



Winter 2020

News from The Chicago Area Reading Association

Supporting literacy learning since 1957

Message from the President



Dear CARA Colleagues,

Happy New Year! As we enter 2020, CARA is busy preparing for some exciting events. On February 22nd, CARA will host Dr. Linda Pincham as she discusses Social Emotional Learning in Literacy. Dr. Tim Rasinski will present to our membership on April 23rd. His research in oral reading fluency has played an important role in the work I do on a daily basis, and I know he has impacted so many of you as well. In the meantime, as you move into 2020, please keep the valuable work we do as a community supporting literacy in Chicago moving forward. Check in with [CARA on Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) or consider writing an article for the next CARA newsletter. We would love to hear your voice.

Check out upcoming events hosted by the [Chicago Literacy Alliance](#). The winter break gave me a chance to restore, renew, and recharge my passion for the work of literacy. I hope that you had the opportunity to do the same.

Finally, thank you again to the CARA volunteer board for all you do to make us an invaluable resource for Chicago.

Laura St John
CARA President

Upcoming Events

February 22

Winter Event:

Social-Emotional Learning

With Dr. Linda Pincham and others co-sponsored with Grace Educational Resources at Chicago Literacy Alliance

April 23, 2020

Spring Event:

Strengthening the Core

Tim Rasinski, Keynote
Followed by Breakout Sessions with Char Cobb and Kristin Lems

May 6, 2020

Family Literacy Night
CARA @ Mireles Academy



Chicago Area Reading Association Newsletter

Urban Education

Submitted by Laura St John

Today the street outside the room where my third grade class meets is closed due to police activity. I close the blinds and turn back to my students. Off to a rough start, I quickly move into the physical and vocal warm ups that I know will re-engage my third graders. They love to move, because they need to move. They are with me for one hour, two times a week, participating in my drama based reading program. I have observed, through talking circles and journal reflections, that the majority of my students struggle to come up with words and their spelling is rough. There's an activity I have been doing in my K/1 classes where we make letter shapes with our bodies while pronouncing the corresponding sound. Known as Alphabet Yoga, I have an idea that we could use this activity to get my third graders thinking about words and spelling. So I let them know that even though they all know their letter shapes and sounds, I am going to teach them these letter poses which we will use in a new lesson. They enjoy the movement and the way we incorporate acting, so they happily follow my lead. With a set pose for each letter, we divide into teams of four and I ask each group to generate a list of words that have four letters. From their list, they select one word. Everyone on their team gets a letter to make when we spell the word on our makeshift "stage". The laughter in the room lets me know that we are on the right track. As class ends, I raise the blinds to find the street outside quiet and peaceful again. I hear Deandre ask, "How many letters are in the word window?"

Urban Education



Urban Education

Submitted by Laura St John

"There's always room for a story that can transport people to another place."

– J.K. Rowling, novelist, screenwriter and film producer

I meet with a 4th grade class twice a week, delivering my drama based reading program, with the goal of developing stories through short movies and plays. By our eighth session together, I had to acknowledge that it was not going well. Because our work together is drama based, so much is dependent upon being able to work together; yet every time I assign partners or small groups, the room erupts in bickering and obstinate refusals to work with "him" or "her" or "them". The simple act of team building seems impossible with this class. Chatting and bickering are constants, and it has been difficult to achieve focus long enough to impart simple directions. I think back to my own 4th grade days and recall my passionate interest in mythology. I loved scary stories and am guessing that my particular 4th grade class will too. I find an online version of Theseus and the Minotaur and give it a listen while I make my morning commute. In class, I gather everyone on the carpet and let them know that I can see that we are struggling to focus and work together. I let them know that the reason that we need to be able to work in pairs and groups is so that we can develop stories together. And I ask permission to share a story that I think they will like, noting that it is very scary. Permission is granted. As I share Theseus and the Minotaur to a completely captive audience, I am reminded of the true power of story. It is the story that has the power to both focus and unite students. Whether it is a drama activity, a writing assignment, or identifying story elements - a good story can often be the key.



Chicago Area Reading Association Newsletter



When CARA Past President Baraba Kent, suggested that information in the article, “5 Engaging Books For Math Read-Alouds”, I was intrigued to read and gain knowledge about this hot topic. Admittedly, many of the read-alouds that I have observed at my school are rarely based upon math concepts or math skill-building through literacy. In my career, it is not uncommon to hear so many students and staff alike, say “I am not a math person”, implying that they would rather be reading? However, the text suggests that neither can succeed without the other. People who rely on mathematics on a daily basis, would not be successful were they not a strong reader, and conversely math requires higher order thinking, taught through questioning, analyzing, logic and creativity and of course problem-solving.

The text shares 5 books that teachers could use to promote mathematical reasoning, logic and math concepts into literacy. How would you think about incorporating mathematics into your literacy instruction? The text also suggests that it might be a unique way to teach students about geometry, as they could write a story about shapes. Can you imagine the “crayons” writing a story about the shapes that they are connected to? How fun!

The five books that the article shares are:

1. Math Curse
2. Actual Size
3. Triangle
4. The Map of Good Memories
5. Infinity and Me

Submitted by:

Barbara Kent, Past President

Tenesha Hatter, Assistant Principal Arnold Mireles Academy

CARA Resources

www.CARAreads.org

[Join CARA on Facebook!](#)

Registration is now open for our Spring Event: Addressing the “Four Cs” with Adolescent Learning in Mind: Communication, Collaboration, Creativity & Critical Thinking with Author Dr. Linda Pincham. Seats are limited! Sign up today to guarantee your seat!



Winter Workshop



with Associate Professor
Linda B. Pincham, Ed.D.

Sat. February 22nd
9:00am - 12:00pm

Register Now

Chicago Literary Alliance
LiteraCenter
641 West Lake Street
Suite 200, Chicago, IL

An affiliate of:



INTERNATIONAL
LITERACY
ASSOCIATION

CARA is pleased to host this event.
For further information, please contact
bmctague@roosevelt.edu.

Addressing the “Four Cs” with Adolescent Learning in Mind *Communication, Collaboration, Creativity & Critical Thinking*

In this hands-on workshop, Dr. Pincham will engage participants in exploring the connection between social emotional learning and technology in the adolescent classroom. Please bring your preferred device in order to participate fully.

Dr. Linda B. Pincham is an Associate Professor in secondary and middle-level education at Roosevelt University. She is a former middle and high school English and drama teacher, middle school assistant principal, and middle school principal. Dr. Pincham's research interests include social-emotional learning in the young adolescent, and she is currently co-authoring a book on social-emotional learning with her friend and colleague, Dr. Becky McTague. Other research interests include best practices in middle-level education and technology in the classroom. She has presented internationally and nationally on each topic.

Engagement → Equity → Excellence

CARA & CLA Members - \$50.00 each

Non-members - \$75.00

Registration + Membership Special (\$95 value!) = \$85

College Students - \$25.00 each

Apply 10% discount for groups of 5 or more from one school or organization

A light breakfast is included

Earn 2 clock hours!





CARA is a Good Place to Network

A monthly column by Drs. Becky McTague and Linda Pincham, faculty members of Roosevelt University

I personally like to network, because this form of communication allows me to connect with other professionals. I love creating new network branches by introducing professionals who do not know one another, but I know that they have common interests. Furthermore, CARA is a great place to connect with other professionals and practice networking. According to research about networking, (Harvard NewsLetter, 2016), most professionals are arranged into two categories. The first group is people who love networking and the second group is professionals who hate networking. So, CARA activities and conferences are wonderful ways for both categories of people to network. CARA offers a safe and positive form for professionals who usually do not like networking. Moreover, CARA offers opportunities for professionals who like networking to enlarge their networking. Some strategies that both groups of people can practice within the CARA organization are; 1) focus on learning, 2) identify common interests, 3) think broadly about sharing your expertise, and 4) finding a higher purpose.

Professionals who join and become active with CARA can nurture their relationship with like-minded professionals. Recently many articles have been circulating about how professionals need to generate self-care. CARA enables professionals to connect and communicate in an ongoing way, provides news and insights, and offers a sympathetic ear. People who network not only create new contacts, but CARA members can strengthen their current networks. Research shows (2016) that networking is necessary to be successful with career development and that networking leads to more job and business opportunities, broader and deeper knowledge, improved capacity to innovate, faster advancement, and greater status and authority. So I encourage you to start a new habit. Either join CARA or get more involved with your CARA members.

Casciaro, T. Gino, F., & Kouchaki, M. (2016). Learn to Love Networking. Harvard Business Group.

Not a Member?

Don't miss out on CARA News and Events! Join CARA and Illinois Reading Council today to ensure that you have access to all the wonderful professional learning opportunities!

Discounted registration fees to all CARA and IRC events, including conferences!

FREE members-only access to IRC's Wired Wednesday Webinars – great PD, and you can participate in your PJs at home!

AND you can earn free clock hours!

FREE members-only access to IRC's Book Clubs – great online book discussions with other teachers about some of the seminal professional books in literacy, and another PJ PD opportunity! AND free clock hours!

Information about upcoming events from professional organizations throughout the state



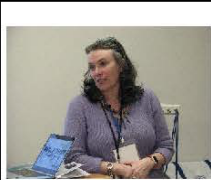
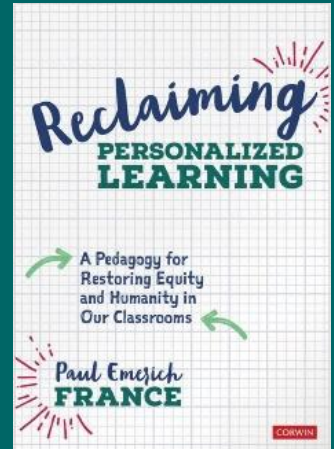
Join Now



Highlights from our Fall Event:

“Reclaiming Professional Learning”

Author Paul France challenged us to think about personalized learning from our perspective and to think about its impact in our school and classrooms. Paul led us through an opportunity to think about equity and humanity amongst our students and within our classrooms. We worked in small groups to debate concepts relating to personalized learning and we shared ideas around current definitions and best instructional practices. Paul reminded us to be flexible with our teaching practices, as we must ensure that students feel a sense of attachment and acceptance.



President Laura St. John welcomed all



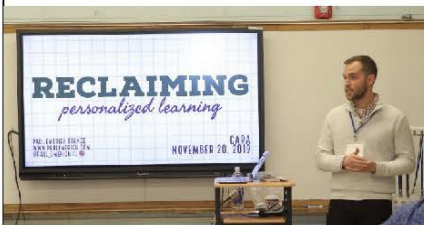
Becky and Joyce welcomed all as they checked in



Excellent Dinner and Networking Opportunity



Principal Dr. Mellodie Brown welcomed CARA to Beethoven



Author Paul France shared ideas from his book, *Reclaiming Personalized Learning*



Program Chair Dr. Becky McTague Introduced Paul



Paul opened with a thought-provoking question



Becky thanked Paul for a challenging workshop



Working in small groups to share ideas



Even our get-acquainted activity presented challenging questions!

[Register Early for Strengthening the Core: with Tim Rasinski on April 23, 2020](#)



Strengthening the Core:
Fluency, Vocabulary, Language
with Tim Rasinski
Keynote Speaker
and Breakout Sessions
with Char Cobb and Kristin Lems

