

Benjamin L. Hooks

FCC!



Like a broken record, in speech, sermon, writings, private chats, press interviews -- whatever -- I have continually harped on this theme: Black youngsters spend too much time striving to be star singers, entertainers and super athletes, and not enough time in study, trying to acquire knowledge.

Some folk have got mad at me when I said this, and when I chastise TV and radio for seeking out the star singer-entertainer, super-stud athlete to discuss weighty matters of state and country while ignoring blacks more qualified to address these subjects -- doctors, lawyers, sociologists, economists, teachers, etc.

This is not elitism but awareness of what this is doing to us. I would be the first to applaud the super athlete and star singer for attaining their elevated status. I, for one, also enjoy their performances. But I think things should be kept in perspective.

I believe that our youngsters are spending entirely too much time trying to become star basketball, football, baseball players; or singers and dancers and entertainers, to the detriment of acquiring knowledge, a must in this complex world.

Now comes strong support for this position in the person of none other than Arthur Ashe, the super star professional tennis player, who happens to be black.

In a recent column that appeared in the New York Times, Ashe, Wimbledon and Forest Hills title-champion who is a native of Richmond, Va., says:

"Since my sophomore year at the University of California, Los Angeles, I have become convinced that we blacks spend too much time on the playing fields and too little time in the libraries."

Begging us to listen further, Ashe says "I don't have children, but I can make observations. I strongly believe the black culture expends too much time, energy and effort raising, praising and teasing our black children as to the dubious glories of professional sport.

"All children need models to emulate -- parents, relatives or friends. But when the child starts school, the influence of the parent is shared by teachers and classmates, by the lure of books, movies, ministers and newspapers, but most of all by television.

"Which televised events have the greatest viewers? -- Sports -- The Olympics, Super Bowl, Masters, World Series, pro basketball play-offs, Forest Hills . . . So your child gets a massive dose of O. J. Simpson, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Muhammad Ali, Reggie Jackson, Dr. J. and Lee Elder and other pro athletes (including Ashe). And it is only natural that your child will dream of being a pro athlete, himself."

Well, the child also gets huge doses of entertainment -- singing, dancing, acting. He identifies with the outstanding performers of this medium, as well. But not everybody can be a star singer or dancer or entertainer or actor-actress. Everybody can't be a Walt Frazier, Elvin Hayes, a Jim Brown or a Sugar Ray Leonard. Nor can they be a member of the Jacksons, Archie Bell and the Drells, or be a Billy Davis or Marilyn McCoo, an Aretha Franklin, a Barry White or a Natalie Cole.

Ashe offers some interesting facts: "For the major professional sports of hockey, football, baseball, golf, tennis and boxing, there are roughly 3,170 major league positions available (attributing 200 positions to golf, 200 to tennis and 100 to boxing. And the annual turnover is small." There are fewer positions for super star entertainers-actors-singers to occupy at any given time. In sports Ashe figures you child has less than one chance in 1,000 of becoming a pro. In entertainment, he or she has far less than those monumental odds.

Ashe says his grandmother was more proud of the degree he acquired at UCLA in 1966 than

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VOICE EDITORIALS**The Hughes****Report**

By Thomas F. Hughes



Having been asked to place my name in nomination for Chairman of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, I acquired a copy of the by-laws of the organization for study. The Las Vegas Chapter is a corporate set-up with a basic philosophy of the N.A.A.C.P. with the exception that S.C.L.C. goes farther by including political which is not true with N.A.A.C.P. -- The N.A.A.C.P. is not supposed to delve in politics. I am happy that S.C.L.C. embraces the political since our everyday lives are controlled directly by the political. The time for protest marches and fights for basic discrimination is over. We reserve the right to march but now is the time for implementation of those civil rights obtained, securing our positions in equal or nearer equal rights must now become our consistent and persistent effort. We have the right to jobs and accommodations in most places and now it is incumbent to get those jobs, preserve these already obtained and implement our earnings so that we can afford those things called "The Better Life." So the big effort now must be economic development on both a personal level and a community level. I was chosen as chairman and I am proud of the excellent group of officers chosen to pursue our goals. Plans are now in the works to secure an office and establish a new image for the S.C.L.C. Because of adverse publicity the S.C.L.C. suffered in the last year but the true picture of S.C.L.C. will make you proud of it and want to contribute to its success. Article II of the corporation outlines the Las Vegas Branch purposes.

ARTICLE II(In Part)

The purpose of the corporation is to bring to this forefront acts of discrimination based upon race, sex, age or national origin primarily by the use of non-violent demonstrations, use of the judicial system and other recognized agencies empowered to overcome discriminations in the United States of America. The corporation shall also engage in the social economic and physical development of the Black community, and assist in aiding the under privileged in gaining a meaningful place in society through individual development and education and in addition to engage in any business whatsoever, either principal or agent or both, or as a partnership, whichever said corporation may deem convenient or proper in the furtherance of any of the purposes herein above mentioned or otherwise, to conduct its business in this state, in other states, in the United States and in foreign countries; and to have and exercise all powers authorized by the state of Nevada.

Meetings are held at Greater Faith Baptist Church in North Las Vegas at this writing although a more central meeting place is now being sought. S.C.L.C. plans to work with all civic organizations and will now put on a drive for membership to get the greatest possible input in order to effectively serve the Greater Black Las Vegas Populace. Come Join Us.

S.C.L.C. PICKS HUGHES

Thomas F. Hughes, Las Vegas Voice Columnist as new Chairman of the Board. Rev. Prentiss Walker, The Former Chairman passed away recently causing the vacancy in the S.C.L.C. top position. Named to other offices were: Rev. C.C. Smith, President; Rev. Joe Prudhomme, Executive Vice President; Rev. S.P. Parks, Vice President; Kathryn Joseph, Vice President - Finance; Rev. Noel Kincade, Vice President Religious Affairs; James Rainey, Vice Pres. Industry and Labor; Ethel Smith, Secretary and Elmo Aderholt, Treasurer with Othis Harris remaining as special assistant of S.C.L.C. first meeting of the new board was held at a Saturday morning breakfast at Sambo's Restaurant in N. Las Vegas.

Education Is Power

By Thomas E. Wilson, Ph.D.

Last week we began a discussion of phonics teaching for beginning readers. For this week we will continue our discussion in order to assure that the teacher and/or parent has sufficient information with which to work.

Eight basic steps are used in teaching students to apply phonic skills. These same eight steps are used to teach each new phonic skill. The phonic skills outlined below are the fundamental ones which the beginning reader must learn in his early reading experiences.

Step one involves the identification of needs. The teacher needs to help each student identify his own word-recognition during the first reading of any selection. Help is given when students have a need for phonics.

Step two is concerned with the determination of meaning. The learner needs to know the meaning of each word. Meaning comes from discussion and silent reading which should always precede any work on skills.

In step three the hearing of sounds is stressed. The beginning reader needs to listen to the pronunciation of the whole word. Phonic skills call for hearing the undistorted sounds of words and seeing the letters or letter representing these sounds. Through hearing these sounds, the student is enabled to progress easily and naturally in applying their phonic skills to unknown words.

Step four is involved with helping the learner see and identify the letter or letters representing the sounds of whole words, such as the letter w in want or the letters ill in will. Before readers can blend parts of words to make a word, they must first know how to identify those parts. This is one reason for giving students so much help in listening to the sounds of words when they are introduced to a beginning reading program.

In step five the learner should be taught how to blend letters to make words. Basically there are two kinds of blends for new words: (1) they blend, for example, "b" of big and "l" of look to make "bl" of blue. When we pay attention to the first sounds of (tr)ain, (pl)ay, and (st)op, and other words beginning with consonant blends, we often-times prevent difficulty the beginning reader often have; (2) they blend, for example, "m" of my and "an" of can to make man; this emphasis on blending important parts of two whole words to make another word helps the learner take a needed step toward independence in his use of phonic skills.

Step six involves checking meaning. It is important that students learn to check the meaning of each new word. Does it make sense to them? Checking a word made by blending with the use of the of the word in a sentence keeps each student's mind on reading as a thinking process.

In step seven beginning readers need to be able to make certain rules about what they have learned. In the beginning reading program, students listen to words like me and my and make a rule about the sound of m - when a new word begins with the letter m, it is likely to have the same first sound as me.

In step eight the student should be able to demonstrate the ability to apply his knowledge of phonic skills to an unknown word. If students know the letter "m" in my and "an" in can, they should be able to blend them to make the new word man. If they can identify man, does it make sense in the sentence?

The application of phonic skills and meaning clues, automatically and surely is the goal of phonics instruction. After students have made a beginning in reading and have learned such fundamental skills in phonics as described above, they should be prepared to progress in their use of phonics. Their letter phonic skills are gradually and easily applied to the syllables of words which also include inflectional endings, suffixes, roots, prefixes and accent. In turn, these letter and syllable phonic skills should be applied to respellings in the dictionary.