



Contents

Preface v
Correlation Guide xv
Introduction xvii

UNIT 1 BASIC THEORETICAL ISSUES 1

Issue 1. Should Schooling Be Based on Social Experiences? 2

YES: John Dewey, from *Experience and Education* (Macmillan, 1938) 4

NO: Robert M. Hutchins, from *The Conflict in Education in a Democratic Society* (Harper & Row, 1953) 11

Philosopher John Dewey suggests a reconsideration of traditional approaches to schooling, giving fuller attention to the social development of the learner and the quality of his or her total experience. Robert M. Hutchins, noted educator and one-time chancellor of the University of Chicago, argues for a liberal arts education geared to the development of intellectual powers.

Issue 2. Should the Curriculum Be Standardized for All? 16

YES: Mortimer J. Adler, from “The Paideia Proposal: Rediscovering the Essence of Education,” *American School Board Journal* (July 1982) 18

NO: John Holt, from *Escape from Childhood* (E. P. Dutton, 1974) 25

Philosopher Mortimer J. Adler contends that democracy is best served by a public school system that establishes uniform curricular objectives for all students. Educator John Holt argues that an imposed curriculum damages the individual and usurps a basic human right to select one’s own path of development.

Issue 3. Should Behaviorism Shape Educational Practices? 31

YES: B. F. Skinner, from *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1971) 33

NO: Carl R. Rogers, from *Freedom to Learn for the Eighties* (Merrill, 1983) 39

B. F. Skinner, an influential proponent of behaviorism and professor of psychology, critiques the concept of “inner freedom” and links learning and motivation to the influence of external forces. Professor of psychology and psychiatry Carl R. Rogers offers the “humanistic” alternative to behaviorism, insisting on the reality of subjective forces in human motivation.

Issue 4. Is Constructivism the Best Philosophy of Education? 48

YES: David Elkind, from “The Problem with Constructivism,” *The Educational Forum* (Summer 2004) 50

NO: Jamin Carson, from “Objectivism and Education: A Response to David Elkind’s ‘The Problem with Constructivism,’” *The Educational Forum* (Spring 2005) 57

Child development professor David Elkind contends that the philosophical positions found in constructivism, though often difficult to apply, are necessary elements in a meaningful reform of educational practices. Jamin Carson, an assistant professor of education and former high school teacher, offers a close critique of constructivism and argues that the philosophy of objectivism is a more realistic and usable basis for the process of education.

Issue 5. Should Global Competition Steer School Reform? 64

YES: Marc Tucker, from “Charting a New Course for Schools,” *Educational Leadership* (April 2007) 66

NO: Herb Childress, from “A Subtractive Education,” *Phi Delta Kappan* (October 2006) 73

Marc Tucker, president of the National Center on Education and the Economy, summarizes the work of the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce on which he served as vice chairman. Herb Childress, director of liberal studies at the Boston Architectural College, argues for a completely different approach to improvement of our efforts to educate.

UNIT 2 CURRENT FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES 83

Issue 6. Are Truly Democratic Classrooms Possible? 84

YES: Kristan A. Morrison, from “Democratic Classrooms: Promises and Challenges of Student Voice and Choice, Part One,” *Educational Horizons* (Fall 2008) 86

NO: Gary K. Clabaugh, from “Second Thoughts About Democratic Classrooms,” *Educational Horizons* (Fall 2008) 96

Associate professor of education Kristan A. Morrison explores historical and theoretical bases for implementing democratic practices in schools that would make student experience more appealing and productive. Professor of education Gary K. Clabaugh examines such factors as top-down management, compulsory attendance, business world influences, and federal mandates to declare Morrison’s ideas to be “out of touch” with reality.

Issue 7. Has the Supreme Court Reconfigured American Education? 103

YES: Charles L. Glenn, from “Fanatical Secularism,” *Education Next* (Winter 2003) 105

NO: Paul E. Peterson, from “Victory for Vouchers?” *Commentary* (September 2002) 112

Professor of education Charles L. Glenn argues that the Supreme Court's decision in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* is an immediate antidote to the public school's secularist philosophy. Professor of government Paul E. Peterson, while welcoming the decision, contends that the barricades against widespread use of vouchers in religious schools will postpone any lasting effects.

Issue 8. Is No Child Left Behind Irretrievably Flawed? 120

YES: Sharon L. Nichols and David C. Berliner, from "Testing the Joy Out of Learning," *Educational Leadership* (March 2008) 122

NO: Dianne Piché, from "Basically a Good Model," *Education Next* (Fall 2007) 128

Education professors Sharon Nichols and David Berliner cite evidence of the negative effects of test-dominated schooling under the influence of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Dianne Piché, executive director of the Citizen's Commission on Civil Rights, supports the testing and accountability measures of the federal law as the best way to advance the interests of the poor and minorities.

Issue 9. Does a "Deficit Model" Serve Poor Children Well? 133

YES: Ruby Payne, from "Nine Powerful Practices," *Educational Leadership* (April 2008) 135

NO: Mistilina Sato and Timothy J. Lensmire, from "Poverty and Payne: Supporting Teachers to Work with Children of Poverty," *Phi Delta Kappan* (January 2009) 141

Ruby Payne, president of aha!Process, Inc., a company that offers guidance to educators in poverty-area districts, puts forth specific ideas for overcoming deficits in students' lives. Assistant professor of education Mistilina Sato and associate professor of education Timothy J. Lensmire find that Payne's approach offers only simplistic solutions based on a grossly overgeneralized, deficit-laden portrayal of poor children.

Issue 10. Should "Public Schooling" Be Redefined? 149

YES: Frederick M. Hess, from "What Is a 'Public School?' Principles for a New Century," *Phi Delta Kappan* (February 2004) 151

NO: Linda Nathan et al., from "A Response to Frederick Hess," *Phi Delta Kappan* (February 2004) 160

Frederick M. Hess, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, advocates a broadening of the definition of "public schooling" in light of recent developments such as vouchers, charter schools, and home schooling. Linda Nathan, Joe Nathan, Ray Bacchetti, and Evans Clinchy express a variety of concerns about the conceptual expansion that Hess proposes.

UNIT 3 CURRENT SPECIFIC ISSUES 175

Issue 11. Are Undocumented Immigrants Entitled to Public Education? 176

YES: William J. Brennan, Jr., from Majority Opinion in *Plyler v. Doe* (June 15, 1982) 178

NO: Warren Burger, from Dissenting Opinion in *Plyler v. Doe* (June 15, 1982) 188

Justice William Brennan argues that the action of the Texas state legislature to authorize local school districts to deny enrollment in public schools to children not “legally admitted” to the country violates the Fourteenth Amendment. Chief Justice Warren Burger, in dissent, counters that the Court has no business assuming a policymaking role simply because the legislative branches of government fail to act appropriately.

Issue 12. Has the Time Arrived for Universal Preschool? 195

YES: David L. Kirp, from *Big Ideas for Children: Investing in Our Nation’s Future* (First Focus, 2008) 197

NO: Douglas J. Besharov and Douglas M. Call, from “The New Kindergarten,” *The Wilson Quarterly* (Autumn 2008) 206

David L. Kirp, a professor of public policy and author of *The Sandbox Investment*, calls for expansion of federal support for universal preschool and other child care services. Professor Douglas J. Besharov and research associate Douglas M. Call of the University of Maryland School of Public Policy examine the development of child care programs and conclude that the case for universal preschool is not as strong as it seems.

Issue 13. Is Privatization the Hope of the Future? 216

YES: Chris Whittle, from “Dramatic Growth Is Possible,” *Education Next* (Spring 2006) 218

NO: Henry Levin, from “Déjà Vu All Over Again,” *Education Next* (Spring 2006) 224

Chris Whittle, founder and CEO of Edison Schools, contends that public school systems still operate in an eighteenth-century mindset and offers an “independent learning” model as a replacement. Professor of economics and education Henry Levin criticizes the assumptions on which Whittle bases his prediction of successful operation of schools by for-profit management organizations such as Edison.

Issue 14. Is the Inclusive Classroom Model Workable? 230

YES: Mara Sapon-Shevin, from “Learning in an Inclusive Community,” *Educational Leadership* (September 2008) 232

NO: Wade A. Carpenter, from “The Other Side of Inclusion,” *Educational Horizons* (Spring 2008) 239

Professor of inclusive education Mara Sapon-Shevin presents a redefinition of the inclusive classroom and offers specific strategies for bringing it about in practice. Associate professor of education Wade A. Carpenter expresses concerns about the inclusive ideology’s uncritical infatuation with socialization.

Issue 15. Can Current High School Reform Curtail Dropouts? 245

YES: Thomas Toch, Craig D. Jerald, and Erin Dillon, from “Surprise—High School Reform Is Working,” *Phi Delta Kappan* (February 2007) 247

NO: Robert Epstein, from “Why High School Must Go: An Interview with Leon Botstein,” *Phi Delta Kappan* (May 2007) 254

Thomas Toch, Craig D. Jerald, and Erin Dillon, think-tank researchers at Education Sector, review recent efforts at high school reform by the Gates Foundation, the National Governors Association, and other groups, identifying many signs of progress. Scholar, author, and editor Robert Epstein, interviewing college president Leon Botstein, explores the abolition of high school as it now exists.

Issue 16. Is “Intelligent Design” a Threat to the Curriculum? 262

YES: Mark Terry, from “One Nation, Under the Designer,” *Phi Delta Kappan* (December 2004) 264

NO: Dan Peterson, from “The Little Engine That Could . . . Undo Darwinism,” *The American Spectator* (June 2005) 274

Biology teacher and science department administrator Mark Terry warns of the so-called Wedge Strategy being employed by the Discovery Institute to incorporate the “intelligent design” approach into the public school science curriculum. Attorney Dan Peterson presents fact-based arguments that separate “intelligent design” from previous campaigns for inclusion of “creation science” in the biology curriculum and cause evolution theorists to possibly adjust their standard positions.

Issue 17. Are Single-Sex Schools and Classes Effective? 283

YES: Peter Meyer, from “Learning Separately: The Case for Single-Sex Schools,” *Education Next* (Winter 2008) 285

NO: Vincent A. Anfara, Jr. and Steven B. Mertens, from “Do Single-Sex Classes and Schools Make a Difference?” *Middle School Journal* (November 2008) 291

Journalist Peter Meyer examines the history of single-sex schools and recent concerns about “shortchanging” girls and the “crisis” in boys’ education and lauds the current resurgence of single-sex schooling. Associate professor of education Vincent A. Anfara, Jr. and assistant professor of education Steven B. Mertens review research on student culture, academic climate, and attitudinal effects, concluding that the benefits of single-sex schooling remain unclear.

Issue 18. Can Zero Tolerance Violate Students Rights? 302

YES: Hon. David Souter, from Majority Opinion in *Safford Unified School District #1 v. Redding* (June 25, 2009) 304

NO: Hon. Clarence Thomas, from Dissenting Opinion in *Safford Unified School District #1 v. Redding* (June 25, 2009) 310

Supreme Court justice David Souter, delivering the opinion of the Court, hold that school officials, in carrying out a zero-tolerance policy on drug possession, violated a student's Fourth Amendment right against unreasonable search and seizure when they included a strip search of the girl. Justice Clarence Thomas, in dissent, states that the majority opinion imposes too vague a standard on school officials and that it grants judges sweeping authority to second-guess measures those officials take to maintain discipline and ensure safety.

Issue 19. Do Computers Negatively Affect Student Growth? 316

YES: Lowell Monke, from "The Human Touch," *Education Next* (Fall 2004) 318

NO: Frederick M. Hess, from "Technical Difficulties," *Education Next* (Fall 2004) 325

Lowell Monke, an assistant professor of education, expresses deep concerns that the uncritical faith in computer technology in schools has led to sacrifices in intellectual growth and creativity. Frederick M. Hess, while sharing some of Monke's observations, believes that the tools of technology, used appropriately, can support innovation and reinvention in education.

Issue 20. Should Alternative Teacher Training Be Encouraged? 333

YES: Robert Holland, from "How to Build a Better Teacher," *Policy Review* (April & May 2001) 335

NO: Linda Darling-Hammond, from "How Teacher Education Matters," *Journal of Teacher Education* (May/June 2000) 345

Public policy researcher Robert Holland argues that current certification programs are inadequate, especially given the growing shortage of teachers. Educational professor Linda Darling-Hammond offers evidence of failure among alternative programs and responds to criticism of standard professional preparation.

Issue 21. Can Merit Pay Accelerate School Improvement? 356

YES: Steven Malanga, from "Why Merit Pay Will Improve Teaching," *City Journal* (Summer 2001) 358

NO: Al Ramirez, from "How Merit Pay Undermines Education," *Educational Leadership* (February 2001) 364

Steven Malanga, a senior fellow of the Manhattan Institute, draws on examples from the corporate world and from public school systems in Cincinnati, Iowa, and Denver to make his case for performance-based merit pay for teachers. Associate professor of education Al Ramirez contends that merit pay programs misconstrue human motivation and devalue the work of teachers.

UNIT 4 BONUS ISSUES 373

Issue 22. Do American Students Need More Time in School? 374

YES: Chris Gabrieli, from “More Time, More Learning,” *Educational Leadership* (April 2010) 376

NO: Larry Cuban, from “The Perennial Reform: Fixing School Time,” *Phi Delta Kappan* (December 2008) 385

National Center on Time and Learning chairman Chris Gabrieli claims that current school time schedules are outmoded and calls for expansion of the instructional day and year to close the achievement gap and provide enrichment opportunities. Stanford University professor emeritus Larry Cuban reviews the history of school time expansion and finds scant research to support such demands.

Issue 23. Is the “21st Century Skills” Movement Viable? 398

YES: Andrew J. Rotherham and Daniel T. Willingham, from “21st Century Skills: The Challenges Ahead,” *Educational Leadership* (September 2009) 400

NO: Diana Senechal, from “The Most Daring Education Reform of All,” *American Educator* (Spring 2010) 407

Education policy expert Rotherham and psychology professor Willingham see great promise in the movement to bring needed skills to all students if the delivery system works satisfactorily. Education writer and former teacher Diana Senechal expresses deep concern about the movement’s focus on current societal needs to the detriment of core academic studies.

Contributors 420

