Thank you for sending me the Cahier d'exercices for the SLECC math program at the CP level; it will surely be a landmark publication, as the very first production of the GRIP editions for the schools.

This workbook represents an extraordinarily lucid outline for the teacher at the same time that it serves as a place for the CP student to write his own results, helping him to learn to read and write in both printed and cursive forms while learning the elements of arithmetic.

Obviously the teacher will have to understand the reasons for these particular exercises. Not because they are difficult; it is only the tradition of the last sixty years or so that has regarded the ideas of multiplication and division as something too difficult for the CP. . But experience shows that when a program is presented in a logical and cumulative sequence, small children will delight in the new words and the new ideas, and being given the power to write them down with their own pencils, into their own notebooks. If a child in CP can pronounce "Rumplestiltskin", he can certainly also speak -- and write -- divide". There is no reason for the child to feel burdened when writing about 5×7 in company with 35/7 by the end of the year; and he should feel pride when he "fills in" sentences about these operations on an illustrated page of lined paper.

The operations, the language and the symbolism taught in this program represent nothing more complicated than what can as easily be seen in a diagram or held in the imagination, for the CP is not yet the place to begin symbolic reasoning. I suspect that you will nonetheless find critics who fail to understand this fact, and who will blindly condemn SLECC's mathematics as a program of formalisms to be learned by rote without understanding. Here is how I would answer them in advance:

This first GRIP publication for SLECC mathematics shows a fine appreciation of the mind of a child, and of the nature of mathematics, and it uses them both, to begin an attractive and reasoned program in arithmetic.

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