sense, the webbing or spirals of peer culture are collectively spun

on the framework of the cultural knowledge and institutions they come in part to constitute.

These collective, productive, and innovative features of children's peer culture are captured in the basic features of spiraling and embed deadness in

the orb web model. Peer cultures are not stages that individual children pass through. Children produce and participate in their peer cultures, and these productions are embedded in the web of experiences children weave with others throughout their lives. Therefore, children's experiences in peer cultures are not left behind with maturity or individual development; rather than, remain part of their live histories as active members of a given culture. Thus, individual development is embedded in the collective production of a series of peer cultures which in turn contribute to reproducation and change in the wider adult society or culture.

Preparation for the field trip and the event itself became more than a vacation from class work. The event was the culminating activity of teams working together. Issues of etiquette that should be used at arts events were introduced, but because the students established camaraderie and had strong individual interests in seeing the play behavior was not a problem.While keeping the students in production teams, discussion prompts and viewing anticipation guides focused on addressing their wow moments and moments of confusion and their models, sketches, and suggestions made over the past weeks. This excerpt illustrates how the students demonstrated their understanding of the book and their desire to see the

play: Depending upon the complexity of the show, some companies would be pleased to have learners watch them work. Watching a stage adaptation of literature also involved teaching students how to respond quickly after a performance. This strategy can be used when reading literature even when it is not possible to incorporate a performance of the work. all educators hope to hear from their students: "Thank you for letting us know that it's OK to read!"

When educators discuss children's development, they usually talk about physical, mental, social, and emotional development. The following is a quick lesson in how children develop and the stages they go through. Knowing these will help you understand what stage they are in and what comes next. For greater understanding of stages in the development of reading, writing, and math skills and for an idea of what goes on in a quality child care center, read **Ready To Learn**. You can use that information to help your child do the activities which will enable him/her to progress smoothly to the next stage.

How do we prepare children to be ready to learn?

During the last 10 years, there has been an explosion in our knowledge of the ways in which humans develop and learn. It is now known that babies are beginning to learn even before they are born. As I have read the latest research, I often find myself wishing I had known these things when my children were young. We all want our children to be the best that they can be, and with some knowledge of how children learn and the sequential steps they must go through in many areas of development, we can provide

many experiences at home to help them reach their potential.

There is great interest on the part of parents in teaching children their letters and numbers and writing skills. The following lists show the pre-reading and pre-writing skills and beginning number skills that every child must develop in order to learn to read, write, and do well in math..

After that, I have listed many of the activities that quality preschools and daycare centers do in the learning areas (physical, mental, social, emotional) to develop these readiness skills so that children will go to school ready to learn.

Reading skills: Reading skills develop in a sequence and we as educators try to help each child progress along that sequence as he/she is ready to progress. First, a child develops a love for books. At the same time they are beginning to develop eye-hand coordination. Next, they acquire tracking skills (the ability to follow words and pages from left to right through a book).

Then children begin to recognize individual letters and later they realize that letters form words. Next they begin to understand that words remain the same from day to day. Listening skills improve at about the same time. The child begins to hear letter sounds and connect them with the written letters. Later, he/she begins to string sounds together to make words. The child then learns to hear and use the rhythm of the language. Reading ability continues to improve as he/she receives positive feedback from interested adults.

How Children Develop Physically:

Once born, children develop strength from top to bottom (head, then body, then legs, then feet); from the inside to the outside (trunk, then arms and legs, then hands and feet, then fingers and toes); from large muscle (jumping, hopping, running, throwing, catching, carrying, climbing, and balancing) to small muscle (using muscles of the wrist and hand in activities such as cutting, drawing, stringing beads, building block towers, working with play dough) skills. THIS IS A SEQUENCE THAT ALL HUMANS FOLLOW. (The development may vary for children with disabilities).While children are young we need to do many activities to strengthen their large and small muscles. Muscle skill development and maintaining a healthy body are especially important for future reading, writing, and math success.

When a child is born, he/she comes with a brain ready and eager to learn. The brain is very much like a new computer. It has great potential for development, depending on what we put into it. Early experiences greatly influence the way a person develops. Everyone who works with children has an awesome responsibility for the future of those children. The activities you do with them from birth to age 10 will determine how their learning patterns develop. As children interact with their environment, they learn problem solving skills, Critical thinking skills, and language skills.

Socially:

First children develop a sense of self and then a sense of belonging to a family. They begin to watch

other children and to want to interact with them. Children's play develops through stages (playing alone, playing near others but not with them, playing with others but not sharing, playing and sharing, playing with a purpose, organized games). These stages develop over time and with practice. Later, children develop the ability to respect the rights of others and to feel empathy for them.

They learn to work cooperatively with others and to resolve conflicts in peaceful ways. You can interact with your child in ways that encourage cooperative behavior and respect for the rights of others. Interacting with others in positive ways is critical to success in life.

As babies grow, they learn that they are not the center of the universe and that they can depend on others. They develop a trust or mistrust of others. As toddlers, they learn to be proud of their accomplishments and state their opinions and desires. As they become preschoolers, children learn to separate from their parents and adjust to the school environment. They begin to participate in classroom activities. They learn to take turns and to solve conflicts using words. They begin to learn to control their emotions. They learn that it is okay to make a mistake. They develop confidence in themselves and learn to love themselves.

You can help your children by encouraging them and showing your faith in their abilities.

Having Confidence In Yourself and Liking Yourself Are Critically Important to Future Success In School and In Life.

To encourage emotional development they...

- Help children learn to control their own behavior through setting a positive example.

- Help them learn to wait for a turn and to share with others.

- Help them develop plans for activities to do while waiting for a turn.

- Reassure children that it is okay to have feelings and to express them in acceptable ways.

- Give them the ability to channel their energy in constructive ways.

- Through showing respect to our children we help them learn to show respect for each other.

- Give children self-respect through accepting them as they are and helping them develop their negotiating and problem-solving skills.

To encourage social development preschools and daycare centers...

- Set up their classrooms in learning centers to enable and encourage children to work together in small groups.

- Help them develop self-esteem by accepting and respecting their efforts.

- Give them jobs and responsibilities in the classroom.

- Teach children to clean up and straighten up at the end of their work time.

- Help them learn to respect others through adult actions, words, stories and conversations.

- Encourage children to help other children in need and to share.
- Give them love and encouragement.
- Invite them to share their culture with others and encourage their parents to come in to the centers.
- Introduce them to children of other cultures and different abilities.
- Help children develop a positive attitude by being trustworthy models.
- Read books and have discussions which show parents leaving their children at school and being there when their children arrive home.
- Talk about careers and jobs and why parents have to work or go to school.
- Have a structured day so that children will feel secure.
- Let children help make the rules for the classroom and let them choose projects to work on.
- Build language skills (through conversations with adults and each other, word games, reading stories, learning nursery rhymes, singing, dramatic play, introduction of new words, providing a writing center with word cards and writing materials, activities with puppets, listening center activities).
- Provide science experiments and introduce concepts about our world to help them make sense of it.
- Learn about the neighborhood and the city through walks and field trips.
- Provide many manipulative materials which encourage the development of problem solving skills.

- Encourage counting objects through games and individual activities.

- Ask the children for their opinions.

- Make charts with their predictions and their opinions and reread them often.

- Provide small group and individual activities involving counting sets and adding or subtracting; provide manipulative which encourage classifying (by size, color shape, general classes like animals or plants and by function such as library and book or mower and grass).

- Read daily to the children.

- Help them learn sequencing by telling stories back to you.

- Observe each child in order to provide activities to encourage their individual learning. Remember, what children know depends on the experiences they have had.

- Feed children meals with good nutritional value and teach nutrition activities to children and parents.

- Teach children and families about good hygiene.

- Practice large motor skills (balancing, galloping, skipping, building muscles in the arms, legs, and trunk).

- Build small motor skills through practice (cutting, holding writing instruments, drawing, painting, stringing beads, using play dough, water play).

- Present activities to develop eye-hand coordination.

- Offer many movement activities.

- Play instruments to the rhythm of the music.

- Play games that involve listening to and following directions.

- Don't forget to take your child for regular medical and dental checkups.

To encourage mental development they...

- Ask open-ended questions (questions which encourage children to think because they have no right or wrong answer).

- Give children choices.

- Allow and encourage creativity (through art, music and movement, dictation, retelling stories and creating new ones). Theatre experiences can make reading meaningful, attainable, and

- enjoyable for reluctant readers. investigated how a collaborative program with a teacher and a theatre director can improve adolescents' skills of comprehension and visualization along with reviving their enjoyment of reading. a literate students and those who struggle with literature. Instead of trying to cover a book in a short time period, the experiences were designed to "un-cover" and "discover" a book at their pace.

- Harste (2001) wrote, "Because literacy is fundamentally about learning to use language to mean, drama and good books go together" (cited in Smith & Herring, 2001, p. vii). Providing experiences for young students to become immersed in theatrical presentations of literary works can spark insight, reflection, self knowledge, and imagination

(Johns & Davis, 1990). These are the same skills educators want their students to acquire when reading literature.

A significant using drama to improve reading is the difference between the performing arts and creative dramatics presentations. Compared with dramatic experiences in classrooms, Sauter (2000) defined theatre as a "communicative intersection between the performer's actions and the spectator's reactions" (p. 53) that occurs in environments designed to facilitate the imaginative creations and interpretations of trained retests. This art form creates multi-sensory, imaginative experiences that transport students into deeply personal interpretations of what was formerly the printed word. Audiences see living collages of words, images, sounds, emotions, and ideas all presented at once.

Theatre activities done in the classroom and theatre field trips are pedagogically sound methods of addressing literacy issues. Teachers and students, however, need to see these experiences as more than drama and entertainment. They should view theatre as "a virtual world— or mental model—from the textual symbols called words" (Wilhelm & Edmiston, 1998, p.31). By combining reading with seeing, students found ways to immerse themselves in the actions, thoughts, and dialogue of characters, as well as the settings, sounds, and symbols in the literature.

Reading as theatrical art:

Typically alliterate students have not discovered how to lose themselves in a book. One reason, found by Sumara (2002), is that schools tend to implement

curriculum in which students quickly read several books and then teachers create tests to assess the ability of students to recall facts from literature. He believed this approach to reading defeats any chance of students' finding enjoyment or meaningful experiences in literature.

Tovani (2000) also found that when reading strategies fail to incorporate things from students' personal lives, students assume they know very little about what they are reading. As a result, "they complete their assignments but get little out of the material because they aren't able to use it".When reading becomes frustrating, many reluctant readers typically give up. Tovani continued, "Decoding is not enough...learning how to employ comprehension strategies will help [the student] understand the words he reads". However, when teachers provide experiences in which students find themselves "absorbed by an aesthetic experience" (Sumara, 2002, p. 157) students become engaged in multilayered, positive literary experiences. Gangi (1998) wrote, "An encounter with a theatre production has the potential to emancipate students who may not participate in their own educations in any other areas" (p. 79). Using a defined series of easily adaptable theatre-based strategies along with providing opportunities for students to hear and see actors speak and to react to the narrative helped students understand the text. Teachers and

students made discoveries by going beyond merely decoding words to decoding ideas. Students developed skills of building on prior knowledge either from reading the literature or recognizing universal truths in

their own lives being expressed in the literature and in the performances.

Nell (1988) believed the ultimate source of a book's power is that "which is inside the reader's head" (p. 54). I wondered how teachers could tap that power in aliterate students. Caine and Caine (1991) and Esslin (1987) supported the need for teachers to stimulate students' imaginations with enhanced methods of reading that use theatre and theatrical experiences. In Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain, Caine and Caine noted,

- Effective learning always involves the alternation of several states of arousal. One of the fundamental reasons schools fail is that they impose on learners a single state of unrelieved boredom.... Intelligent orchestration in teaching includes an understanding of these states of arousal and borrows from theatre such elements as timing and the ability to create anticipation, drama and excitement. (pp. 31–32)

Esslin (1987), professor, producer, script writer, journalist, adaptor and translator, critic,

and academic scholar, wrote extensively on:

- How theatre stimulates, enacts or reenacts events that have, or may be imagined to have, happened in the "real" or in an imagined world.... A dramatic text, unperformed is literature. It can be read as a story.... The element which distinguishes drama from those types of fiction is, precisely, that of "performance," enactment. (p. 24) Those notions were affirmed by Farnan (1996) who suggested that teachers show their students how to look beyond the

literal text and encourage [them] to consider the big ideas (themes) in reading, not simply for the sake of identifying "theme" as a literary element, but to reflect on their own feelings and attitudes in the context of ideas that emerge from a reading. (p. 439)

Reeves (2004) wrote, "Reading literature is an art itself and needs not only extensive instruction and practice, but also instruction and practice in an environment in which education and imagination are not separate" (p. 255). To accomplish those goals, Farnan (1996) suggested that teachers show their students how to look beyond the literal text and "consider the big ideas

(themes) in reading...to reflect on their own feelings and attitudes in the context of ideas that emerge from a reading" (p. 439).

These were the foundations on which the study was based. Could a series of theatre-based activities in which students closely interact with text and then see the literature adapted and produced in a theatrical facility with settings, costumes, lights, and sounds help a literate students comprehend, visualize, and find enjoyment in an assigned work of literature?

The adapted, alternative strategies:

Saldaña (1995) who confirmed that it takes more than one theatrical experience to build comprehension and enjoyment of theatre. Reluctant readers need multiple interventions to guide and support their discovery of reading being a worthwhile experience (Moore et al., 1999). By answering the following questions:(1)According to sixth-grade reluctant readers,

what causes them to dislike reading books assigned in school? (2) What theatically based techniques could activate the students' interests, sustain their curiosities, and engage them in the literature? and (3) How significantly can the experiences of preparing for and watching a theatrical adaptation of literature transform the reading skills and attitudes of reluctant readers?

Results from those questions supported the use of four strategies that can be easily adapted to any curriculum that incorporates reading. In response to the first question asked (According to sixth-grade reluctant readers, what causes them to dislike reading books assigned in school?), the students affirmed the importance of relevancy, of helping them enjoy the process, and of providing choices.

Production team strategy:

The first strategy, adapted from literature circle models and the process of designing theatre productions,. What theatically based techniques could activate the students' interests, sustain their curiosities, and engage them in the literature? After introducing the students and teachers to differences among theatre, film, and television, the classes were arranged into small-group "production teams" made up of a director, set designer, lighting designer, sound designer, costume designer, and actors. The students chose the role they wanted to play as they read the book, which satisfied their need for choice. Collaborative units were formed to help them comprehend the book.

Now, instead of being just students, they became a team of creative artists who would bring literature to life through sketches, models, and readings of the text.

Through this strategy, the students helped one another with vocabulary, shared responses, and found relevant purposes for reading.

This strategy included having guest artists from A Wrinkle in Time read with the students and discuss the story. An important part of this strategy was the involvement of the teachers, Ms.Roy and Mrs. Bresso. It did not take long for the students to identify the actress's role.

As everyone enjoyed that moment, JR, who was usually quiet in the production team discussions, proudly displayed a detailed sketchbook that he had been working on since he chose to be the costume designer.

On discussion with students the models they created based on scenes from the book.Many ideas were eventually used in the production that the students attended:

Designer: What do you see or hear? What are the "given circumstances"?

Simpson: What I see are lasers.

Designer: Well, how could you do that?

Simpson: I could have lasers shooting down from all sides.

Designer: What if you put [the father] in a circle?

Subzero: Yeah, then they see him looking out from like bars.

Simpson: So, this place is a cell! So it would look like a jail cell.

Designer: You like that idea?

Simpson: Yeah. Yeah.

Students: That's great!

Director: Muffin-Man, as a director what do you want to hear?

Muffin-Man: I'd hear electricity buzzing.

Director: Simpson, how would you create it?

Simpson: What do you mean create?

Director: How would you make it happen?

Simpson: I would put two speakers in the audience so the audience would feel the electricity all around them as I create a...uh...buzzing sound. I would put one speaker here in the inside, then I put another here, here, and here, and four in the audience, two in the side so, the sound would travel and feel like it's coming at you. Like, maybe like after each laser, the sound would go with each speaker and travel around.

Subzero: That would be awesome!

Director: So, what was this experience like for all of you?

Muffin-Man: It was different. I liked it.

Kay-Kay: Can we do this again next time?

Supra: When we are making those models I

got more of a clear picture of the dome

with the purple flames.

Nitro: I think it has helped because I get to

pertisapate and talk about what I read.

Ferrari: It was a lot of work, but it was fun.

Simpson: I learned that, like, you can work with

others to make things happen.

The production teams discovered that literature is filled with moments that are more than

answers to tests.When students are given active forums to share their questions and ideas, reading becomes an exciting creatively social experience with very enjoyable outcomes.

The wow moment or moment that confused:

Another strategy was used to generate discussions. It was taken from rehearsal strategies in which the director and actors find key plot or character revelation moments or when there is confusion about vocabulary or concepts in the text. Students share a wow moment or a moment that confused them in the text. The following excerpt illustrates how the director, teacher, and a reluctant reader illuminated one of the more subtle moments in the book:

Director: Muffin-Man? What is a wow moment for you? Muffin-Man: The part when Charles Wallace comes between Meg and Calvin.

Mrs. Bresso: Why is that a wow moment?

Muffin-Man: Charles Wallace scares me!

Mrs. Bresso: Why?

Muffin-Man: How does he know so much? (The other students agreed.)

Director: Why do you think he does?

Muffin-Man: I don't know, but I want to find out.

Muffin-Man showed interest in wanting to explore the literature to answer his question. The literature was no longer boring. What Muffin-Man eventually found came from a second reading of the literature done on his own and from seeing the literature performed.

The strategy and discussions transcended work-sheets and tests. All the students saw relevance in the literature. The teachers commented on how these strategies improved the reading skills of their students." Ms. Roy reported the results of her A Wrinkle in Time test:

They all scored above 90% on the first try. This was the best they did for the year. It was unusual for even two of them to score above 90% on the first try. Even given two tries, more than half of the class would score below 80%. Mrs". Bresso noted that during the program one student went from an F to a C grade and that another student went from a D to a B grade. Progress was also evident in the work, discussions, and participation of other students.

Through implementing the strategies, difficult passages in the book became comprehensible, challenging ideas became accessible, and irrelevant topics became relevant.

Experiencing the literature:

How significantly can the experiences of preparing for and watching a theatrical adaptation of literature transform the reading skills and attitudes of reluctant readers? Preparation for the field trip and the event itself became more than a vacation from class work. The event was the culminating activity of teams working together. Issues of etiquette that should be used at arts events were introduced, but because the students established camaraderie and had strong individual interests in seeing the play behavior was not a problem.

While keeping the students in production teams, discussion prompts and viewing anticipation guides focused on addressing their wow moments and moments of confusion and their models, sketches, and suggestions made over the past weeks. This excerpt illustrates how the students demonstrated their understanding of the book and their desire to see the play:

Director: At A Wrinkle in Time what do you want and expect to see?

Jazz: Um.... There are going to be real people wearing things like Halloween costumes.

Director: There may be some of that. SpongeBob, what do you think you will see?

SpongeBob: Lot of weird things...colors.

Jazz: The actors will act like the characters I see in the book.

Director: What do you think "It" will be?

Patrick: I see something big and dark.

Director: You are predicting based on what you know?

Patrick: Yeah, I guess so.

Director: So what other things do you predict will be seen in the play? You are the sound designer. What do you expect to hear?

Simpson: Well, in the part of the book where Meg comes back from Aunt Beast, in the book I heard a lot of...uh...fire and crackling and things like that. So, I want to hear what is in the play.

Nitro: I want to see how they go through the glass wall with the glasses and Meg's dad. I was thinking how they would do that.

Director: How would you do that?

Nitro: Not sure.

Supra: I have an idea. You could do a kind of wall, like a mirror that's a reflection of a solid thing. Then have the audience look one way and see something else.

Director: Well, we shall see. Good!

Supra: I expect to see a lot of neat and crazy ideas with the set designs like blinking lights and transparent walls.

CWallace: My favorite character was Charles

Wallace. I would like to see how he
changes when "It" gets him.
Plankton: I thought the teaseling was very confusing
in the book. So I would like to see it
come alive.
Jazz: I wonder about Mrs Who and Mrs
Which because at the end they are like
light. They do a metamorphosis; I think
that's the word. I wonder if they
changed into "It"? Maybe they made the
whole Camazotz thing for a training
thing for Meg or for another book?
Director: Do you think Madeleine L'Engle did
this?
Jazz: I think so. But I want to see the play first.

The response of Muffin-Man captured the essence of how the strategies and the program transformed the attitudes of at least one reluctant reader toward reading literature that is assigned in school. "I expect to see a play that brings the book to life. I expect the characters to look differently to what I think them to be." Muffin-Man, Jazz, Plankton, and the other reluctant readers took gigantic leaps beyond seeing the process of reading as looking for answers to traditional objective test questions. Now the students were seeking answers to conceptual

thoughts. They discovered aesthetics in literature Students, who once found literature without pictures

tedious and uninteresting, now enthusiastically brought their knowledge of the text to an experience that challenged them, delighted them, and taught them.

This strategy also included arriving at the theatre in time to watch reshow preparation by technicians. Because I was the artistic director of the company that produced the play, the students were treated to an experience that is not usually shown to audiences. As production teams, however, it was important for the students to share in this side of the process with those who created the adaptation. Depending upon the complexity of the show, some companies would be pleased to have learners watch them work.

Watching a stage adaptation of literature also involved teaching students how to respond quickly after a performance. This strategy can be used when reading literature even when it is not possible to incorporate a performance of the work. Instead of asking how they liked the performance, the teacher should continue to follow the model of wow moments, moments of confusion, and questions that follow up on their expectations:

Nitro: The Man with the Red Eyes. Amazing!

How did you do it?

Sponge Bob: My favorite characters were Charles,

Meg, Mrs What sit, Who, Which. The

Mrs W's were great.

CWallace: Charles Wallace was very funny. I like

who you picked.

Muffin-Man: The Man with the Red Eyes was exactly.

what I was thinking he would be. When

Mr. M. was in the column and the Zap!

The following comments were about any confusing

moments that students had while reading the

text:

Jazz: The dimensions and the teaseling. At first I

didn't understand the teaseling. Now I know

what that meant.

Supra: I would like to reread the part when Meg

meats Aunt Beast.

Outline of the strategies and action plans:

With any program, success is measured by results and the ability to replicate activities. This list outlines the strategies and action plans:

1. Select a book that will be produced by a local theatre company. If you are in a metropolitan area, usually one company produces literature or a company tours to your region. If this is a problem, remember scripts are literature. Plays are effective tools to connect students with reading. You could also propose to the theatre that if they produce the work, you will bring your class and help promote it to other teachers. As an artistic director, I would definitely consider that proposal. If you live in a smaller city or town that does not have a theatre, perhaps your school will produce a play or musical. Many musicals are based on literature. This could be a wonderful opportunity for any school study of the literature. I hope the book is on your school's reading list. If not, this could be an

opportunity to consider including the book in the canon of literature.

2. Plan the curriculum as a collaborative, extended experience that will culminate in students' seeing and responding to a production of the literature.

3. Initiate partnerships with a colleague who has theatre experience or with a local company. If you have limited experience with the performing arts, this action will provide you with continual support throughout the program. Theatre is the most collaborative art form. It always takes more than one person to create any performance — even a one-person performance. There are always directors, designers, stage managers, and crew. Even writers work in collaboration with editors, illustrators, or publishers. They will enthusiastically work with you and your students.

4. Introduce the literature, theatre, and the experience to the students.

5. Organize your students into small-group production teams.

6. Initiate discussion prompts of wow moments or moments that confused you.

7. Invite guest artists to share in discussions about the book and the students' creations.

8. Prepare students for experiencing the literature in a theatrical format by reflecting on their discussions, comments, questions, models or sketches, and their expectations. Be sure to contact the performing arts company in time to observe the show's preparations.

9. Encourage immediate feedback using the earlier discussion prompts. Be sure to actively, intently, and

sincerely listen. Offer your own ideas and engage the students in discussions that challenge them to think critically about the experiences.

10. Provide an encouraging environment in which students actively create and share their projects, express and discuss wow moments or moments of confusion with the text, and freely state their responses to the literature and the theatrical adaptation of the book.

Finally, it is the general structure of the model that is most crucial. As is the case for the garden spiders, whose webs vary in terms of number of radii and spirals, when we use the web as a model for interpretive reproduction, the number of radii (institutional fields or locales) and the nature and number of spirals (the makeup or age diversity of peer groups and cohorts, the nature of the encounters and crossings of institutional locales, and so on) varies across cultures, across sub-cultural groups within a particular culture, and over historical time.

Children's 'Two Cultures:

Although the orb web model is useful for visualizing the nature of interpretive reproduction, like any metaphor it tends to reify a highly complex process; in other words, it regards as concrete something that is, in fact, an abstract concept. However, the model does capture the idea that children are always participating in and part of two cultures—children's and adults'— and these cultures are intricately interwoven. To capture the complexity of children's evolving membership in these two cultures we need to examine their collective activities with each other and

adults. We also need to consider children as part of a social group that has a place in the larger social structure true Here our focus will be on childhood as a structural form that has a permanent place in society.

Summary

Until recently sociology has paid relatively little attention to children and childhood. The neglect or marginalization of children in sociology is clearly related to traditional views of socialization, which relegate children to a primarily passive role. Most of these theories were based on behaviorist views of child development that have been severely challenged by the rise of constructivism in contemporary developmental psychology. Best represented in Piaget's cognitive developmental theory and Vygotsky's socio-cultural approach, constructivism stresses the child's active role in her development and her eventual participation in the adult world. Although constructivist theories of individual human development provide sociology with a lens for refocusing our images of children as active agents; these theories primarily focus on developmental outcomes and fail to seriously consider the complexity of social structure and children's collective activities. Interpretive reproduction provides a basis for a new sociology of childhood. Interpretive reproduction replaces linear models of children's individual social development with the collective, productive-reproductive view that is illustrated in the orb web model. In the model, children spontaneously participate as active members of both childhood and adult cultures, we will extend the notion of interpretive reproduction by examining its relation to structural approaches to children and childhood.

Childhood as a Structural Form:

The notion of childhood as a social form noting that childhood is both a period in which children live

their lives and a category or part of society, like social class. While childhood is a temporary period for children,it is a permanent structural category in society. Qvortrup further develops the notion of viewing childhood as a structural form by contrasting it with perspectives that focus on childhood only as a period of life. We place these perspectives in three general categories. The first is the typical psychological view, which is individual and personality-oriented. In this view childhood is forward looking or anticipatory, and is determined by an adult perspective.

The second is the psychoanalytic view with is also individual- and personality-oriented, but here the interest in individual adulthood requires the retro-spective examination of the individual's childhood experiences. The life course perspective.. This perspective is a mix of individual and non individual approaches, in that it follows single individuals from child-hood to adulthood or vice versa while at the same time stressing the impact of historical and societal events. All of these views are similar to the traditional theories of socialization: they focus on the anticipatory outcomes of childhood (that is, children becoming adults), and: they consider childhood and adulthood as necessarily belonging to different historical periods.

By conceptualizing childhood as a structural form we can move beyond these individualistic, adult-oriented, and time-bound perspectives to pose and answer a wide range of sociological questions. Consider just a few possibilities: How is childhood alike, different from, and related to other age groups at any given time and place? (Consider the interrelations of childhood, adulthood, and old age in the 1950s

compared to the 1980s in the United States.) How has the conception and nature of childhood changed over different historical periods in particular societies (for example, childhood in the 1890s compared to the 1990s in the United States)? How do conceptions and the nature of childhood vary across cultures at particular points in time (for example, childhood in the 1990s in Western industrial societies compared to non-Western developing societies)? We will examine these and related questions in detail.Let's now move to a consideration of the general effects of societal forces on childhood.

Societal Effects on childhood:

A key feature of Qvortrup's structural approach is childhood as integrated in society. Children in their particular childhoods are, like adults, active participants in organized activities (for example, they engage in economic production and consumption). They both affect and are affected by major societal events and developments. But how are the lives of children, that is, contemporary children's childhoods, affected by such changes? Furthermore, how might children, through their collective, activities, contribute to society's accommodation to such changes?

The New American Grandparent:

The New American Grandparent, sociologists Andrew Cherlin and Frank Furstenbeg chart the modernization of "grandparenthood." They note that a number of trends such as changes in mortality fertility communication, transportation, retirement, Social Security and standards of living have transformed grandparent-hood "can keep in touch more easily with

their grandchildren; they have more time to devote to them; they have more money to spend on them; and they are less likely still to be raising their own children" (1986, p. 35).

Even though grandparenthood has seemed to change for the better, there was little evidence from the grandchildren's responses that greater involvement by grandparents had any major impact on their lives. In qualification of these findings.

Like most traditional sociological research that involves children Cherlin and Furstenberg's study focuses on the effects of a social phenomenon (in this case grand parenting) on individual children. Although their acknowledgment of subtle forms of influence hints at the complexity of the worlds of children and their grandparents, the authors fail to push their study to consider fully children's perspectives. For example, they do not consider the possible counterpart of the conception of grandparenthood, which we can term "grand childhood." Just as adults are grandparents, children are grandchildren, and as the nature of grand parenting changes so does the nature of being a grandchild. The very difficulty of the word, grand childhood, is due to the tendency of social scientists to think of children as individually affected (as dependent variables) rather than as agents of complex, collective actions.

Surely the intergenerational lives of grandchildren have changed in ways that parallel those of their grandparents. We can consider a whole new set of vantage points: styles of being a grandchild; grandchild careers; and variations in these styles and careers by

gender, class, race, and ethnicity. An important factor to keep in mind in this regard is the influence of parents on their children's lives as grandchildren (or for that matter the jives of their parents as grandparents). At least for younger children, for instance, parents control access to grandparents, and they both actively and reactively support children in their interpretation and appreciation of their interactions with grandparents. Finally, children's interactions with grandparents occur often in multigenerational settings (for example, in the presence of grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins). These occasions provide an ideal setting for priming activities in which children are prepared for transitions into a variety of social relations in their lives. One such family obligation—to serve as the adult child caretaker of elderly parents—may indeed be a long and demanding one for the present generation of children.

Children's Activities and Contributions to Society:

Like all theories that focus primarily on how the structural features of society affect individual societal members, a structural approach to the sociology of childhood runs the risk of undervaluing how the collective actions of individuals (including children) can affect society.

"Children are themselves co--constructors of childhood and society" (1993? p. 14). While acknowledging the historical trend of an increasing sentimentalism and over protectiveness of children as noted by Zelizer (1985) and others, he challenges their accompanying contention that children have moved

from being useful to useless. On the contrary.

Qvortrup maintains that children have always been useful and that it is the nature of their contributions to society that have changed (1991, pp. 25-26). A wonderful example of Qvortrup's point in this regard is research conducted by the anthropologist Enid schildkrout (1975) in her study of a certain African culture.

" We found that the development of Western educational beliefs and increasing primary school enrollment was viewed by adult members and children in these relations. Although very few people objected to what were seen as the long-term benefits of Western education, the resistance that did exist was "very often based upon those very realistic appraisals of its immediate socio-economic consequences".

Children do not simply internalize the norms of their society like those in line with prudish and then behave in accordance with them in later life. On the contrary, children are active contributors to society in that they cooperate with adults in the enforcement of norms and values. In the process of carrying out activities children do, of course, come to understand its significance, and in this way they contribute to societal maintenance.

Overall children serve as active contributors to society, and how children and adults are complementary participants in the social system. Other activities of children from industrialized societies-in school, the workplace, the home and also in organized sports, play and leisure settings- through which children make similar contributions.

However, the general anxiety about children's safety runs much deeper, beyond big city streets to affluent suburbs and small towns. This uneasiness about our children is probably related to the state of modern societies more generally: We have less time for our children and for family interaction and activities, we do not know our communities and neighborhoods well, and we rely more on the media for information and advice (Stephens, 1993

The increased institutionalization of children's activities is that structured leisure activities and lessons provide parents with needed child care. Many parents use lessons as a way to care for school-age children after school, as well as to expand their academic, physical, social, and cultural skills" (Hofferth et al., 1991, p. 67.The child gets to pursue an area of interest, and at the same time the parent benefits from "child care." The data also suggest that lessons may become a necessary replacement for center care as children move from preschool into elementary school.. Older children may be more interested in things like piano and tennis lessons; however, it is also true that alter-school center care for school-age children is not available in many communities.

The major reason for an increase in organized activities for children may will be an accompanying increase in parental concerns regarding children's Safety. Given modern conditions, parental preoccupation with children's well-being even while playing in their own neighborhoods, is understandable. Such fears have been heightened in recent years by the media's reporting and depiction of children as victims of physical and sexual abuse. There is much debate about

the accuracy of descriptive accounts and statistical reports of child victimization (Best, 1990).

Childhood Children's Activities, and Interpretive: Reproduction in Peer Culture:

Qvortrup's approach to childhood as a social phenomenon and his emphases on Children as active, co-constructors of their social worlds reflects an important shift away from individualistic views of socialization in which the individual child internalizes adult skills and knowledge. His view leads us to a better understanding of children's place, stake, and importance in both cultural production and maintenance. However, children do not just actively to the contribute to the adult culture and their own childhoods in a direct way. Children creatively appropriate information from the adult world to produce their own unique peer cultures. The process of interpretive reproduction enables children to become a part of adult culture to contribute to its reproduction and extension-through their negotiations with adults and their creative production of a series of peer cultures with other children Let's turn now to a more detailed discussion of this notion of interpretive reproduction within children's peer cultures.

This process continues as children from very young ages begin to participate in cultural routines and other collective activities outside the family. By interacting with playmates in play groups and preschools, children produce the first in a series of peer cultures in which childhood knowledge and practices are gradually transformed into the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in the adult world.

However, here I want to stress that children's production of peer cultures is neither a matter of simple imitation nor direct appropriation of the adult world. Children creatively appropriate or take information from the adult world to produce their own unique peer cultures. Such appropriation is creative in that it extends or elaborates peer culture; children transform information from the adult world in order to meet the concerns of their peer world. In this way they simultaneously contribute to the reproduction of the adult culture. Thus, children's peer cultures have an autonomy that makes them worthy of documentation and study in their own right.

To better understand this idea it is helpful to consider how children acquire and use language. Children do not first learn all the rules of grammar, phonology, and semantics, practice these rules, and only then begin to use them to communicate with others. Instead, children use their developing language skills to communicate at specific moments in time, and they refine and further develop the skills through re-peated use in interaction over time. It is the same for the creation of and participation in peer culture. Children appropriate information from the adult world to create and participate in a peer culture at specific moments in time The same collective actions, through their repetition in peer culture over time contribute to children's better understanding of the aspects of the adult culture they have appropriated. Further, these repetitions over time can even bring about changes certain aspects of the adult culture..

Children attempt to evade rules through collabo-ratively produced secondary adjust cuts which enable

the children to gain a certain amount of control over their lives in these settings. According to Goff man, secondary adjustment are "any habitual arrangement by which a member of organization employs unauthorized means, or obtains unauthorized ends, or both, thus getting around the organization's as sumps to what he should do and get and hence what he should be"

Children produced a wide variety of dairy adjustments in response to school rules. The children employed several concealment strategies to evade the rule prohibited bringing toys or other personal objects from home to school This rule was necessary: Personal objects were attractive to children just because they were different from the ever day trials in the preschools, and as a result, the teachers were tamely settling disputes about these items. Therefore, such acts could not be brought to school; if they were brought, they should to be stored in the child's locker until the end of the day. Particular favorites were small toy animals, match box cars, candies, and chewing gum. While playing, a child often would show his or her "stashed loot" to a playmate and carefully share the forbidden object without catching the teachers' attention. The teachers, of course, often knew what was going on hut simply ignored minor transgressions. The teachers overlooked these violations because the nature of the secondary adjustment often eliminates the organizational need to enforce the rule. Children share and play with smuggled personal objects surreptitiously to avoid detection by the teachers. If the children always played with personal objects in this fashion, there would be no conflict and hence no need for the rule. That is not the case, however; the careful

sharing takes place only because the adult rule is in effect. Thus, in an indirect way, the secondary adjustment endorses the organizational need for the rule. We see, then, that children's secondary adjustments (which are see later innovative and highly valued features of the peer culture, often contribute to the maintenance of the adult rules.

Summary

In childhood, one that breaks free from the individualistic doctrine that regards socialization as the child's private internalization of adult skills and knowledge. In this new approach the focus is on childhood as a social construction resulting from the collective actions of children with adults and each other. Childhood is recognized as a structural form and children are social agents who contribute to the reproduction of childhood and society through their negotiations with adults and through their creative production of a series of peer cultures with other children. This new view of childhood as a social phenomenon replaces the traditional notion of socialization with the concept of interpretive reproduction. Interpretive reproduction reflects children's yolving membership in their culture, which begins in the family and spirals outward create a series of embedded peer cultures based on the institutional of the adult culture. Overall, the notion of interpretive production challenges sociology to take children seriously and to appreciate children's contributions to social reproduction and change.

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