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## Education Is Power

By Thomas E. Wilson

As a teacher, I have been puzzled by bright students who achieve well on reading comprehension and vocabulary tests, yet read only when required.

One day my seventh graders and I were reading some fairy tales and myths to see how their themes related to modern life. You could have cut the boredom with a knife. In utter frustration, I shut the book and said, "Without looking

back in the story, write a few sentences showing what color Cinderella's gown was, on which of the palace steps she lost her slipper, and what the extended weather forecast was for that week."

Being courteous students, they didn't rebel at once. But the murmurs soon exploded into voices of outrage. "The story didn't tell us that! We can't write about what isn't in the

story!" The more they resisted, the clearer it became that they hadn't seen most of the words they had read. ON television, Cinderella's dress is pink, the slipper lands on the third step from the bottom, and the weather is clear or cloudy depending on the producer's version of the story. The story in the book pointed out the same facts.

Parents can help their children's imagination and involve their "mind's eye" when reading. The informal setting of the home and the absence of report cards benefit the process.

Here are some games to play with your youngsters to help them become alive and active readers:

**THE PLOT-THICKENS GAME:** Ask your children to retell any story they have

read that day. Ask questions about how the story moved. Urge your children to find out "where the action is."

**THE SERIAL GAME:** Take any familiar story and write a sequel to it. How about the wedding between Cinderella and Prince Charming as seen by the step-sisters?

The possibilities of reading games are as vast as your imagination. None of these guarantees reading speed, comprehension, or vocabulary building. But keeping in touch with your child's reading is a job you can do better than any teacher in a large class. You can do this job while you are peeling potatoes, driving to baseball or ballet practice, or changing your spark plugs.

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## Conservative Blacks See New Hope In Future

By Juan Williams  
Washington Post

SAN FRANCISCO — You've heard about Clarence Thomas, but not by name. He is one of the black people now on center stage in American politics: He is a Republican, a longtime supporter of Ronald Reagan, opposed to the minimum wage law, rent control, busing and affirmative action. How a black man can say no to those policies is a

mystery to most black people.

But Clarence Thomas, 32, is convinced that the real mystery is how 90 percent of black Americans could support those policies and vote for Jimmy Carter.

"I marched. I protested. I asked the government to help black people," says Thomas. "I did all those things. But it hasn't worked. It isn't working. And someone needs to say that."

To talk with Thomas is to realize that his conservatism is born of the same personal anger at racism that fired militants of the 1960s. The worst experience of his life, says Thomas, a lawyer who is an assistant to Sen. John Danforth, R-Mo., was attending college and law school

with whites who believed he was there only because of racial quotas for the admission of blacks.

"You had to prove yourself everyday because the presumption was that you were dumb and didn't deserve to be there on merit," Thomas says. "Every time you walked into a law class at Yale it was like having a monkey jump down on your back from the Gothic arches...The professors and the students resented your very presence."

The same racism, the assumption that he got his job because he is black, trails Thomas to this day. He refuses to work on any issue directly related to black people because, he says, his colleagues

again would assume that he has the job only because he is black.

"If I ever went to work for the EEOC or did anything directly connected with blacks, my career would be irreparably ruined," he says. "The monkey would be on my back again to prove that I didn't have the job because I was black. People meeting me for the first time would automatically dismiss my thinking as second-rate."

Again and again, in recent weeks, that message has been repeated by black conservatives: blacks need to get out of the black-only issues and begin to show their competence in every field, in every

See HOPE, Page 18

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