

The book is well written and manages to avoid all technical jargon. It can be read from cover to cover or the reader can just work within a particular chapter if he or she is confident of the level his or her child has reached. The book is to be highly recommended for the authors provide a very practical description of procedures and back this up with a wealth of suggestions for language games and experiences. The reader can sense that the book is empathetically written and it is clear that the authors have observed and worked with many children like the one the reader is now trying to help. The book is a useful crutch for the reader in offering clear 'cues' as to what stage the child is at and in making straightforward suggestions that do not involve great expense in terms of time or money. When picking up the book, it is likely that both the reader and the child will be feeling frustrated at what seems a very arduous task ahead. I suspect that by reading the relevant chapters the child-helper will be fired with ideas and the child will begin to respond. The underlying message could have been an advertisement for that well-known telecoms company because the authors really do get the message across that, no matter how great one's limitations may seem, through interacting together, 'it's good to talk'!

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**Developmental phonological disorders: a practical guide for families and teachers**

**C. Bowen**

*Melbourne: The Australian Council for Educational Research, 1998. viii + 40pp.*

Dr Bowen has provided both a concise description of the nature of phonological disorders and a therapy programme developed through her research at Macquarie University. Intended for use by parents and teachers, it is short and easy to read, but contains sufficient information to increase the adults' understanding of the difficulties faced by children who are unable to express themselves clearly.

The first three chapters consider normal phonological development, explaining both the production of individual sounds and the processes

involved in learning to sequence these sounds into an organized system. The author employs terminology and phonetic symbols, which may initially appear challenging to the reader with no prior knowledge of this field, although the terms are explained clearly with the aid of charts and specific examples of young children's speech. Dr Bowen rightly asserts that it is necessary to understand the processes of speech development before working with children who have phonological disorders, and that therapy is most effective when all those involved with the child's daily life can participate.

The remainder of the book describes the suggested method of therapy, detailing the underlying theoretical principles, and providing specific examples of teaching techniques. A very useful section explains the importance of assessment, initially to determine the child's developmental level and subsequently as part of the ongoing monitoring process, and provides 'answers' to the questions most frequently asked by parents. An admirably practical and positive approach is adopted which should help to dispel many of the concerns expressed by parents and teachers.

This book was obviously written to complement individual therapy sessions, so its usefulness to the general reader may appear limited, particularly since the author strongly advises against remediation without a therapist's guidance. However, the principles expounded are sound, the tone throughout is one of sensible optimism, and there is much here to inform and encourage all those working to develop the speech of young children.

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### **Learning to learn**

**Gordon Malone and Dorothy Smith**

*Tamworth: NASEN, 1996. v + 66pp.*

Malone and Smith have provided a comprehensive guide to study skills suitable for children in upper primary and secondary schools. They encourage teachers to offer learning opportunities, which move away from subject specialisms and emphasize the learning process. The five chapters (Teaching approaches, Special educational needs, Barriers to effective study skills and how to overcome them, Study skills in the classroom, and