

JEANNETTE VEATCH: A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Arvinder Johri and Elizabeth G. Sturtevant

George Mason University

Jeannette Veatch was well known for her work in creative and individualized reading and writing instruction. She was born in Ada, Ohio, on April 12, 1910 and died in 2002. She earned a BA from Western State University, Michigan (1937), and an M.A. (1947) and PhD (1953) from New York University.

As a young teacher, Veatch incorporated trade books and strategies from Burrows' *They All Want to Write* (1939), into her fifth grade classroom in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She continued her interest in creative classroom strategies with her doctoral dissertation, which was entitled "An Experimental Study of the Relation of a Program of Specific Creative Activities to Group Acceptance, Emotional Needs, and Academic Achievement." In the early 1950's, Veatch taught at Goucher College in Towson, Maryland and also served as Director of Program Development for the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. In 1958, she accepted a position at Pennsylvania State University where she remained until 1964. She later served on the faculties of Jersey City State College, the University of Southern California, and Arizona State University, Tempe. After retirement from Arizona State University in 1975, Dr. Veatch accepted a one-year teaching position to prepare classroom teachers at the American Samoa Community College in Pago.

Dr. Veatch challenged the use of basal readers and was a strong proponent of a literature-based, learner-centered approach called Individualized Reading. In her article, *Some Thoughts on Direct Teaching*, Veatch strongly advocated for the replacement of textbooks with library books: "In my opinion, the elimination of all texts for pupils is essential. The materials needed in quantity are those that carry no prescribed, predetermined plan" (1969, p. 178).



References

- Burrows, A. T. (1939). *They all want to write*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.
- Veatch, J. (1953). An experimental study of the relation of a program of specific creative activities to group acceptance, emotional needs, and academic achievement. (Doctoral Dissertation, New York University). *Dissertation Abstracts*, 13(06), 1056.
- Veatch, J. (1969). Some thoughts on direct teaching. *Theory into Practice*, 8(3), 177-179.