Book Reviews

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Bonk, Curtis J. *The World Is Open: How Web Technology Is Revolutionizing Education.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009.
ISBN 978-0-470-46130-3.
$29.95
Reviewed by Barbie Keiser

Curtis J. Bonk, Professor of Instructional Systems Technology at Indiana University, uses *The World is Open: How Web Technology Is Revolutionizing Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009) to tell us that the Web is a great tool for learning of any type, formal or informal, at any time of the day or night, in the manner most appropriate to the subject matter at-hand and our own personal learning style. He summarizes the ten learning technology trends that are transforming education (and life) today, using the acronym WE-ALL-LEARN:

1. **W**eb Searching in the World of E-Books
2. **E**-Learning and Blended Learning
3. **A**vailability of Open Source and Free Software
4. **L**everaged Resources and OpenCourseWare
5. **L**earning Object Repositories and Portals
6. **L**eaner Participation in Open Information Communities
7. **E**lectronic Collaboration
8. **A**lternate Reality Learning
9. **R**eal-Time Mobility and Portability
10. **N**etworks of Personalized Learning

In place of Thomas Friedman's new economic *players*, a flattened *playing* field, and more horizontal management *processes*, Bonk highlights changes in three p's related to education: *Pages* of content; *piping* that content (i.e., technological infrastructure); and *participatory* learning culture. The book is meant to highlight changing instructional practices, and focus a good deal more on the responsibilities of the individual learner than published studies to date.

Bonk employs the "story" approach. Most are interesting, but a bit long—so much so that I often forgot the point! The stories are designed to demonstrate how learning has shifted from the classroom to real-world settings, enabled by technologies and individual curiosity. According to the author, this notion of passion-based (just-in-time) learning makes us more connected with the world around us and fosters deeper knowledge about a subject.

Bonk agrees with Ivan Illich's three purposes of a good education system, and gives us many examples of how Web 2.0 is the perfect education environment:

- Providing unlimited resources for any learner at the point they are requested
- Allowing individuals who want to share their knowledge or expertise with others to find those who wish to learn from them
- Enabling all who want to present an idea, issue, or resource to the public to be able to do so.

For Bonk, and us, the very openness of the Web pushes "the envelope for untried and untested education methods," serving as a great antidote to "dull and flat learning" of old, with 50-minute lectures in large hall. The book is designed to provide a model to help us "make sense of the ten converging learning technology trends that are now opening up education," contributing to the empowerment of the learner who can now choose his/her teacher/trainer. There is a two-pronged message here, one for the learner and the other for the would-be educator: Learning online in a self-paced fashion can enhance one's skills only if the content is properly designed (with participatory learning avenues through collaborative technologies) and the study is seriously undertaken.

The text is peppered with examples of tools and sites—some of which are no longer available—though the discussion of each and how they contributed to the change in learning is always interesting. Bonk gives us a great deal of food for thought concerning the nature of learning and will help all who strive to help others learn. His 400+ page work contains 40 pages of endnotes for additional research by the reader, as he/she desires. Society is moving toward a learning culture where we have the ability to create our own Personalized Learning

Environment, something the author encourages everyone to do.

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Burton, Diana, and Bartlett, Steve. *Key Issues for Education Researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009. ISBN 978-1-8478-7358-3. $37.95.
Reviewed by Warren Jacobs

Research provides the data needed to develop theories and make decisions. Diana Burton and Stave Bartlett have written a useful guide to the research process. Focusing on critical evaluation, data collection, and analysis, *Key Issues for Education Researchers* includes 12 chapters comprised of sample case studies, templates, bulleted lists, tables, definitions, activities, and recommended readings. A table of contents, introduction, bibliography, and index are included.

Chapter one looks at the process of receiving information. Teachers, lecturers, and students are constantly evaluating the activities taking place in an educational environment in order to institute needed changes. Examples include school effectiveness and school improvement programs resulting from action research projects utilizing quantitative analysis, and practitioner research that helps educators enhance their teaching skills.

In chapter two, the authors describe two major paradigms in the social sciences: positivist (quantitative characteristics) and interpretivist (qualitative characteristics). In designing a research project, researchers must ensure reliability, validity, and the triangulation of research findings to promote the consistency of responses while increasing the accuracy of the data collected.

Chapter three addresses the ethical principles which should guide any research project. Researchers must seek the informed consent of participants, maintain their confidentiality and privacy, be honest and open, provide access to the findings of the research, and avoid doing harm in the course of the study.

In chapter four, sample research projects investigating pupil truancy and the transition from high school to higher education help to demonstrate research design, a data collection plan, and a research timeline.

Chapter five teaches students how to critique literature reviews using a checklist of criteria. After performing a comprehensive search for library resources, readers are furnished with an outline to use when addressing the relevancy of the literature to the proposed research project.

Case studies and questionnaires are frequently used in educational research. Three examples of case studies are provided in chapter six. A sample questionnaire is presented in chapter seven. Readers learn how to frame questions, collect responses, and address issues that may arise.

Burton and Bartlett, professors of Education Studies in Great Britain, discuss the merits of structured interviews comprised of set questions asked of all participants contrasted with unstructured interviews that place greater emphasis on the individual account of one interviewee. Some of the factors that promote a successful interview include the ability to listen to the interviewee‘s responses, the use of appropriate body language, and the careful consideration of whether to take notes or record the interview. Included are sample interviews that link to questionnaires.

Chapter nine identifies observations as a means to gather data for research projects. Sample observations of individual students, small groups, entire classrooms, and playground activities are described. A checklist delineates the criteria to use when explaining the data gathered through observation.

Research biographies differ from diaries and logs. A biographical record synthesizes different types of data to create a coherent narrative that helps the researcher to better understand that individual, while a diary or log focuses on an ongoing account of a specific activity over time.

Chapter eleven addresses the use of existing documentation including lesson plans, textbooks, and visual records such as photographs. An example of a research study comprised of the abstract, research questions, literature review, methodology, analysis of findings, conclusions, and commentary is furnished in chapter 12.

Key Issues for Education Researchers is a concise and understandable look at the research process. The numerous examples provide the novice researcher with a template for the design of a successful research project. This text should be added to graduate collections in education. Faculty may also wish to utilize this title as a textbook for courses in educational research.

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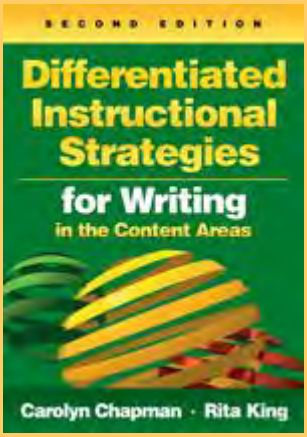

Chapman, Carolyn and King, Rita. *Differentiated Instructional Strategies for Writing in the Content Areas*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2009. ISBN: 978-1-4129-7232-1 (pbk.). $28.95.
Reviewed by Mona Anne Niedbala

This is the second edition of the best seller written by Carolyn Chapman and Rita King, well known educational consultants. This second edition offers current research, many new activities and strategies, and best practices for teachers to differentiate their work and cultivate each student's unique skills in order to develop self-directed, effective, confident, and fluent writers. The book is organized in six chapters each ending with a summary. The book also includes an appendix, references, and an index.

Chapter 1: Introduction
Infusing writing into the content areas is a strategy that uses higher-order critical-thinking skills and creativity and helps students to master content and authorship. Educators need to build on the types of writing used by students such as e-mail, blogs, text messages, and personal web pages in order to teach them how to apply the standards of writing in formal and informal situations.
Differentiated writing instruction is organized around differentiating content, assessment, performance tasks, and instructional strategies.
Writing impacts brain activities by making mental connections, building long-term memory, and by achieving a state of flow which is the state of mind that occurs when the learner concentrates on the task at hand, enjoys it, and is totally immersed in it.

The rationale for writing in the content areas is supported by the fact that writers write to demonstrate understanding, to enhance learning and memory, to inform and to express important ideas in the real world. Every teacher is a writing teacher that has a golden opportunity to model and teach writing. All teachers can —turn on the writers" in their students and use writing as a valuable component of differentiated instruction.

Chapter 2: Creating a Climate for Writing
Establishing the effective writing environment in a differentiated classroom means to create a climate conducive to writing. The main tools that teachers can use in order to create such environments are instilling self-efficacy, developing internal motivation, and developing self-regulated learners. Suggestions for creating a safe and positive writing atmosphere are the use of sayings, charts, slogans and posters. Assessing the affective writing climate is essential.

In order to create a physical environment for writing, teachers are encouraged to entice students with novel writing instruments and materials. The authors encourage adding spice to activities by varying the medium, size, shape, color, weight, and texture of the writing materials.

Examples of ideas that add novelty to the writing climate are the Burrito fold, the accordion fold, or the hot dog fold along with shaping the things by using the quarter tear, paper stripping, or sticky tabbing. Other suggestions are using the rainbow writing, ready references, and the teacher-created and student-created displays.

Finding the right write spot and assessing the physical writing climate are important in order for the teacher to establish and maintain a productive affective and physical learning environment that would inspire each writer.

Chapter 3: Knowing the Writer
In this chapter the authors present the developmental stages of the student's writing abilities, from the lower levels, such as the scribbler, the picture maker, the storyteller, the letter shaker, the copier, the sound maker, to the complex, sophisticated levels, such as the sentence maker and the fluent writer.
The description of problems teachers encounter during writing tasks in the differentiated classroom is organized around observable behaviors, feelings of the student, and suggested interventions. A list of common writing problems with some suggested interventions for improving individual writing performance is provided. Understanding and addressing individual learning styles is a powerful tool for teachers to tailor writing experiences in the differentiated classroom.

Chapter 4: Differentiating the Writing Process and Flexible Grouping
The authors discuss the necessity of immersing students in the writer's craft and of developing a writing vocabulary which include terms such as *draft*, *revise*, *edit*, and *publish*.

Four types of writing are presented with suggested teaching guidelines:
1. Descriptive Writing: Let Me Create a Picture in Your Mind!
2. Expository Writing: Let Me Explain It to You!
3. Persuasive Writing: Let Me Convince You!
4. Narrative Writing: Let Me Tell You What Happened!
Purposes and features of the four types of writing with assignment examples are provided.
The use of the Block Party activity, which is designed to meet the diverse needs of students as they practice the four types of writing, is presented.

The description of the six steps of the writing process is the focus of this chapter. The authors make suggestions in regard to the teacher's role and provide guidelines for approaching each step:
Step 1: Getting Started: Prewriting
Step 2: Sloppy Copy: First Draft
Step 3: Hamming It Up: Revision
Step 4: Tuning It Up: Editing
Step 5: Neat Sheet: Final Copy
Step 6: Sharing and Celebrating: Publishing
The flexible grouping (Total group, Alone, Partner, Small Groups) is an essential tool for meeting the diverse needs of learners and writers. The authors provide examples of group designs for specific writing activities.

Chapter 5: Instructional Strategies and Activities for the Differentiated Writing Classroom
The chapter begins with a discussion about the value of using writing to develop critical thinking before, during, and after a lesson. Writing strategies for English-language learners are addressed.

Activities for differentiating writing with formats and genres, using personification to process content information, and planning for individual needs are described.

The authors provide a wealth of examples for writing strategies, gathering research, note taking, developing outlines and rubrics, writing essays, rhymes and riddles, getting to know text characters, and sequencing with graphic organizers. The chapter ends with a collection of forty-three assignment activities.

Chapter 6: Planning, Assessing, and Evaluating Writing
The chapter starts with a lesson plan model for writing in the content areas including strategies and ideas to meet students' needs before, during, and after the writing experience.

A large collection of materials for informal writing assessment and formal writing assessment follows.
The authors also provide a collection of examples of uses of writing across content areas such as language arts, social studies, math, science, visual arts, vocational studies, and physical education and health.

This work is recommended for academic library collections supporting undergraduate and graduate programs in teacher education and school librarianship. The wealth of strategies, activities, suggestions, and practical examples make this book an excellent resource for in-service teachers and for professional development workshops.

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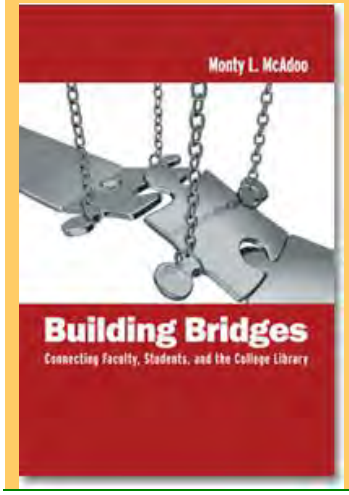

McAdoo, Monty L. *Building Bridges: Connecting Faculty, Students, and the College Library,* Chicago: American Library Association, 2010. ISBN 978-0-8389-1019-1 (pbk.). $55. Reviewed by Celeste Moore

Monty L. McAdoo's *Building Bridges* is a comprehensive guide that will help academic librarians connect more effectively with faculty members and students. McAddo states that —because of the nature of their work, librarians are often bridges between the student and the faculty member." The book examines why this bridge is needed and how librarians can better serve their patrons and promote learning through learning assignments. This thought provoking book will help college librarians better understand their uniquely important role and give them tangible ways to foster the learning process.

McAdoo has an M.L.S. and a doctorate in Educational Administration and Leadership. The author has fused his educational training and his work as an instructional service librarian to create this insightful book. McAdoo has the expertise to understand academic settings and the learning process. The author draws on his own experience to guide librarians as they strive to help professors and students succeed. This book has an important message that can help librarians better promote learning in higher education.

The book is organized into five parts. The parts include The Need for Bridges, Building a Foundation, Building the Bridge, Bridge Collapse and Crossing the Bridge. These chapters flow well as subsequent chapters build on the ideas presented in the previous chapters. Other helpful features of the book include three appendixes, a resource list and an index. Practical ideas are offered throughout the book to help librarians collaborate more with educators. The book also examines assignments and why they succeed or fail. The closing reflection will help librarians as they deal with the challenges of their work.

The author addresses many important topics for academic librarians. The need for information literacy in academics is highlighted throughout the book. Current trends in higher education are opening new ways for colleges to incorporate information literacy into the curriculum. Librarians have much to offer this new learning environment and the author shares ways to promote information literacy. Librarians are also encouraged to take a more active role in the learning process and forge relationships with faculty. The author is realistic when advising librarians how to proceed with problematic assignments and the best ways to cultivate partnerships with reluctant faculty. The author has a broad understanding of the culture of academics and the roles librarians have in this setting. Reading this book can help the academic librarian better navigate through academia and help maximize student success.

Building Bridges is a powerful resource that can help librarians close the gap between faculty, students and the college library. Librarians can become a larger part of the learning process while promoting information literacy and library resources. Academic librarians can benefit from reading and applying the useful hints throughout the book. This title is well worth its shelf space in your professional collection!

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Simons, Helen. *Case Study Research in Practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009. ISBN 978-0-7619-6424-7. $39.95. Reviewed by Warren Jacobs

Case study research examines a unique situation in order to gather data that will be used to foster change and enable needed decisions to be made. *Case Study Research in Practice* provides a blueprint for beginning researchers to follow as they design, conduct, and

disseminate the results of case study research to their constituents.

Helen Simons, a retired professor, has written extensively on the case study approach to educational research, including a previous book, *Getting to Know Schools in a Democracy: The Politics and Process of Evaluation* (Falmer Press).

The prologue features a letter on case study research from a fictional student. The letter is a composite of student questions about the research process fielded by the author over the years. Simons also includes a midterm and final letter from the student. These letters demonstrate the student's increasing understanding about case study research. Simons asserts in her replies that this text is a lengthy response to the student's initial questions about case study research.

Case Study Research in Practice is divided into four sections based on the typical progression of a case study. Section one is comprised of the first three chapters. Chapter one looks at the development of case study research. Through the work of pioneering researchers, case studies have evolved from a qualitative inquiry about a single event into a comprehensive research strategy utilized to evaluate a program or policy.

The second chapter focuses on the planning process which includes selection of a case, identification of the key research questions, establishing whether qualitative or quantitative methods will be used, and how a researcher can obtain access to a specific school or program to study.

Chapter three addresses the advantages and disadvantages of different types of interviews: in-depth, conversational, group, and non face-to-face (e-mail or telephone). The major purposes of interviews include documentation of the interviewee's perspective, providing an opportunity for both the interviewer and interviewee to learn more about an issue, a chance for the interviewer to represent feelings and events that may not have been observed, and the adaptability to investigate other issues as they come up in the interview.

Section two examines issues that arise during case study research in the field. Chapter four looks at how researchers study and portray individuals. In chapter five, Simons makes the case that a researcher cannot separate oneself from the research process. Subjectivity does shape the investigation and findings. Reflexivity is the process by which a researcher addresses the impact of his/her biases, values, beliefs, and preferences on the research process. Chapter six deals with ethical issues such as establishing and maintaining trust, informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymization (using pseudonyms).

Chapters seven and eight make up the third section examining analysis and interpretation of research findings. Chapter seven surveys the selection and organization of data. After data has been coded, the relationship between concepts can be established. Chapter eight features examples of specific types of interpretation: interview transcripts, mixed mode analysis, and concept mapping.

Chapters nine and ten comprise the final section of the text in which the results of the case study are communicated. Chapter nine looks at the scope and content of a case study narrative, documentary, and artistic expression. Chapter ten addresses the strengths and weaknesses of the outcome of case study research in relation to subjectivity, generalization, generation of theory, and usefulness in policy-making.

Case Study Research in Practice will enable a student to not only understand the theory behind case study research, but also design, execute, and inform others as to the results of a case study. Each chapter contains examples, bulleted lists of key questions, notes, and annotated readings. This title will be an excellent addition to academic library collections, and useful as a textbook for research methods courses focusing on case studies in education or other social sciences.

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