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Chapter 11: Concrete materials in the classroom.

Bishop, Alan J. et al., International handbook of mathematics education. Vol. 4. Pt. 1. Kluwer, Dordrecht (ISBN 0-7923-3533-3). 411-434 (1996).

Concrete materials have a long history in the mathematics classroom, although they have not always been readily accepted or used appropriately. They disappeared when written computational methods arose and little premium was placed on understanding the algorithms being learned. Comenius and Pestalozzi began the process of reintroduction, with Montessori and many others in the present century providing new materials and new rationales for their use, so that today one finds hundreds of ‘manipulatives’ available. Arguments have persisted, however, as to whether common tools from daily life might be better than specially constructed educational materials and whether, in fact, all such materials might do more harm than good. Educational materials are not miracle drugs; their productive use requires planning and foresight. (Abstract)

Classification: U60