Chapter One

Introduction and Framing the Field

INTRODUCTION

The field of curriculum can best be understood by viewing it in terms of trends. In this text, trends that took shape from the late 1800s to the present are described and explained. Three major categories of trends appeared in the field of curriculum studies. The three most sensible categories used for this text are: The traditionalists, the reconceptualists, and the postmodern writers. There are many subcategories, of course, in a field as wide as curriculum. For the purposes of this text, the three categories selected will enable the reader to get an overview of the field as well as an insight into particular moments in the history of curriculum that changed how we view schools, teachers, ourselves, and society. Many writers have used these or closely related terms. For this handbook, the three categories are wide enough to capture the complexity of curriculum trends.

In addition, this text represents my own journey through my career as a teacher, an educational leader, and a professor of curriculum and research courses. Schools and curriculum are reflections of our society. What happens politically, economically, and psychologically in daily life has some effect in the classroom. Likewise, schools also reflect our society. So there is no one way to view curriculum, nor is the complexity of curriculum issues lessening. In fact, one could argue that since the events of September 11, 2001, in New York, at the Pentagon, and in Pennsylvania, a spiritual and social-psychological curricular wake-up call has occurred. In the aftermath of September 11, we are more aware than ever before of the need to educate the whole person and go deeper into the meaning of curriculum. In other words, curriculum embraces the overt areas of learning, assessment, and the content of subjects but also pays attention to the inner needs of the learner. The spiritual center of an individual is as critical to develop as the external temporal components of learning. Thus, the key questions in the field

What do we teach?
How best do we teach?

are continually transformed to include the whole person.

In my own life as an educator and with a background in the arts and disciplined inquiry, curriculum studies was a natural career focus for me. In a sense, this book has been in preparation for two decades. In general, ever present is hope and optimism. Hope exists so that curriculum can be reshaped in many schools to allow learners to learn and teachers to teach effectively. Optimism exists so that within the context of curriculum, the education of the whole person will be a permanent fixture in curriculum trends. The result would be a critical reflective learner, participating actively in our democratic society.

CURRICULUM TRENDS AS A PAINTING

In an effort to understand curriculum, a helpful metaphor—the metaphor of painting—will be used. As trends in the field are described, think of a painting, in which each stroke of the brush and each color of paint brings us closer to understanding the current and latest portrayal of the subject that is curriculum trends. But all paintings begin somewhere on the canvas. The first stroke is about our history in the field of curriculum trends, or the traditional approach. The second stroke is about the reconceptualists, who challenged the nuts-and-bolts approach of the traditionalists and who revered science. The next stroke is the postmodern stroke. What the postmodernists questioned was our reckless adherence to logic and reason when so much else was going on in the learning process. They also wanted the learner as a person inserted into the educational equation. They disrupted the calm sea of the traditionalists and reconceptualists, so to speak. To complete the painting, the final strokes are about the future of curriculum as autobiographical text, curriculum as aesthetic text, and curriculum as ethical text. For the sake of clarity, this first section will focus on where we came from, or the traditional view of curriculum.

THE FIRST STROKE: THE TRADITIONALIST VIEW OF CURRICULUM TRENDS

As we look back over our history, recall that when the traditionalist writers began, they were the revolutionaries and the movers and shakers of their time. Now as we look back, it seems these writers portrayed a field

that in fact did not exist. Nonetheless, they began the discussion and provided the points of departure for studying the field. Key texts on traditional curriculum views can be traced to as early as the 1880s and up to the 1970s, so strong is the voice of the traditionalist. Even in the early years, the politics of education was forcing and prompting some critique of these writings, although not overtly explained as such. Major events such as World War I shaped the thinking and writing of the time. Definitions, to be clear, were critical then as now. In fact, the word *curriculum* can be defined as, alternately and literally:

> The race to be run, from the Latin word *currerre*
> The racecourse
> A field of study
> The course the mind runs on
> All the experiences children have in school
> All learning opportunities
> A program for all experiences encountered by a learner

Obviously, the field is complex and complicated. But in a sense, each of these definitions adds to our understanding of curriculum trends. Now, let's continue with our painting.

What Did We Learn from the Traditional View?

The discussion of curriculum trends began as far back as the 1880s, and key educators in higher education met to proclaim the importance of curriculum in 1890. Yet it took fifty years to gel, and it was not until the 1940s that the educator Ralph Tyler wrote his now famous "Tyler Rationale." In 1949, Tyler wrote *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction,* and our field of curriculum was on the way to many debates and new twists and turns; most likely, that work is responsible for today's reconceptualization of the field, especially in terms of the postmodern. Tyler's principles consist of four questions:

1. What educational purposes should schools seek to attain? (objectives)
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? (design)
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? (scope and sequence)
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are attained? (evaluation)

But what was missing from the Tyler rationale was the person as learner and the teacher as public intellectual. Tyler assumed the teacher was like a banker, to use Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's term. When education is viewed as banking, the student comes in to the banker/teacher and makes a deposit or withdrawal. So Tyler in effect erased the human being. Of course, this would cause problems down the line in our history. In fact, Tyler created these questions, oddly enough, based on the work of the philosopher and educator John Dewey (1902) and the educator Franklin Bobbitt (1918). Both of these writers refocused the discussion on curriculum trends. It was Dewey who was to have extensive influence and results.

A Stroke of Dewey

Let me back up and explain the profound influence of the philosopher and activist John Dewey (1859–1952). Dewey is widely recognized as the most powerful influence on educational philosophy and practice. His pragmatism—that branch of philosophy that seeks to balance theory and practice, with an eye to social change—caused schooling to change and curriculum specialists to rejoice. Dewey began the Laboratory School at the University of Chicago in 1896 and ran it until 1904. He wanted to see theory in action and the importance of experience in education. Indeed, he claimed (and I agree) that we cannot know something without directly experiencing it. For example, you learn about painting a landscape through the actual engagement of paint and canvas, creative thought, and actually painting. Children at early ages learn mathematical principles by using manipulatives, or objects to work with. All of us who love literature love it because vicariously we experience the world of the writer and so on. Although Dewey historically falls in the time period of the traditionalists and reconceptualists, he foreshadowed and influenced the postmodern writers as well. Thus, any given writer may have elements of each of these traditions in his or her own work.

Dewey's groundbreaking work in the following texts helped to shape some of our schools then and now, in the United States and around the world. Of his voluminous writings, these texts in particular relate to curriculum trends:

"My Pedagogic Creed" (1897)
The School and Society (1899)
The Child and the Curriculum (1902)

How We Think (1910)
Democracy and Education (1916)
Art as Experience (1934)
Experience and Education (1938)

In addition to these dynamic resources, many texts have been written about Dewey's work. Still to this day, educators are actively attempting to put into practice his ideas, principles, and practices. Dewey was the first to argue for what would later be a major shift from control of subject matter by the teacher to control of learning by the student with student input regarding subject matter. In addition, he preferred at least a balance and a give-and-take posture between student and teacher. This was preferable to a technocratic, spoon-fed curriculum. Throughout Dewey's life and beyond, his writings influenced thinkers in philosophy, history, education, and the arts. In education, his most enduring legacy in terms of curriculum includes his focus on:

1. Experience as a key element in the educative process.
2. Child-centered activities for learning in the early years.
3. Democracy and education.
4. The significance of art as experience and a key component of education.
5. Awareness of the importance of the public school as a key element of educating the citizenry for a healthy democracy.
6. Pragmatism, or the balance between theory and practice.
7. Progressivism, or the movement to ensure experience-based education—a move away from technocratic approaches to curriculum—and dealing with the whole child. Not only that, progressivism had a goal of social improvement and change. For the first time, educators were looking to the school and society as never before.
8. The idea that a school must be a community. (It was this idea that the postmodernists took up and amplified.)

Although Dewey had many ideas that could be considered as rooted in traditionalist orientations, he certainly could also be perceived as a reconceptualist. His reconceptualist ideas would be those specifically centered on the person's need to experience something in order to learn it. This was congruent with other great thinkers worldwide, such as Jean Piaget (1898–1980), the Swiss psychologist, and Maria Montessori (1870–1952), the Italian medical doctor and educator. Furthermore, the

Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925) held these beliefs. Dewey's thought and writings and the Laboratory School most certainly affected many educators, many of whom we have come to call the reconceptualists. Likewise, the curriculum writer Franklin Bobbitt reinforced many ideas prevalent in Dewey's work and influenced the later work of Ralph Tyler. This is not to say that curriculum writers were one big, happy family. In fact, the criticisms of the traditional approach gave way to the next wave, the reconceptualists.

THE NEXT STROKE: THE RECONCEPTUALISTS

Although there are as many reconceptualists who helped to develop, improve, and, in some areas, negate the traditional approaches, the focus here is on some writers who stand out for the clarity of their contributions. Luckily, Elliot Eisner and Elizabeth Vallance (1974) listed five orientations to the reconceptualizing of the traditional approach to curriculum. Each of these can be found within the reconceptualists' writings. They are discussed in the following passages.

The Cognitive Process Orientation

This approach to curriculum focuses on cognitive skills that a learner applies to intellectual problems. The skills will endure after the content knowledge is forgotten or obsolete. This grouping would include developmentalist writers such as Jean Piaget, the Swiss psychologist, for example. For developmentalists, a learner learns in developmental stages that are age appropriate. At each stage, one retains characteristics of the previous stage but still continues development. For example, as adults, we might count on our fingers, an action most often associated with childhood. Yet we continue as adults to develop appropriately. Another such educator would be Maria Montessori, the Italian physician who created schools for children with physical and/or emotional problems and used concrete experiences to allow them to grow and develop into literate, well-rounded adults. One example of this approach can be seen in the recent discussion I had with one of my students. She happens to be taking a statistics course in the college of arts and sciences, and I asked her how it was going. She told me that she is doing well, oddly enough despite the fact that the class is totally based on one or more tests a week, no discussion of ideas, memorizing information, and de-

coding the textbook. Thus, she captured this orientation and its evolution in the postmodern time frame.

The Technological Orientation

In this approach to curriculum, technology may be involved but in the traditional "means to an end" focus. The problem is for the educational technologist to oversee the system so that goals can be achieved. In the field of curriculum, almost all textbooks smack of this orientation. Many rely on objectives, measuring, comparing scores, and the like. The technological orientation is almost totally traditional in origin. This is closely aligned with and follows from the traditionalists but adds the ever popular technology component. The problem is the way in which technology is viewed and how it is used or misused. An example of this orientation would be what currently goes on in most high schools. A student takes a course and learns how to do a Power Point presentation on a topic, and that supposedly satisfies as an understanding of technology. What is missing, a postmodernist might argue, is the critical eye toward the fact that there are race, class, and gender issues embedded in technology use. In fact, some students may not have the economic means to have a computer at home to practice even this basic exercise. Likewise, some minority members and women are excluded from the ownership, discourse, and use of any form of technology. Unfortunately, this continues presently in many schools and universities.

The Self-Actualization Orientation

In this approach, education and schooling are viewed as means to personal fulfillment, or self-actualization. Individuals find and discover their talents, skills, and abilities. Curriculum is thus enriching and valuable. This later was sometimes called the "personal success model." The psychologist Abraham Maslow was writing about self-actualization going through a hierarchy of levels and in effect sparked an interest in humanism sometimes associated with the traditionalists. However, recall that the traditionalist approach really erased the student and often the teacher from the learning process. An example of this approach would be the many alternative private schools that focus on developing the whole child, such as the Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Schools, the Montessori Schools, and experimental community schools based on the British experimental school Summerhill. In the 1970s, Summerhill, a model school, emphasized child-centered education for the purpose of self-

realization. In addition, home schooling began to take shape as a viable alternative to public schools.

The Social Reconstructionist Orientation

Here, education and particularly curriculum are seen as tools for social change. Elements of equity, fairness, and social justice are considered. Education must be relevant to students' and society's needs. Curriculum is viewed as dynamic and active and eventually as having an effect on society. Writers such as Henry Giroux, Peter McClaren, and Michael Apple raised questions about the politics, economics, and purposes of education. They wanted to make accountable those educators who refused to deal with issues of poverty, hunger, and lack of wealth as serious flaws in education. They questioned the batching of poor and minority students into vocational education programs or special education, among other things. In effect, they raised many ethical concerns about schools and schooling.

An example of this approach can most readily be seen in the recent critiques of popular culture, such as Henry Giroux's dissection of the Disney Corporation products that students devour: the corporation's bombardment of advertising and its control of media empires in effect teach kids to be great little consumers. I myself saw this in my own niece's desire to have not only the *Pocahontas* video but also Pocahontas sheets, jewelry, clothing, toys, and school supplies. With a social reconstructionist approach, educators might use this kind of reality as an opportunity to critique this side of Disney. I call this the "Disneyfication" of society. This is not to say that Disney is not creative or magical or that Disney does not employ millions. It is to say, let's look at what this means for our children. All this was called into question most recently and most seriously in Giroux's text *The Mouse That Roared*.

The Academic Rationalist Approach

This approach seeks to have students learn and use the words and ideas of the Western world. In recent times, questions have arisen about the heavy emphasis on teaching about *only* Western writers. Movements to include Eastern philosophers, African writers, etc., still cause arguments on many college campuses. This orientation gave rise to our multicultural trend in curriculum studies eventually. It also laid the groundwork for the questions of the postmodern writers. In a way, this orientation was very traditional, on the one hand, and reconceptual, on the other, in that it included an awe of science and discovery.

As we look at these orientations, some may overlap in the actual classroom. They are handy tools with which to approach the topic of curriculum trends. If it were not for the reconceptualizing of the curriculum, we would not have come so far into the present postmodern moment. Ideas and questions about schools were percolating. The world was recovering from World War II. Science was supported without reservation, hence the nuclear bomb, for example. It was time for the intellectuals and educators to ask ethical questions again, and so we took the postmodern turn. A good example of this is the "great books approach" to literature, which, of course, features great Western writers. Perhaps the most well-known work on this subject is the writer Mortimer Adler's *Paideia Proposal* (1982). In this text, he argues persuasively for teaching the great books of the Western world.

ANOTHER STROKE: THE POSTMODERN TRENDS IN CURRICULUM

Postmodernism is often traced to post–World War II thought and action. After the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we see a critical turning point in history. Many disciplines reassessed the meaning of life and their purposes and goals. Nowhere was this more evident than in education. For one thing, teachers began to see themselves as public intellectuals. In addition, postmodernism was a prompter for many educational researchers to actually look in classrooms, see what was happening, and interpret what was seen. Schools were viewed as cultures and entire social systems. Postmodern researchers looked to explain more of the puzzle of curriculum and schooling by viewing schools as entire systems. As a result, the writer/educator William Pinar and colleagues (1995) looked at schools with an eye to history and with a view toward the future. Their well-known schema considers the following categories:

Understanding curriculum as political text
Understanding curriculum as racial text
Understanding curriculum as gender text
Understanding curriculum as postmodern text
Understanding curriculum as aesthetic text
Understanding curriculum as autobiographical text
Understanding curriculum as spiritual, moral text
Understanding curriculum as international text
Understanding curriculum as emancipatory text

Curriculum as a site for multiple competing views of curriculum

In other words, postmodernists have forced educators to examine the complexities of race, class, gender, politics, spirituality, aesthetics, and all aspects of curriculum. They complete the current painting. The linear and technocratic stroke of the traditionalists gave us just that. Then, the questioning of why components were missing from discourse was layered on by the reconceptualists. Now, in our present day, the postmodernists have given texture to the painting of curriculum trends. Let us recall a bit about postmodernism.

Postmodernism: In Bold Strokes

Postmodernism is a theoretical framework and a form of critique that questions the following:

- The primacy of Western reason and its social, political, economic, and educational effects so often idealized by the reconceptualist
- Obligatory Western heroes, together with the supposed privilege for these heroes
- Stories of expansionism, progress, and the success of science at the expense of working poor people who enable that expansionism, progress, and success
- Western stories that critique other cultures without applying the same level of critical analysis to the Western ideology, mythos, and culture

Thus, you can see these issues alone are a challenge to the reconceptualists and the traditionalists.

Postmodernism and Applications for Curriculum Trends

If we take a postmodern view of schooling, one of the main concerns of the educator is to attempt to uncover ways that dominant schooling (1) serves to perpetuate the hopelessness of the oppressed, and (2) strives to treat people with equity. As a result, those who work in the field of curriculum would assert a framework that:

- Recognizes the power of race, class, and gender differences and how these shape educational outcomes

Exposes the ways that power works to structure inequality
Promotes a narrative of hope, complexity, and multiple competing perceptions of social reality
Conceptualizes ways that promote a more human, hopeful way to approach school, work, parenting, play, etc.
States that all teachers are learners and all learners are teachers
Suggests that no one single vision of the world is enough to change the world
Suggests fairness as a guiding principle
Values critique, critical thinking, and critical pedagogy
Suggests that unraveling issues of race, class, and gender can sometimes be addressed legally to move the process forward
Suggests that we call into question any truth claims

Thus, postmodernism begins to question some of the basic beliefs and values of the traditionalists, and it also points out the weakness of the exclusionary reverence for science of the reconceptualists. Legal issues that arose on a regular basis seem to have been challenged in the courts during the postmodern era. This gave prominence to postmodern questions. Some of the key legal cases are indeed benchmarks for current and future trends in curriculum. Understanding some of these cases may illuminate curriculum trends.

LEGAL CASES THAT HAVE SHAPED CURRICULUM TRENDS

Obviously, cases related to educational issues and curriculum trends have to be tested in the courts. To help the reader understand the context and importance of the law and how the law affects curriculum, here are selected and seminal cases that relate to all the trends described in this chapter. Cases relating to curriculum issues such as race, class, gender, and diversity are described and most recently came into prominence in the postmodern era of curriculum trends. There is no intent to leave any one out; the goal here is to mention the most powerful and useful cases. They begin in the 1890s, the pretraditionalist era, and go to the present time.

Plessy v. Ferguson *(1896)*

This case set the precedents for racial segregation in public schools. The court upheld an 1890 Louisiana statute mandating racially segregated

but equal railroad carriages, ruling that the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution dealt with political and not social equality. The case arose from resentment among black and Creole residents of New Orleans and was supported by the railroad companies, who felt it unnecessary to pay the cost of separate cars. Justice Henry Billings Brown wrote the majority opinion, stating that "separate but equal" laws did not imply the inferiority of one race to another. Justice John Harlan (1833–1911) dissented, arguing that the U.S. Constitution was color-blind. The decision provided constitutional sanction for the adoption throughout the South of a comprehensive series of Jim Crow laws, which were maintained until overruled in 1954 by *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas.* It had particular relevance to education, with Justice Brown drawing parallels between race segregation on trains and in educational facilities. It is critical to see the history here, for this case led to the next most famous groundbreaker, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. These two cases brought to bear the issues of race and equal opportunity for education and curriculum trends.

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas *(1954)*

This case set the precedents for racial discrimination in schools. Linda Brown was denied admission to her local elementary school in Topeka because she was black. When, combined with several other cases, her suit reached the Supreme Court; that body, in an opinion by then recently appointed Chief Justice Earl Warren, broke with long tradition and unanimously overruled the "separate but equal" doctrine of *Plessy v. Ferguson,* holding for the first time that de jure (legally imposed) segregation in the public schools violated the principle of equal protection under the law guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Responding to legal and sociological arguments presented by lawyers from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) led by Thurgood Marshall, the Court stressed that the "badge of inferiority" stamped on minority children by segregation hindered their full development, no matter how "equal" physical facilities might be. After hearing further arguments on implementation, the Court declared in 1955 that schools must be desegregated "with all deliberate speed." Restricted in application to de jure segregation, the *Brown* case was applied mainly to southern school systems. After strong resistance, which led to such incidents as the 1957 Little Rock, Arkansas, school crisis, integration spread slowly across the South, under Court orders and the threat of loss of federal funds for noncompliance. The *Brown* decision gave tremendous impetus to the civil rights movement

of the 1950s and 1960s and hastened integration in public facilities and accommodations. This was a time of upheaval in the country, and many note this case as contributing strongly to the awareness of the need to clarify civil rights at this point in history. This case is the basis for many current cases that are still unresolved, such as the Kansas City, Missouri, desegregation case.

Lau v. Nichols *(414 U.S. 563) (1974)*

The failure of the San Francisco school system to provide English language instruction to approximately 1,800 students of Chinese ancestry who did not speak English—or to provide them with other adequate instructional procedures—denied them a meaningful opportunity to participate in the public educational program, said a group of parents. Thus, discrimination was alleged, based on race.

There were dissenting opinions, but basically, this case laid the groundwork for the upsurge in bilingual education and all resulting curricula, as well as programs that are called bilingual or language immersion or that give children who do not speak English the right to an equal education under the law. This and the *Brown v. Board of Education* are looked upon by educators as the two most critical legal cases that affect school curriculum.

Daniel v. State of California *(Los Angeles Superior Court) (1999)*

On July 27, 1999, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a suit on behalf of California high school students who were being denied equal and adequate access to advanced placement courses by their local school districts and the State of California. The defendants in this case were the State of California, the state superintendent of public instruction, the State Board of Education, the Inglewood Unified School District, and the superintendent of the Inglewood Unified School District. The named plaintiffs were African American and Latino high school students enrolled at Inglewood High School. The ACLU argued that the allocation of advanced placement courses was unequal across California, with low-income and minority students being denied equal access to these rigorous classes. As a result, these students were disproportionately disadvantaged in the quality of their high school curriculum and their opportunities to pursue and succeed in higher education.

In this case, the issues of race, class, and gender all came into play and were part of the postmodern trends described earlier. By litigants

taking on the state with the largest population, great emphasis was given to their concerns, and a window of opportunity was opened for students who, by virtue of their race, class, and/or gender, were not able to avail themselves of educational options afforded others. This case opened the door for awareness that minority children were able to perform as well as anyone else.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (PL 101-336, enacted July 26, 1990)

The Americans with Disabilities Act, a U.S. civil rights law enacted in 1990, forbids discrimination of various sorts against persons with physical or mental handicaps. Its primary emphasis is on enabling these persons to enter the job market and remain employed, but it also outlaws most physical barriers in public accommodations, transportation, telecommunications, and government services. Among the protected class are persons with AIDS and substance abusers who are in treatment. Some 50 million current or potential workers are estimated to be covered by the law's provisions. This law is hailed as absolutely the most critical and powerful movement forward for persons with disabilities. It affected curriculum trends immediately by requiring that in practice in schools every day, the curriculum would be changed forever. It became the rule of thumb that every student classified as a special education student must have an individual education plan on file in the school. This added more paperwork for special educators and principals, on the one hand, but, on the other hand, it provided for all of us a model of what can be done to individualize the curriculum for those in need.

In schools, special educators had always done this due to excellent training and development in this area; however, what is groundbreaking is that individuals with disabilities had the power from that point on to challenge in the courts any occurrence in which they may have been wronged. Thus, the legal arena became more active, with many cases put forward under the aegis of this statute. Subsequently, this law went through many changes before assuming its current state. It is now called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The Education of All Handicapped Children Act Amendments of 1990 (PL 101-476)

In 1990, PL 101-476 changed the title of the special education law to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and this act became known as the "person first" law. The thinking was that we should speak of and

write about people first, then their physical disabilities. Basically, the term *handicapped* was deleted entirely. In a sense, this is a postmodern interpretation for recognizing people as people. The measure is thought to be a major victory for persons with disabilities. In any event, the current IDEA follows from the original ADA.

Although each of these cases may seem like something we have always taken for granted, they actually reshaped how we think about schools and schooling. Particularly, they reiterated the importance of education as a civil right and emphasized that issues of race, class, and gender must be considered in schooling and that language issues are ever present in curriculum trends. In addition, the powerful notion that people with disabilities may not be discriminated against by virtue of their disabilities changed not only schools but also society. Thus, we can see how laws can help schools, students, and teachers to achieve educational goals. But where do we go from postmodernism in curriculum trends? How do we apply postmodernism in the classroom? One way is to use integrated thematic units, across content areas, to punctuate the notions of education of the whole child, experience-based education, linking concepts across disciplines, and allowing the learner to take responsibility for learning.

INTEGRATED THEMATIC UNITS

Educational reformers for many years have been trying to make connections between content areas to allow students to learn subject matter more effectively. This has been happening at all grade levels, K–12. In this next section, you will see two examples of how teachers have pulled together thematic units across disciplines, a postmodern trend. In the first example, you will see how first-grade students benefit from an integrated thematic unit. The bear unit was created by Ruth Anne Jepson and Suzanne Evenson.

Example 1: Bear Theme Study—Grade One

Day One: Kickoff to *The Three Bears*
Day Two: Sequencing of story events
Day Three: Transition words and tear bears
Day Four: Big, bigger, and biggest (comparing), serration in math, and begin *Beary Interesting Facts* flipbook
Day Five: Creative bear writing and flipbook
Day Six: "Story Soup"—elements of a story

Day Seven: Musical paper bag puppet art project and
Teddy Gram story problems
Day Eight: Puppet show practice and bear paws math
Day Nine: Videotape puppet show presentations and
addition game
Day Ten: Teddy bear celebration and "The Teddy Bear Tea Party"

Day One: Kickoff. Introduce *The Three Bears* big book.

Discuss how it is a folktale.
Talk about the cover, title, and author.
Take a picture walk.
Look for various punctuation marks throughout the book.
Do a shared reading—whole group.
Sing a song called "The Five W's and One H," written by Suzanne Evenson.
Following the song, use these words to ask comprehension questions about the story.

With the magnetic math bear, graph the following:
Who was your favorite character?
Papa Bear, Mama Bear, Baby Bear, or Goldilocks?

Talk about glyphs. It is a way to organize information. Students will make their own bear glyph (the glyph will be used for a math lesson in Day Two).
Start a K-W-L. What do you know about bears? What do you want to know about bears? Leave the L for the last day's unit celebration.

The Five W's and One H
by Suzanne Evenson
(sung to "Bingo" tune)

There are some words that make up questions
And mainly start with W's
Who, What, Where, When, Why,
Who, What, When, Where, Why,
Who, What, When, Where, Why,
And now and again it may be How!

Day Two. Do a story retell with a finger puppet (we made ours with a gardening glove, pom-pom balls, googly eyes, and felt).