



Fox Valley Reading Council

SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENTS

Welcome back to a new school year! It'll be one to go down in history, that's for sure! We here at Fox Valley Reading Council want to help you in any way we can. Our Board for this year is as follows: Camille and Dawn continue as Co-Presidents, Denise Mitchell is Vice-President, Katina Kastranas is Past President, Diana Wilkie is Treasurer, Sarah Paulson is Secretary and Social Media director, and Kristen Walsh is Membership. We are from many schools and cities in the Fox Valley, so consider being involved and joining us! Please look at the information below to continue your online PD or just get some relief with a little advice. Don't forget, joining helps you with Domain 4 on your evaluation. Consider convincing a friend to join with you this year! Our theme for this unusual year is: "*Navigating Literacy in 2020.*"


Not surprisingly, you might notice that our events will be virtual this year. We will continue our usual Fall event on **Sept. 12** with **Anderson's Book Shop and Heinemann Books Book Talk**. They will be filling us in on the latest kids' and professional books to help us navigate the students' social emotional needs and the online literacy we need.

Secondly, we had to cancel **Maria Walther** in April and she has graciously agreed to reschedule

on **Nov. 14**, but we both decided it would be best to also be virtual. Many of you know Maria, as she is from the area, but she will be helping us delve deeper into powerful reading instruction with kids K-5 in the differentiated classroom. We all know it's going to look a little different this year. How can we help them?

Lastly, you may have seen the **Wired Webinars** offered by IRC. (See attached schedule at the bottom of this article.) These webinars feature some famous authors and are free to you as an IRC member! FVRC would like to add an additional opportunity to discuss what you've learned. The first one features Tim Rasinski on **Sept. 2 at 7:00 PM**. Tim focuses on fluency and word study. FVRC will lead a Zoom discussion immediately after he concludes his webinar to discuss what you learned, or to share a problem or solution with others. Be sure to register online at www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org and tune in later for the information needed to join us!

Even though this is a very unusual year, we all know teachers will rise to the occasion and do their very best for kids. Thank you, heroes!























IRC Webinar Series

All webinars will begin at 7:00 p.m.

EMPOWERING LIVES THROUGH LITERACY

IRC will be offering the Webinar Series for members only in 2020-2021. All webinars will begin at 7:00 p.m. Members who watch the live or recorded webinars can earn professional development clock hours. Mark your calendars and register to take part in this convenient, free IRC membership benefit. Members will receive monthly emails with links to register. Nonmembers can join online and email for the registration link.

<p>September 2, 2020 ~ Timothy Rasinski Word Study that Works</p>  <p>Word decoding, vocabulary, and spelling are essential skills as learning to read at every grade level. Students who struggle in reading and other content areas often do so because of difficulty in word decoding and understanding the meaning of key vocabulary. In this session Dr. Rasinski will share effective and engaging methods for helping students learn words and take delight in words.</p> 	<p>February 3, 2021 ~ Becky Anderson Discovering the 2021 Illinois Reads Books</p>  <p>Join Becky Anderson as she presents the Illinois Reads books for 2021. Learn more about the Illinois Reads statewide literacy initiative that promotes reading for all Illinois citizens. Six books in six age bands from Birth to Adult will be shared. A variety of book topics and themes are chosen for each age band, highlighting the work of Illinois authors.</p> 
<p>October 7, 2020 ~ Kate Hannigan Tools for Making Historical Figures Come to Life</p>  <p>Join Chicago author Kate Hannigan as she talks about getting kids excited about history by connecting with real life figures. Kate shares specific tools she uses in conducting research for her historical fiction and nonfiction books, including her newest World War II historical fantasy series, <i>The League of Secret Heroes</i>. Through her research, Kate is hoping to highlight for young readers how seemingly ordinary people did extraordinary things.</p> 	<p>March 3, 2021 ~ Matthew Cordell The Power of Wordless Picture Books</p>  <p>Wordless picture books are a treasured sub-genre in the world of children's literature. But they can be intimidating or misunderstood if an educator or classroom has not yet encountered, read, or taught with one. Join Caldecott Medalist Matthew Cordell as he discusses the many ways wordless picture books can have a significant and lasting impact in classrooms and libraries.</p> 
<p>November 11, 2020 ~ Clare Landrigan Using Poetry to Expand Content Knowledge and Structure Informational Text</p>  <p>Poetry is a structure that writers can use in any unit of study. This session will make the case for including poetry in content area and nonfiction literacy units of study. In reading, it is a great way to build one's schema in a content area and to synthesize the big ideas in an area of research. In writing, poetry offers choice in terms of how a writer wants to convey information. We will explore poetry mentor texts and craft moves to teach students.</p> 	<p>April 7, 2021 ~ Penny Kittle The Literacy Lessons I Learned from Hamilton</p>  <p>The Pulitzer Prize winning play by Lin-Manuel Miranda has lessons to teach us all about passion, creativity, genre, and the process of writing. Each year we have the opportunity to help students construct identities of power and opportunity, to challenge themselves as readers and writers, and to act with agency in our classrooms. We will spark the classroom, combine and practice that are grounded in key principles for motivation, relevance, engagement, and community.</p> 
<p>December 2, 2020 ~ Jon Scieszka Inspiring Lifelong Readers</p>  <p>First National Ambassador of Young People's Literature Jon Scieszka draws on his 10 year elementary school teaching career, and recent literacy studies, to make a case for self-motivation being the essential ingredient for inspiring kids to be true readers. With plenty of bad jokes and tales of Mr. Scieszka's own classroom fields of victory... and genres of defeat.</p> 	<p>May 5, 2021 ~ Donalyn Miller Making a Case for Reading Joy</p>  <p>Adults who continue to read long after formal schooling ends read because they find some intellectual or personal enjoyment. Unfortunately, too many young readers end up reading experiences at school that discourage them from reading enjoyment or actively discourage it. In this webinar, Donalyn will describe the conditions, rituals, and instructional opportunities that engage young people with reading and set them on the path to reading joy for a lifetime.</p> 
<p>January 6, 2021 ~ Crystal Chan Dark, Absurd Humor...for Dark, Absurd Times</p>  <p>In these tumultuous times, dark humor and the absurd can be our greatest allies that can also change the world in ways that positive, straightforward storytelling cannot. Join Crystal Chan as she walks you through her recent novel, <i>All Ten Ten Fix</i> which includes a blend of real life exotic zoo breakout, a suicidal father, a small Indiana town deeply divided over the gun debate, and a mixed race teen navigating the absurdity of the adult in an absurd world, with more than a couple of laughs to boot.</p> 	<p>June 2, 2021 ~ Samira Ahmed Fighting the Good Fight: Literacy as the Foundation of Democracy & Social Justice</p>  <p>In this webinar, Samira Ahmed will discuss the power of literacy to shape our world, the difficult conversations we must have to re-visit and re-evaluate our curriculum to address institutionalized racism and how schools and libraries are not neutral spaces. The text we place on our shelves and our ability to hold adults, not merely students, accountable, will define civic engagement for years to come.</p> 

Register online at www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org

WELCOME BACK BY DAWN LUTZ

As this unusual school year begins, we know there may be some anxieties present in us all. There is probably a fear of the unknown. Unfortunately we don't know what this year holds for us and what the right thing is to do. Sadly, there is not a right answer. I wanted to share with you some insights from my friend and therapist, Cheryl Denz MA, LCPC:

- Make those initial connections with students. Even though we want to make up time with missed academics, connections are necessary to build relationships with kids. Take the time to do that. Learn their interests, address them by name, let them know some personal information about you, and do some little check-ins.
- Kids are taking their cues from you. Understand they are anxious and that's ok. Be calm and take the time to address that we are being as safe as we can be and we will work together to stay safe and learn. Kids want to feel as normal as possible and they are resilient.
- Recognize that typical anxiety may show itself as the quiet kid. Others may act out. Negative behavior is a clue that there is something else going on-a sign of distress. Those students may need extra care and conversation.
- Parents-encourage them (or yourself if you are also a parent) to CALM DOWN. Remember, there is not a right or wrong answer here. We are trying to balance between the safest thing and the best education for your child and that may look different to different people. That's ok-we choose what works best in our situation and there should be no judgment. Do what's right for you and recognize that might be different than your neighbor.

We all hope for the best and want what's best for our kids. Thank you for keeping an open mind.

For more information, please go to Riverview Counseling at:

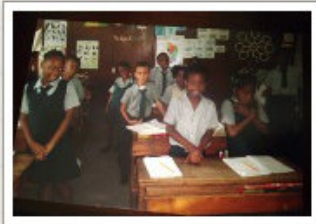
www.riverviewcounselingservices.com or call their general number: 630-587-3777 ext. 102.

Also, a great article in the August 2020 NEA Today also highlights prioritizing social-emotional learning. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), "identifies five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making" (p. 31). Read more through nea.org/trauma and casel.org/covid-resources.

INTERNATIONAL PROJECT BY DIANA WILKIE

I had the opportunity to travel to Dominica, a southern Caribbean island. As I traveled from the airport in the northeast part of the land across to the village of Trafalgar in the southwest corner, one of the first things I saw were school children walking home with their teacher. Even on this very small island (population 73,000) each school wore distinct uniforms. I could not wait to visit the school in the village. Beautiful teachers and children survive with the little supplies that they have. They use old computer monitors, chalkboards and have a small library that just fills four small shelves. Character Counts is painted on the pillars and they share PBIS language with American schools.

One of our goals is to support literacy around the world. It is very costly to make school purchases on the island. Trafalgar Primary School has given us a list of specific requests and we will send additional books. If you are able to donate any of these items or have any questions, please contact Diana Wilkie at IllinoisFVRC@gmail.com.



Supplies Needed	
whiteboard markers	600 black and colored ink
permanent markers	611 black and colored ink
crayons	604 black and colored ink
pens	240 and 248 black and colored ink
pencils	photo and paper binders
writing books	scotch tape and books
write cardboard	printing paper
colored cardboard	reward stickers
art supplies (spray eyes, paint, playdough)	Electronic readers
clock stamps	glue sticks
tape	markers
Hokey or Phonic cards	glue
terminating pouches	blue dividers



CORNELIUS MINOR BY CAMILLE LUTZ

Are you looking for a quick, but informative read on equity and access in your classroom? In his new book "We Got This," Cornelius Minor shares how authentically listening to kids is the key to making powerful moves toward equity in the classroom. Chapters in his book include the importance of truly listening to our students, how to create lessons that speak to what students say they need, disrupting the status quo of classroom cultures, and creating a community in the classroom (just to name a few).

For a glimpse into Minor's book, check out this [link](#) where he discusses feedback and love in a 15 minute podcast.

If you are interested in learning more from Cornelius, one of our sister councils, Secondary Reading League, is hosting a one day (virtual) workshop November 12, 2020. Send a note to dayofreading@gmail.com for more information.

TECH TIDBIT: BITMOJI CLASSROOM BY SARAH PAULSON

Looking for a way to share assignments, websites, and daily activities with your students while teaching virtually? BitMoji Classrooms allow teachers to create virtual learning environments. Using the Bitmoji app, you can create your very own teacher avatar. Then through PowerPoint or Google Slides, you can build your own classroom complete with colorful rugs, posters, whiteboards, bookshelves, and tons more. Each slide can be linked to different subjects. For example, students may click on your bookshelf to access your virtual library. For how-tos on building these virtual environments, check out the many free templates and tutorials on YouTube, TeachersPayTeachers, and Facebook Groups.



YA BOOK RECOMMENDATION: PATRON SAINTS OF NOTHING BY DIANA WILKIE

I enjoyed every minute while reading *Patron Saints of Nothing* by fellow teacher and author Randy Ribay, National Book Award Finalist. It's a powerful story about grief, guilt and risks a teenager takes to uncover the truth about his cousin's murder. Complex relationships between the characters and surprises along the way left me hungry for more each day. I learned much history about the Philippines and Duterte's Drug War that led me to want to know more. So many topics could be in the discussion while reading with students: identity, impact of colonialism, Catholicism, the role of politics, violence, power and control.

"Ribay seamlessly takes the cultural texture of the Philippines, the complexities between ethnicity and nationality, political tension and the propaganda that buttresses it, and, most importantly, teenage life, and weaves them all into a thick braid that asks one question: What is the truth? And the necessity to know that truth—the fight it takes to find that truth—somehow gets right to the core of who young people are. This is nothing short of a tremendous feat and will certainly solidify Ribay as a singular voice in the world of literature for years to come." —Jason Reynolds

www.randyribay.com





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