

25 July 2000

The following are some personal views related to this inquiry:

1. There is a continuing need for and value in the provision of positive male role models for boys in schools, including primary schools.
2. The literacy needs of boys are similar to those of girls. With respect to learning to read, they need to master effective word-attack strategies, to have a well-developed sight vocabulary, to have comprehension skills/strategies, and to have the opportunity to read material that is relevant to their interests, makes sense, is age appropriate, and is at an appropriate ability level.
3. Successful strategies used in literacy instruction include individualised and small-group activities. The use of computer software as tools to facilitate learning and for motivation has been productive, both for learning and social goals.
4. A structured environment and program are essential.
5. Positive interactions amongst teachers, students, and texts are valuable.
6. Perhaps the single most significant factor is the relationship between the teacher and the boy. There must be strength and consistency, structure and flexibility, empathy and interaction. Both female and male teachers can provide these, of course, but it is highly desirable that male role models be included in boys' education throughout their school years, including the primary years where such male influences may be lacking in today's evolving social and familial structures.

Respectfully,
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