



Back to the Basics of Teaching and Learning: "Thinking the World Together"

By David W. Jardine, Patricia Clifford, Sharon Friesen

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This book is about an ecological-interpretive image of "the basics." Essays detailing everyday, lived events in classroom life are presented to help readers see beneath the surface ordinariness of these events to uncover and examine the underlying complex and contested meanings they contain. Readers are invited to imagine what would happen to our understanding of teaching and learning if we stepped away from the image of basics-as-breakdown under which education labors today – an image of fragmentation, isolation, and the consequent dispensing, manipulation and control of the smallest, simplest, most meaningless bits and pieces of the living inheritances that are entrusted to teachers and learners in schools. By involving readers in re-thinking the idea of the "basics" in educational theory and practice, this book offers a more generous, rigorous, difficult, and pleasurable image of what this term might mean in the living work of teachers and learners.

This is a valuable text for practicing teachers and student-teachers interested in re-imagining what is basic to their work and the work of their students. It also provides examples of interpretive inquiry that will be helpful for graduate students and scholars in the areas of curriculum, teaching, and learning who are interested in pursuing this form of research and writing.

The Second Edition:

- is guided by the view that thinking the world together is a form of *ecological thinking*
- adds chapters that take up the ecological aspects of this vision, the hermeneutic aspects, and curricular aspects in the areas of mathematics, reading and writing, and social studies; included also are chapters on child development, information and communications technologies, and more
- proposes a version of "the basics" that asks teachers to be public intellectuals who think about the world, who think about the knowledge we have inherited and to which we are offering our students living, breathing access

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Editorial Review

Review

"This book is, by any standard, amazing. It plays, in a wonderfully hermeneutic manner, with common themes in an uncommon way.... As one wanders through the book (this is a book to journey in) one questions not only the basics but many educational slogans and shibboleths. One does indeed re-imagine the whole concept of schooling and the potential power that exists in a classroom filled with the fullness and richness of creative experience.... This is in many ways an inspiring book – a what-can-be book– but more than that, it is a book which asks the reader to deal with ‘hard questions,’ ones which probe the meaning of life. To read this book is to be transformed. I invite all readers to partake of that journey."

William E. Doll, Louisiana State University, From the Foreword

"Jardine, Clifford and Friesen juxtapose the concreteness of specific students and specific classrooms to the abstraction of theory: in that respect alone, this book exemplifies curriculum at its most poignant and sophisticated."

William F. Pinar, University of British Columbia

"*Back to the Basics of Teaching and Learning* audaciously challenges the appropriation of the idea of basics in/of education by conservative thinkers. Much of the beauty of this book lies in its refusal to lose sight of the stubborn particulars of classroom life – real children – and sail away into the lofty clouds of theory and philosophical reflection.... No one in education can read this book and be unmoved by it, nor, perhaps, be unchanged by it."

Paul Ernest, University of Exeter

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

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