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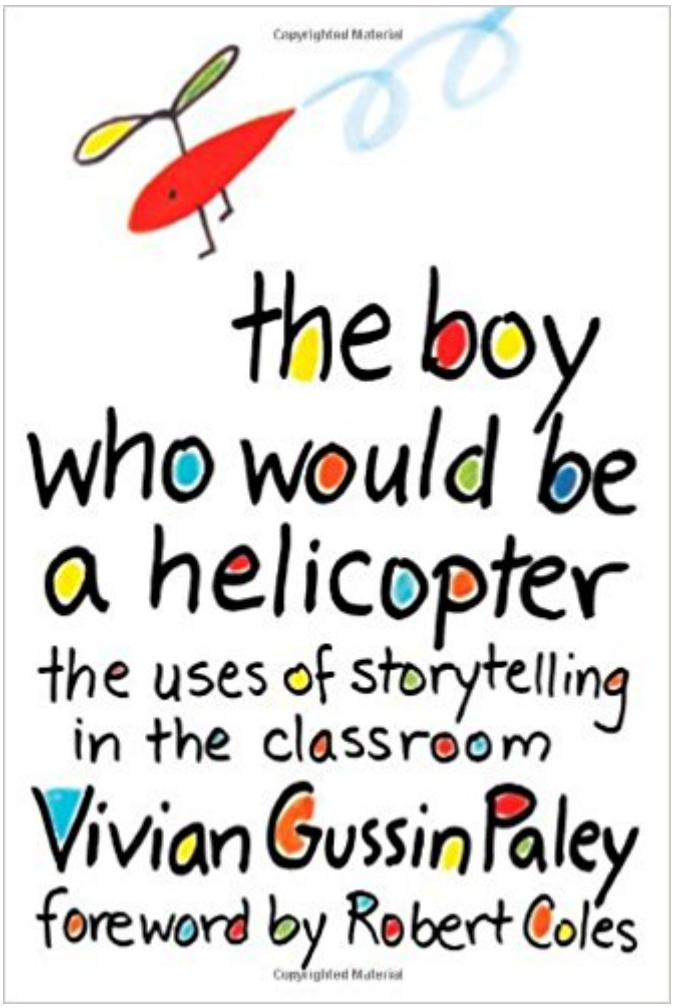
The Boy Who Would Be A Helicopter



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Synopsis

How does a teacher begin to appreciate and tap the rich creative resources of the fantasy world of children? What social functions do story playing and storytelling serve in the preschool classroom? And how can the child who is trapped in private fantasies be brought into the richly imaginative social play that surrounds him? The Boy Who Would Be a Helicopter focuses on the challenge posed by the isolated child to teachers and classmates alike in the unique community of the classroom. It is the dramatic story of Jason-the loner and outsider-and of his ultimate triumph and homecoming into the society of his classmates. As we follow Jason's struggle, we see that the classroom is indeed the crucible within which the young discover themselves and learn to confront new problems in their daily experience. Vivian Paley recreates the stage upon which children emerge as natural and ingenious storytellers. She supplements these real-life vignettes with brilliant insights into the teaching process, offering detailed discussions about control, authority, and the misuse of punishment in the preschool classroom. She shows a more effective and natural dynamic of limit-setting that emerges in the control children exert over their own fantasies. And here for the first time the author introduces a triumvirate of teachers (Paley herself and two apprentices) who reflect on the meaning of events unfolding before them.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Recent MacArthur award-winner Paley reveals the subtle, involved process that occurs as a child learns to socialize and interact with other children. In her classroom, children become storytellers.

She feels that by letting them create stories with alternate patterns of behavior, they learn new ways to achieve acceptable behavior. By tape-recording and analyzing (with her colleagues) children's conversations and actions she shows how play is, among other things, a sort of rehearsal of problems, and misbehavior perhaps just a poor timing or performance. Calling to mind echoes of Sylvia Ashton-Warner's Teacher (LJ 5/1/63; 1986. pap.), this offers insight into class control, setting limits, and teaching methods. Ideal for those who specialize in working with children and for libraries in need of material on this subject.- Annette V. Janes, Hamilton P.L., Mass.Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The Boy Who Would Be a Helicopter is, among other things, an original essay on the practice of teaching young children...Vivian Paley's innovation is her use of children's stories as a vehicle of instruction...Paley is an artist whose medium is children in the classroom. The end product of her year's work is a group of children who can live comfortably with themselves and with one another. This group of children will soon scatter. But each child will always carry a bit of Vivian Paley along with him or her, and that is the way in which a gifted teacher's art lives on. (David Elkind New York Times Book Review)For those interested in...the education of the spirit, this is finally a heartening and challenging book. (Geoff Fox Times Educational Supplement)A tour de force...Years from now we may know the fruit of the trees Vivian Paley and her associates have planted. It will be easy, then, to recognize her former students. When asked to recall their kindergarten experiences, they surely will begin with the words, "Once upon a time..." (Thomas J. Cottle Chicago Tribune)There are many funny moments...[and] an attractive humility in Paley's work...Anyone who was once a child, and especially those who were once helicopters, will enjoy it. (David Perkins Kansas City Star)Humanity, wisdom, and understanding are the words that come to mind when reading Paley's latest book. She offers a view into the world of children that is respectful of their strengths and complexity...This book shines with an authenticity that comes from the voice of the teacher, not the observer...[It] should be required reading for all those working with children of any age. They and other readers will find it an absorbing and enlightening experience. (S. Sugarman Choice)

This book is a must read for anyone working with children. The story of the boy who would be a helicopter is fascinating and gives you insight and background information about the child who seems to fit into his own mold and initially appears to be resistant to becoming a part of the group. I am still reading this book but even at the halfway point, Paley has provided me with information and insight that will no doubt allow me to be a more connected and caring mother, teacher and

colleague.

Ms. Paley and this book were featured on This American Life. It is an astonishing account of the power of children's storytelling and the natural way in which children help each of grow and receive nurture. Nothing like seeing how children act before society begins to limit their imagination. Very powerful and enjoyable read. A must for any teacher or counselor or therapist. The healer within.

Excellent book! Every educator needs to read this book and follow the examples in the book.

I was required to read this book for a college education course. The book did provide a lot of fun and useful experiences within Vivian Paley's preschool; which can help any parent and teacher look more into the minds of children and their ability to learn.

Vivian Paley outdoes herself in creative, insightful and deeply empathetic teaching in this wonderful book about the use of story telling to bring a fragile young child into the comfort of the group.

great book for early childhood educators

Vivian Paley is a master teacher of using storytelling in the classroom. It is so heart warming to know that children are being heard.Socio-Dramatic and literature in an environment where children are safe to be themselves. Autism Speaks. Bravo!!

Awesome! Thanks!

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