



## CREATING A RELATIONAL SET OF VOCABULARY WORDS TO HELP CHILDREN COPE WITH THEIR EMOTIONS

By Laura Beltchenko, IRC Professional Learning and Development Chair

Young children often do not have a set of words, or the aural/receptive or oral/expressive language required to express their emotions and related feelings. These two evolving traits create an asynchronistic or uneven developmental progression. Generally developed first, **receptive language** is the ability to understand language and information before there is an ability to *produce or articulate* it in the form of a working vocabulary. An example is a child's ability to recognize an object before they are able to verbalize what it is. The developmental progression begins synchronizing when their **expressive language**, the ability to express your wants, needs, or understandings through verbal or nonverbal communication, commences. It is the ability to communicate by matching thoughts with words in a way that makes sense.

In the current state of our world, and partly due to the pandemic, students may have experienced the passing of a loved one. The death of a family pet may also be an upsetting ordeal. To understand death and the grieving process that accompanies losing someone and to better understand the meaning of empathy and sympathy, picture books can be a system of support.

Illustrations and text in picture story books provide children with the ability to pull key details out of the pictures, infer and synthesize what those details mean, and help children begin to match those connections with the necessary vocabulary needed to better understand their emotions and express their feelings. In their fifth edition of *Teaching Vocabulary in all Classrooms* (2015) Blachowitz and Fisher state,

*Meaningful use, review and practice that calls upon student to use vocabulary in authentic ways are a must to develop rich and full word knowledge. So, connecting new words to words that are already known is an important part of vocabulary learning; we build **relational sets of words**, not an alphabetized dictionary in our heads. (p.4; emphasis added)*

Through guided instruction and picture book illustrations, we can begin to build that "relational set of words" (Blachowitz & Fisher, 2015, p4.) needed to help students make tangible references to the pictures and match them with the necessary vocabulary words they need and require to understand and comprehend one's emotional state of being. Furthering this concept is the recognition of grief through sympathy, which is showing a feeling of sorrow by comforting someone with our words and actions, and empathy, to understand how someone else feels and share their emotions.

To better bring these concepts to the classroom, I have created a [book collection](#) located on Teachingbooks.net. The embedded link will help educators match books that will begin to support the *relational set of words* children need to capture the vocabulary necessary to articulate their emotions and how they can, through the characters, plot and setting, make vocabulary connections to add to the lexicon of emotions, sympathy, and empathy.

---

## A CULTURALLY RELEVANT LESSON THROUGH MAKING A VIDEO

By Laura St. John

As I strive to create student-centered lessons that allow for learning through the culture my students know, I've found making videos to be a powerful tool for helping them connect to literature. A great way to do this is to create an entry for the [90-Second Newbery Film Festival](#). This is a film festival in which children from all over the country make short movie adaptations of Newbery award winning or Newbery honor books. The festival is held in major cities across the nation and is hosted by the Harold Washington Library in Chicago.

Last year, when Chicago Public Schools were mostly virtual, I had to rethink the culminating event for [Play In A Book](#), my drama based reading program. We typically end with a performance of our leveled scripts, which we've rehearsed through repeated readings. Since a live performance wasn't possible, I turned to developing short videos with my students. I've been amazed at their level of engagement since adding this to my programming. Making a video based on a story we've read is a project that is fully engaging my students, plus, as they work on acting out scenes or doing voice-overs, I am able to gauge their reading skills.

Begin by selecting the book you'd like to adapt from the list of Newbery award winners as well as the list of Newbery Honor books. The links listed below can help you get started:

### List of Newbery Award Winners

- <https://abqlibrary.org/newbery/All>

### 90-Second Newbery Website

- <https://90secondnewbery.com/>

### Flipgrid (a wonderful tool for shooting video with students)

- <https://info.flipgrid.com/>

Once you've selected a book and read it with your students, you're ready to start working on your movie. The process I am using in Play In A Book classrooms is mapped out below:

- **Session 1:** Students are introduced to 90-Second Newbery Film samples, and will decide on the style with which they wish to develop their film.
- **Session 2:** Scripting and storyboarding beginning.
- **Session 3:** Scripting and storyboarding middle.
- **Session 4:** Scripting and storyboarding ending.
- **Session 5:** Shooting beginning.
- **Session 6:** Shooting middle.
- **Session 7:** Shooting end.
- **Session 8:** Additional shooting and recording needed voice-overs.
- **Session 9:** Viewing draft and making revisions as needed.
- **Session 10:** Viewing final video and celebrating our work together.

The deadline for entry into the festival is January 14, 2022.

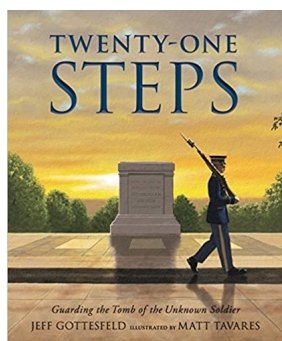
---

## FAMILY LITERACY BOOKSHELF

By Barb Ashton, IRC Family Literacy Committee Chair

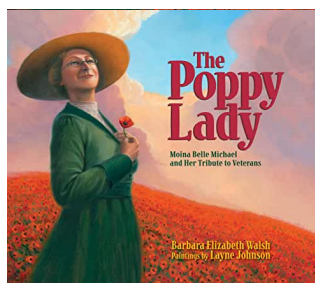
The cooler crisp days of autumn are upon us. November is just around the corner as is the anticipation of

the holiday season. We reminded ourselves during November that it's Diabetes Awareness Month, and Native American Heritage Month. We honor those who served our country on Veteran's Day and "Give Thanks" for the blessings received on Thanksgiving Day.



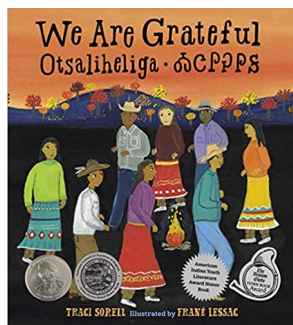
"I am an unknown. I am one of many." These are the words of the unknown soldier buried in the tomb at Arlington National Cemetery who is also the narrator of this story. ***Twenty-One Steps: Guarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*** by Jeff Gottesfeld tells the story of the nameless hero who was chosen to be entombed at the end of World War I in 1921. (This year marks the 100th Anniversary of the war's end and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier). The book uses lyrical prose to tell about the sentinel guards who keep vigil at the tomb 24 hours a day in all types of weather to pay tribute to those who served our country but paid the ultimate sacrifice. To become a Tomb Guard of this special unit of the army requires special training and upon completion of their training the new sentinel guards take the Sentinel Creed/oath. Since the tomb was erected there have been other

unknown soldiers placed in the tomb from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. *Twenty-One Steps* is a beautifully illustrated book that explains the significance of the memorial and is a great book to be read on Veteran's Day or Memorial Day. Check out <https://arlingtoncemetery.mil/tomb100> for a resource guide and also click on the education tab for a wealth of lesson plans and teacher materials divided into grade levels to share with your students. *Twenty-One Steps* can also be found on You Tube.



Every year as Veteran's Day approaches we are asked to buy a poppy flower from a dedicated former veteran. But do you know why? The book ***The Poppy Lady: Moina Belle Michael and Her Tribute to Veterans*** by Barbara Elizabeth Walsh will explain how this tradition started. This is the story of Moina Belle Michael, who "wanted to do more" for the men in uniform who volunteered to serve during World War I. Moina began by knitting socks and rolling bandages that she delivered to nearby military camps. Moina also completed a training program at Columbia University in New York to become a canteen worker. She applied to serve overseas but was denied due to her age. Wanting to do more she opened a

reading/writing room in the basement of Columbia University where military personnel could gather to socialize, sing, dance etc. To add a little color to the room she purchased some flowers. This was inspired by her reading the poem "In Flanders Field" which paid tribute to the soldiers who lost their lives and were buried in a field covered with poppies. Searching for the flowers in New York proved to be a challenge, and she decided to make artificial poppies and sell them to raise money for disabled and unemployed veterans/families. Veteran's groups today still continue to sell the poppy flower in remembrance of those who died as well as a symbol of honor. *The Poppy Lady* takes place in a different era which is unfamiliar to students and families today but through a combination of text and beautiful illustrations the book brings this period of time to life. The back of the book provides additional information about Moina and her legacy along with books, articles, and websites. Hear a Read Aloud on You Tube.



To celebrate Native American Heritage Month, Traci Sorell, a member of the Cherokee Nation, has written a dual language book, ***We Are Grateful: Otsaliheliga***, that explains the different ways the Cherokee people express their gratitude throughout the year. Beginning each autumn, which is their new year, the author traces a modern day Cherokee family through the seasons from the Great New Moon Ceremony to the Green Corn Ceremony in the summer. As each season arrives the Cherokee people have the tradition of expressing their gratitude for their blessings and the struggles they have encountered. This is followed by descriptions of the celebrations and the rituals that are practiced along with both the English and Cherokee text that includes the pronunciation and definition. *We Are Grateful* is a timely book that helps the reader learn about current Native

Americans and their cultural heritage. The back of the book contains additional information including the Cherokee syllabary created by Sequoyah, a glossary of terms, author's note, and websites. Go to the author's website [www.tracisorell.com](http://www.tracisorell.com) for a classroom guide and additional resources. *We Are Grateful* is a good book to share with your families on Thanksgiving. This book can also be found on You Tube.



Cranberries are a traditional food often served at Thanksgiving and Christmas family gatherings. ***Time for Cranberries*** by Lisl H. Detlefsen is a delightful story that tells the process of harvesting cranberries. Sam, the narrator, and his family live on a cranberry marsh (farm) in Wisconsin. Sam is



finally old enough to join his family in harvesting the cranberries. First he needs to put on waders so he doesn't get wet. The beds of cranberries are flooded and dad uses his tractor to pick the berries which float to the top. Then it is time to corral the berries. There are several more steps to follow before the process is complete. After the harvest is complete and the berries delivered to the cannery, Sam can't wait to eat the fresh cranberries. *Time for Cranberries* is an informational book and also lets young farm kids see themselves reflected in a story that depicts what life is like on a farm. *Time for Cranberries* makes a nice addition to all libraries as well as to your classroom collection of farm, fall, and Thanksgiving books. The back of the book has a glossary of farm terms, an author's note, and the recipes for cranberry sauce and cranberry pie. Hear the author read the book on You Tube.

## November Reminders

**November 1: All Saints Day**

**November 2: Dia De Los Muertos – A celebration of the life and death of family members**

**November 4: Diwali Day – Go to National Geographic Kids to learn more about this 5 day Celebration of Festival of Lights**

**November 6: Book Lovers Day – Relax and enjoy reading a good book**

**November 11: Veteran's Day – Thank a veteran for his/her service**

**November 25: Thanksgiving Day – Time to give Thanks and be grateful for blessings received**

**November 26: Black Friday**

**November 28: Advent and Hanukkah begins**

---

## LITERACY LINKS

By the IRC Educational Media Committee

Take a moment to review some of the Literacy Links provided by the IRC Educational Media Committee to help Illinois educators in today's classrooms.

### Interactive Resources

#### [Scrumblr](#)

Scrumblr is a web-based interactive whiteboard tool that allows for real-time collaboration. Sharing the link with students allows everyone to have access simultaneously to edit digital index cards for quick formative assessments, KWL charts, and many other instructional strategies.

### Comprehensive Resources

#### [Blendspace](#)

Blendspace is a great tool to create web-based interactive multimedia lessons, projects and presentations. Explore already created lessons and assessments to make learning more interactive for students.

### Web 2.0 Resources

#### [PicLits](#)

PicLits is a creative writing site that matches beautiful images with carefully selected keywords in order to inspire students. The objective is to put the right words in the right place and the right order to capture the essence, story, and meaning of the picture.

---

## UPCOMING PD EVENTS

By the Illinois Reading Council

Don't forget to take advantage of some upcoming PD opportunities planned throughout Illinois.

- **November 1, 2021: Macon County Reading Council** will host the Raising Kids Who Read Book

Club from November 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021 via Google Classroom.

- **November 3, 2021: IRC Webinar** on *Every Child Deserves #TheRightTools: Equitable Practices that Meet Students' Needs* with Towanda Harris from 7:00 to 8:00 pm via Zoom Webinar.
- **November 3, 2021: Starved Rock Reading Council** will host a Book and Wine Tasting from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at Prairie Fox Books, 719 LaSalle Street, Ottawa, Illinois.
- **November 9, 2021: MID-State Reading Council** will host the next session of The Well-Balanced Teacher Book Study at 4:30 pm at Gill Street Bar & Grill, 3002 Gill Street, Bloomington, Illinois.
- **November 13, 2021: Chicago Area Reading Association (CARA)** will host Fall Reflections with Tanesha Hatter, Kenya Edwards, and Laura St. John from 9:30 to 11:30 am via Zoom.
- **November 16, 2021: South Eastern Reading Council** will host Falling for Great Reads at 6:00 via Zoom.
- **November 16, 2021: West Suburban Reading Council** will host a Book Gossip with Kathleen March from 7:00 to 8:30 pm via Zoom.
- **November 17, 2021: Secondary Reading League (SRL)** will host Differentiation in Secondary Education with Kim Marshall at 4:00 pm via Zoom.
- **November 17, 2021: Central Illinois Reading Council** will host the monthly CIRC Book Chats on TLC for Teachers with Pat Braun from 7:00 to 8:00 pm via Zoom.
- **November 18, 2021: Illinois Family Reading Night** is an annual statewide event sponsored by Jesse White, Secretary of State and State Librarian, and the Illinois Center for the Book at the Illinois State Library that encourages families to spend quality time reading together. Free bookmarks and posters are available to participating organizations. The IRC's ILLINOIS READS Program has partnered with the Secretary of State's Family Reading Night since 2013. Plan now to create a Family Reading night program in your area. For the annual theme, material order forms and programming ideas, visit the Family Reading Night webpage.

To view the full **IRC Events Calendar**, please visit the [IRC Website](#).

## QUICK LINKS

[Visit the IRC Website](#)

[Full IRC Events Calendar](#)

[Latest on the IRC Conference](#)

[Available IRC Awards and Grants](#)

[Bring IRC PD to your School District](#)

[Learn more about the Illinois Reads Program](#)

Questions? Please feel free to reach out to the Illinois Reading Council by email at [irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org](mailto:irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org) or by phone at 309-454-1341.

See what's also happening on our social media sites:

