



**...And with a Light Touch: Learning about Reading, Writing, and Teaching with First Graders, 2nd Edition, Revised & Enlarged**

*Carol Avery*

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With its first edition, *...And with a Light Touch* was immediately praised for its authentic portrayal of classroom life and learning. "It's my bible for teaching young children" and "It reads like a novel," said veteran and preservice teachers alike. Those with minimal background in children's literature have found the book a godsend. Every page rings true with the voice of a caring, real-life classroom teacher—one who marvels at what young children can do if given the chance to work in daily reading and writing workshops taught with a sensitive and responsive approach.

Now, Carol Avery offers a second edition, giving more insight and examples of children and a teacher learning together. Since her first edition, Carol has worked extensively in kindergarten and second grade, has had her own fourth- and sixth-grade classrooms, and has watched three grandchildren learn to read and write. Her latest edition incorporates Carol's stories and learning from these new experiences. It also expands sections on crafting writing, phonics instruction, read-alouds, and documenting assessment, and includes an updated bibliography. At the same time, it retains its focus on these major areas, addressed in depth:

- **the writing process**-structuring daily writing workshops and the development of young writers
- **the reading process**-structuring daily reading workshops and learning to read without a basal reader
- **children's literature**-incorporating children's literature into the daily life of the classroom and stimulating children's responses to literature
- **classroom environment and tone**-organizing and managing the classroom
- **expanding literacy**-reading and writing across the curriculum and a focus on kindergarten
- **assessment**-documenting and reporting student progress.

Throughout, Carol rejects the concept of "one right way" to teach, but believes instead that a responsive environment provides the greatest possibilities for student growth.

As Donald Graves notes, Carol shows "real children in the process of learning to learn". Classroom teachers, preservice teachers, parents, and anyone concerned with young children learning to read and write will appreciate this book for its honest look into a first-grade classroom, both its ups and its downs.

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