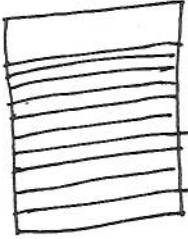


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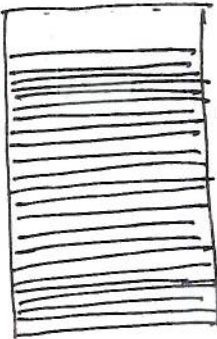
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WRITTEN IN PENCIL



Most would agree
As a general, literary rule,
That the term rough draft is
Not usually applied to a school.

But if you consider the nature of children
Then it does occur to me,
That in a sense, that's what all good schools
Ought to be prepared to be.



Rough drafts, I mean,
Essentially free to adapt,
Willing to be edited and revised
Or even completely remapped.

For while rough drafts are not always chaotic,
Even well written ones anticipate change,
And they actually become more effective
As their interdependent parts rearrange

To fit their audience and their purpose.
This makes their student focus strong,
While eliminating redundancy and inefficiency
And putting things where they belong.

So, if you consider the nature of children
Then it does occur to me,
That, in a sense, a rough draft is what a good school
Ought to be prepared to be.

A rough draft written in pencil, I mean,
Endlessly in development,
Eager to be edited and revised,
To match the children we are sent.

Sigmund A. Boloz

READY FOR THE NEXT GRADE

What does it matter
How many skills he had gained,
How hard you had worked him,
Or how well he'd been trained?

What does it matter
That you had maintained a strong pace.
That you had drilled him to death
At each proper level or place?

What does it matter
How many sounds he could name
How many sight words he knew
Or what type of student he became?

What does it matter
That he had been scoped and sequenced
Or that all the exit skills
Had been properly evidenced?

What does it matter
If next year's teacher is glad
If you had covered all the basics
That her children should have had?

What does it matter
How much you did succeed,
If he doesn't love books
If he doesn't love to read?

Yes, what does it matter
How much of anything you had piled
If in the process
You had lost another child?

Sigmund A. Boloz



THOSE TINY HANDS

Millions of pairs
Of those tiny, youthful hands
Dig for hours
Among the piles of rock and sand,

Scooping up tiny treasures,
Touching, feeling what they find
And etching the encounter
Somewhere deep within their minds.

While millions of pairs
Of those tiny, enterprising feet
Wander their everyday worlds
Exploring whatever they might meet,

Stopping periodically
To manipulate what is there,
To satisfy a child's curiosity,
Then to contrast and to compare.

While millions of pairs
Of those tiny, intense eyes,
Consider the miracles
Which they pause to scrutinize,

And then hands reach out
For an intimate inspection,
Lifting, turning, examining,
Making a deeper connection.

While millions of tiny humans,
Hard at work in children's play,
Make sense of their tiny worlds
Through their discoveries every day.

And all over this tiny world
Upon the waters and the land,
Tiny brains are best nourished
By what is held in tiny hands.

Sigmund A. Boloz





EACH ONE TEACH ONE

The world would be a better place
If every one of us could read,
And if those who could, simply would,
Just plant one more literate seed.

Firmly plant the love of books, I mean,
Within the hands and heart and mind,
Plant the desire to be literate
Within each child who we might find.

If each one would simply teach one,
If they would share the love they know,
The world would be a better place
And our numbers would surely grow.

If each one would simply reach out for one,
Who does not understand,
If each one would simply teach one,
Extend a friendly hand,

Then the world would be a better place,
Yes, a much better place indeed,
If those who could, simply would,
Teach every one of us to read.

Sigmund A. Boloz