

Laura Harborne

Book title: Caring for children

Author: Penny Tassoni

Publication date: 2001

The review

1. What is your overall impression of the book?

Very useful, this book gives an oversight of working with young children. This is particularly helpful as I work in year 1. The children I work with are 5-6 years old and have just come from a mostly play central background. Although it is aimed at young children, I was recommended it from my early years degree and it has been very useful throughout my studies and career so far.

2. Who do you think would benefit most from reading the book? What will they learn?

This book is widely accessible to anybody working in early years or primary. It gives examples of children behavioural traits (which can progress with the child throughout school). This has been particularly helpful to me as many of my children found it very hard to transition. It has given me a better understanding of what they are going through and why. Through this, I have spoken to other staff members who work in the early years to put this into my practice. This book is very useful to those who do not know a lot about childhood development theorists that specialise in particular areas. Anyone who teaches in primary would find at least one chapter of this book useful.

3. What did you think about the quality of the writing? Please consider the tone, structure and ideas. Does it suit the audience?

Although the book does have jargon in it, it is very reader friendly. It could be accessed by parents, carers, guardians, specialists, professionals etc. anyone who would like to know more about childhood development. Although it does refer to the EYFS a lot, it can be easily translated into the national curriculum for primary teachers or TA's working in that sector. It does suit the audience and is very good for discussion; there are many opportunities to discuss certain theorist's findings and what you may see in the classroom/at home.

4. Please discuss the research used to underpin the ideas. What evidence does the author use? Is it robust and up-to-date?

This book is not heavily based up on findings, although there are mentions of theorists such as Piaget and Vygotsky, generally it is just facts that anybody could access. As mentioned previously, it does mention the EYFS a lot as the book is based on early childhood but the ideology can be transferred throughout the primary age. It is not up to date, but as previously mentioned, it includes many facts that will be relevant in current education.

5. What did you learn from reading the book? What ideas/approaches/practice will you change or adopt as a result of reading this book?

This book has made me mindful about the children in my class. There is a great chapter about behaviour traits that has helped me in my NQT year, especially when the children were transitioning. There is also a chapter on creative play, I have shared many of these ideas in PPA with the other year 1 teachers and it has made a huge impact on how we have taught maths and English to begin the academic year.

6. Could you share a quote from the book that particularly resonated with you?

“Most children and adults need to feel secure... Children need routines in their lives so they can predict what is going to happen next. They need to know that the same people will be looking after them and the day will have a familiar pattern.”

Tassoni (2001)

This spoke to me a lot, especially when it was the start of the academic year. This chapter has given me ideas on how to make sure the children must feel safe in order for them to learn. These small ideas are easily put into practice and used effectively. The children now feel safe and give me the same respect as I give them.