



## Freedom to Learn

*Carl R. Rogers , H. Jerome Freiberg*

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## **Freedom to Learn** Carl R. Rogers , H. Jerome Freiberg

This is the text that championed a revolutionary approach to education that changed the way we teach our children. Now, in the Third Edition, its challenging the status quo with twenty years of evidence that defies current thinking. Five exciting new chapters focus on issues of importance now and in the future - learning from children who love school; researching person-centered issues in education; developing the administrators role as a facilitator; building discipline and classroom management with the learner; and person-centered views of transforming schools. Freedom to Learn, Third Edition is written in the first person, with two goals in mind - to aid the development of the minds of children and young persons, and to encourage the kinds of adventurous enterprises being carried out daily by dedicated, caring teachers in creative classrooms and supportive schools throughout the nation. \*Use of a first-person narrative-a technique pioneered by Carl Rogers in the first edition of Freedom to Learn-personalizes text coverage, and gives prospective teachers a real feel of communicating with an expert about what is really needed in the classroom. \*Case studies and interviews illumina

## **Freedom to Learn Details**

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# From Reader Review Freedom to Learn for online ebook

## Joelyn says

Difficulties and Opportunities

CHAPTER ONE, Why do kids love school?

- \* person-centered learning communities (i.e., HSPVA in Houston, TX)
- \* teachers as facilitators (guide on the side vs. sage on the sage)
- \* a community of learners (teachers, students, administrators, parents)
- \* alternative assessment (i.e., portfolios)
- \* innovation (Graham and Parks School, Cambridge, MA)
- \* non-competitive environment (The New Orleans Free School, Bob Ferris)
- \* shared responsibility (City Magnet, Lowell, MA; Tanglewood Open Living School, Jefferson, CO)

CHAPTER TWO, The challenge of present-day teaching

- \* listen to students (i.e., what is school?)
- \* what is learning?
- \* whole-person learning
- \* “the locus of evaluation resides in the learner” (p. 36)
- \* left-brain versus right-brain teaching and learning

CHAPTER THREE, As a teacher, can I be myself?

- \* can we be human in the classroom?
- \* how can I (teacher or student) become real?
- \* the search for identity
- \* the lifetime journey of self-discovery

Responsible Freedom in the Classroom

CHAPTER FOUR, A sixth-grade teacher experiments

- \* experimental, unstructured, non-directive
- \* work contracts
- \* teacher-directed group (small) plus undirected (self-directed) group (large)
- \* commitment (i.e., self-direction, freedom)
- \* internal locus of evaluation
- \* group problem-solving
- \* experience
- \* support from principal and superintendent
- \* introspection and questioning

CHAPTER SIX, Administrators as facilitators

- \* principal teacher (Robert [Bob:] Ferris, New Orleans Free School)
- \* collective solution finding
- \* self-assessment
- \* internal locus of assessment

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN, Researching person-centered issues in education

“Traditional schooling worked for me. Why can’t kids today sit still and listen to the lecture?” (p. 247)

“The major reason for the importance of this chapter is that it presents research, documented over time and in different contexts, that students learn more, attend school more often, are more creative, and are more capable of problem solving when the teacher provides the kind of human, facilitative climate that has been described thus far in this book.” (p. 248)

- \* students who have been socialized to accept a passive approach to learning is dwindling
- \* level of expertise needed for an adult in today’s world is significantly more complex and demanding
- \* knowing is no longer enough: knowing why and how is of greater importance

“It is also more important for students to develop their potential than to adjust to dysfunctional settings.” (p. 248)

“What happens to school attendance when all the teachers in one school decide to increase the amount of direct interaction through eye contact they will have with their students? What percentage of average classroom time is taken up by teacher talk: 20 percent? 40 percent? 60 percent? 80 percent? How often do students in elementary, middle, and high school select their own learning activities? What are the differences between open and traditional education on student learning, attitudes toward school, and creativity? What does research on the brain show about experiential learning and brain development in children and adults? What effect does cooperative grouping have on learning and self-esteem? What are adults like today who were raised in families that spared the rod with their children nearly forty years ago? Can schools foster resilience in youth who face a daily barrage of non-facilitative conditions? What proportion of student time involves actual thinking? What percentage of teacher time is spent in thinking: 10 percent? 1 percent? or less?” (p. 248)

- \* person-centered learning is a process first and an outcome second
- \* person-centered learning focuses on the whole person — individual values, beliefs, and attitudes — not a few skills or actions

What works: direct or indirect teaching?

National Center on Education in the Inner Cities, 1993: 99% activities selected by high school teachers; 98% by middle school teachers; 100% by the elementary school teacher. 78% of instruction in elementary, 88% in middle, and 81% in high school classrooms took place in whole- or large-group settings. The smallest percentage of small-group work was in high school classrooms: 3.17% compared to 5.20% in middle, and 12.20% in elementary.

Brain development and rich environments

- \* student input into selection of learning activities are necessary if rich environments are to be created in the classroom

Facilitators can make a difference

- \* students learn more and behave better when they receive high levels of understanding, caring, and genuineness than when they receive low levels of support

Facilitative conditions and student learning

David Aspy and Flora Roebuck, 1977, Kids don't learn from people they don't like

- \* students miss four fewer days of school during the year
- \* students have increases scores on self-concept measures, indicating a more positive self-regard
- \* student make greater gains on academic achievement measures, including both math and reading scores
- \* student in person-centered classrooms present fewer disciplinary problems and commit fewer acts of vandalism to school property
- \* students are more spontaneous and use higher levels of thinking

Other studies that support person-centered learning

“What happens when the system of learning is freed and opened to the students’ need for active involvement?” (p. 260)

How effective is open education?

- \* greater self-concept, creativity and positive attitude toward school (in students)

Caring: a protective shield

Amy-6 in Philadelphia; HSPVA and Milby High School in Houston; O’Farrell Community School in San Diego; The Dett School and Montefiore School in Chicago; New Orleans Free School are examples.

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### **Robb Lightfoot says**

What can I say.... I read this my first year in teaching, a good 25 years ago, and it framed what I hold most dear. Learning should be fun. Learners should be given latitude in what they study. The rest is commentary.

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### **Brian Huskie says**

The thread that runs through every so-called "radical" book I read on education is "freedom". Give kids (or adults) freedom, time, and opportunity, and they will thrive. This book discusses ways to provide that even in more inflexible, institutional environments.

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### **Don M. says**

This is the book that opened my eyes to the essence of teaching and learning. It explained why I didn't truly become a learner until I left my formal education. It may be dated a bit, but the essential message still rings true. A classic in humanistic education. I read the first edition.

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### **Erik Graff says**

I read quite a bit of Carl Rogers and B.F. Skinner in college, the representing antipodal perspectives, Rogers being the libertarian, Skinner the manipulator. Skinner was at once offensive yet challenging. Rogers was much more sympathetic, but usually boring. This particular book, however, read for Educational Psychology class, was more interesting than the others, probably because the idea of liberty in elementary classrooms was something I still hadn't thought much about.

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