

Movement Education, by John S. Fowler. Philadelphia: Saunders, 1981. 341 pp.

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Article:

Movement Education is addressed primarily to the physical education major who is just beginning a study of teaching methodology. It could also be of interest to the specialist who desires to move from a more traditional methodology to a discovery learning approach.

Fowler first presents an historical overview of movement education, and briefly lists its principles, based on the work of Rudolf Laban. The brevity of the discussion implies significant prior experience in movement and a solid understanding of the content of movement.

The greatest strength of the book is its discussion of discovery learning and the kinds of teaching strategies used in this approach. This is written in a manner that would be helpful to teachers in all fields. Fowler's nonmechanistic view of the teaching-learning process is especially welcome. While making it clear that there are no formulas for teaching a lesson directed at exploration and discovery, the author gives guidelines and examples designed to aid the reader's development in such areas as asking questions to stimulate exploration and giving feedback to clarify understanding and improve skill.

The author reviews the developmental levels of children from preschool through sixth grade before proceeding to present an appropriate program for each level. There is much useful material in these chapters, although the format is such that one often has to search to find when one activity ends and another begins.

The program presented integrates movement education with traditional physical education activities, and most of the activities given would be easily understandable to individuals without a background in Laban's principles. This is fortunate, because the presentation of the Laban framework is skimpy and, in some places, misleading.

As a dance educator, I found the sections of the program dealing with dance to be so vague as to be of little use to the teacher without significant prior experience in dance. The question of "When is movement *dance*?" is neatly sidestepped, and the author does not even mention dealing with negative attitudes based on preconceptions about dance and/or sexist role perceptions.

Fowler hopes that this book will be used as a resource, rather than as a final source in the field. The book is sensitively written with a general tone and specific words of support for those who wish to teach movement education.