

## **Wordskill**

**Christopher Walker**

*London: Piccolo Books, 1986. Books 1–4, 32 pp. each*

These four books are subtitled 'Games for English practice'. Books 1 and 2 are aimed at 7–9-year-olds; 3 and 4 at 9–11-year-olds. They are intended to be used with parents, to complement the kind of language work going on in school. The main aim is to get children to think about the meanings and uses of words, and to enjoy what they are doing, through the use of stories, rhymes, riddles, and puzzle activities, many of which are similar to those found in children's comics and puzzle-books. The introduction gives parents some sound, practical advice: take the work in short stages; when they cease to be fun, stop; enjoy the books TOGETHER. The language level would be too difficult for all but the most advanced language-impaired children, but the books are worth reading as a source of ideas for simpler home-based activities. Children with a normal language background will certainly be intrigued and challenged by them, and the principle of parental involvement is likely to yield far more returns than linguistic progress alone.

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