

# ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL JOURNAL



SUMMER 2025  
VOLUME 53, NUMBER 3

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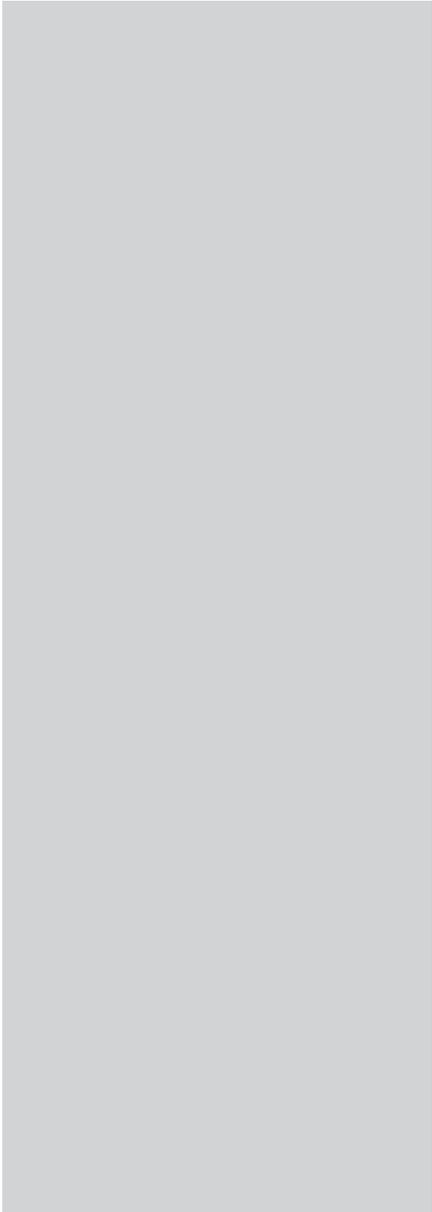
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# ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL JOURNAL



**Summer 2025**

Volume 53, Number 3

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# ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL JOURNAL

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The Illinois Reading Council Journal (IRCJ) is published quarterly and is distributed as a service to all members of the Illinois Reading Council. Membership in the Illinois Reading Council can be obtained through local and special interest reading councils in Illinois. For information, contact the Illinois Reading Council at 1100 Beech Street, Building 8, Suite 2, Normal, IL 61761. IRC staff may also be reached by telephone at (309) 454-1341. Libraries and educational institutions can subscribe to IRCJ at an annual rate of \$50.00; address inquiries to the Executive Director at the IRC office. Because the IRCJ serves as an open forum, its contents do not necessarily reflect or imply endorsement or advocacy by the Illinois Reading Council, its officers, or its members.

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Publication services for the *IRCJ* are provided by Sandra K. Larimer, Copy Editor, and Shanee J. Plate, Layout/Design. Honor Allen is Editor Roxanne Owens' graduate assistant.

## ***About the Cover Artist***

### **Jacqueline Alcántara**

Jacqueline Alcántara is a Chicago-based illustrator and educator. She spends her days drawing, writing, and walking her dog while fueled by dance music, carbs, and coffee. Her 8th illustrated picturebook is also her author/illustrator debut titled *Tíos and Primos* (see pp. 61 & 73). It received two starred reviews from *Kirkus* and *School Library Journal*. Her past illustrated books include *The Field* by Baptiste Paul, *Freedom Soup* by Tami Charles, *Jump at the Sun* by Alicia D. Williams, *Your Mama* by NoNieqa Ramos, *Ordinary Days* by Angela Joy, and *Jam, Too?* by JaNay Brown Wood. Her next book projects include *Just Shine* written by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor and *Wifredo's Jungle* written by Margarita Engle. In addition to her work in the children's publishing industry, she creates editorial and fashion illustrations, teaches at Columbia College Chicago, and has a never-ending interest in learning new skills and taking on new challenges.



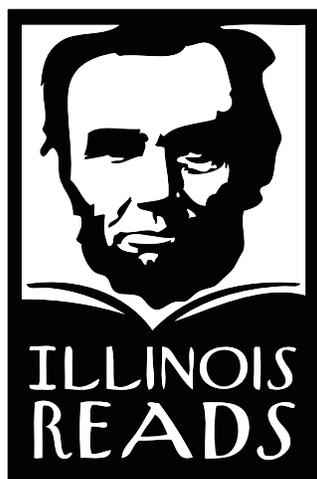
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*Cover Art:* "Science Room Hurricane"

Other artwork by Jacqueline can be found on pages 53, 61, 72, and 73.

# ILLINOIS READS

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### **Birth-4**

*Can You Dance Like a Peacock?*  
by Rekha S. Rajan  
*Hide-and-Seek*  
by Molly Cranch  
*Moms Can Do It All!*  
by Ted Maass  
*Sleepy: Surprising Ways Animals Snooze*  
by Jennifer Ward  
*Painting the Sky with Love: A Celebration of Love and Community*  
by Mary E. Haque  
*Play Outside with Me*  
by Kat Chen

### **K-2**

*Bats Beneath the Bridge*  
by Janet Nolan  
*Love Grows*  
by Ruth Spiro  
*Somebody Needs to Do Something About That Monster!*  
by Doug Cenko  
*The Ghost Who Was Afraid of Everything*  
by Nadia Ahmed  
*The Heartbeat Drum: The Story of Carol Powder, Cree Drummer and Activist*  
by Deidre Havrelock  
and illustrated by Aphelandra  
*Umami*  
by Jacob Grant

### **3-5**

*Cloud Puppy*  
by Kelly Leigh Miller  
*Detective Sweet Pea: The Case of the Golden Bone*  
by Sara Varon  
*It Belongs to the World: Frederick Banting and the Discovery of Insulin*  
by Lisa Katzenberger  
*Legendarios: Wrath of the Rain God*  
by Karla Arenas Valenti  
*One Cool Duck #1: King of Cool*  
by Mike Petrik  
*The Great Lakes: Our Freshwater Treasure*  
by Barb Rosenstock

### **6-8**

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*I Felt Myself Slipping*  
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*Kareem Between*  
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*Rare Birds*  
by Jeff Miller  
*Stage Fright*  
by Wendy Parris  
*The Labors of Hercules Beal*  
by Gary D. Schmidt

### **9-12**

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*Dear Wendy*  
by Ann Zhao  
*Last On His Feet: Jack Johnson and the Battle of the Century*  
by Youssef Daoudi and Adrian Matejka  
*This Book Won't Burn*  
by Samira Ahmed  
*This Night Is Ours*  
by Ronni Davis  
*We Shall Be Monsters: A Novel*  
by Alyssa Wees

### **Adult**

*By Water Beneath the Walls: The Rise of the Navy SEALs*  
by Benjamin H. Milligan  
*Star Wars Dad Jokes: The Best Worst Jokes and Puns from a Galaxy Far, Far Away . . .*  
by Kelly Knox and  
illustrated by Johnny Sampson  
*The Best Lies*  
by David Ellis  
*The Great Divide: A Novel*  
by Cristina Henriquez  
*The Wheel of the Year: An Illustrated Guide to Nature's Rhythms*  
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## IRC Awards & Grants

Are you interested in learning how to nominate individuals from your area for IRC awards or how to benefit from grant money that is available each year for various educational activities? To find out more about these IRC Awards and Grants, please visit the IRC website at [www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org](http://www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org).

**Barack Obama Library Award.** This award is a classroom library, valued at over \$1000, which was created in 2006 through a generous gift to the IRC from (then) Senator Obama. This collection is comprised of carefully selected literature that is “culturally relevant” for African-American readers and targets students in the middle-school (5th-8th) grade range. The award will go to a teacher in a predetermined IRC Region. Each year, the region will be announced on the IRC Website. Nominations are due by November 1st.

**Family Literacy Award.** This award recognizes an IRC member who promotes and supports parent involvement in children’s reading. Nominations are due by November 1st.

**Gene Cramer ICARE for Reading Award.** The Illinois Council for Affective Reading Education recognizes an educator who has performed in an outstanding manner to show concern for the affective domain and who has performed lifelong reading habits among students. The Nomination Form is due by November 1st.

**Hall of Fame Award.** The IRC has designed the Hall of Fame to recognize significant contributions to reading or reading education. The award will be given at the annual conference. The immediate Past President shall receive the nomination forms and final determination will be made by the Executive Committee no later than 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting. Deadline: Nomination Forms are due by November 1st.

**International Grant.** The International Committee of the Illinois Reading Council has created a grant to promote literacy projects internationally. The maximum amount per grant is \$1,000. The application deadline is May 1st.

**IRC Service Award.** The IRC will present the IRC Service Award (formerly known as the Certificate of Recognition) at the annual statewide conference. Certificates are awarded to the most deserving individuals who meet the criteria listed. Deadline: Nomination Forms are due by November 1st.

**Jerry Johns Reading Educator of the Year Award.** This award recognizes outstanding teachers who make contributions in promoting literacy among students, colleagues, and school communities. Application Form, letters of recommendation, and your philosophy statement are due by November 1st.

**Literacy Support Grant.** The Illinois Reading Council will award financial grants to local and special interest councils and individual council members for the purpose of promoting literacy development in the school and community, and/or providing professional development opportunities related to the improvement of reading and writing instruction. The application deadline is May 1st.

**Prairie State Award for Excellence in Writing for Children.** This award recognizes an Illinois Children's Young Adult Author whose body of work demonstrates excellence, engenders a love of literature, and embraces an important part of the mission of the Illinois Reading Council—to promote lifelong literacy. Nominations are due by June 15th.

**Static Stick Decal Design Contest.** Students in grades 4, 5, or 6 are encouraged to create an original design promoting reading. The winning design is printed on static stick decals. Entries must be postmarked no later than January 15th.

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# Request for Membership on IRC Standing and Special Committees

*Please consider becoming more involved in the Illinois Reading Council. Members of the local reading councils may submit their own names for consideration. Below are brief descriptions of committee goals.*

## **IRC STANDING COMMITTEES:**

**Budget, Finance, and Strategic Planning Committee** - Prepare a yearly budget, report on the audit, and review dues structure. Work to establish a well-defined vision for the future of IRC.

**Bylaws, Policies and Procedures Committee** - Review and update the IRC bylaws and policies.

**Conference Committee** - Make plans for the annual conference of the council.

**Membership Committee** - Stimulate membership of ILA, state, local, and special interest councils.

**Nominating Committee** - Prepare a slate of candidates for IRC Vice President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer.

**Organization/Council Bylaws Committee** - Act as liaison between ILA and local and special interest councils.

## **IRC SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**Advocacy Committee** - Gather and disseminate information concerning legislation related to reading.

**Book Club Committee** - Host four virtual book clubs in the spring, summer, fall, and winter.

**Educational Media Committee** - Assist state, local, and special interest councils with newspapers in education and with the integration of technology and literacy.

**Family Literacy Committee** - Collect and disseminate information concerning adult, parent, and family literacy.

**ILA Exemplary Reading Program Award Committee** - Assist ILA in recognizing outstanding reading and language arts programs in Illinois schools.

**Illinois Reads Committee** - A yearly statewide project to encourage reading for all Illinois citizens.

**International Projects Committee** - Address issues, provide resources, and encourage others to become involved in literacy projects in third world countries.

**IRC Literacy Support Grants Committee** - Recommend financial grants for literacy projects.

**Jerry Johns Reading Educator of the Year Award Committee** - Recognize an outstanding teacher contributing to literacy.

**Obama Literacy Fund Committee** - Promote the importance of multicultural literature and focus on providing multicultural literature for teachers' use.

**Prairie State Award Committee** - Review nominations to select an outstanding Illinois children's/YA author.

**Professional Learning** - Share best practices in educational initiatives and effective professional development to support all grade levels and content areas.

**Publicity and Publications Committee** - Provide templates and support to IRC and local councils to promote membership and events. Provide guidance in creating and publishing IRC materials.

**Sticker Design Contest Committee** - Promote the Static Sticker Decal Contest that encourages children to read.

**Please complete the information below and mail the form to:  
Illinois Reading Council, 1100 Beech St, Building 8, Suite 2, Normal, IL 61761**

I wish to be considered for membership on the following committee(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Council \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

---

# ***Calls for Contributions for Future Issues of the Illinois Reading Council Journal***

The Illinois Reading Council Journal seeks manuscripts dealing with topics, issues, and events of interest to educators involved in literacy programs at all levels of education.

## ***About The Review Process***

The complete review process takes approximately 10 to 16 weeks. Upon receipt of a manuscript, an initial review will be conducted and feedback sent to the author. Manuscripts accepted for peer review will be evaluated by at least two reviewers who are uninformed as to the identity of the author. The editor will compile notes from the reviewers and send feedback to the author, including whether the article has been accepted for publication and any requests for revision. Manuscripts are evaluated in terms of interest, quality of writing, appropriate documentation of ideas, uniqueness, and needs of the journal. Research articles should include a clear description of the methodology and should be written in a style that will be readable by classroom teachers. The final decision for acceptance of manuscripts resides with the editor. Please review articles in the journal before submitting manuscripts for consideration. Any questions about the submission process should be directed to Roxanne Owens, IRCJ Editor, by e-mail at [ircjournal@illinoisreadingcouncil.org](mailto:ircjournal@illinoisreadingcouncil.org).

## ***Short Submissions***

For each issue, short items such as original poems, cartoons, artwork, or personal anecdotes may appear throughout the journal. Such submissions should be one-half page to one page in length, double-spaced, and word-processed. Front and back cover art is also accepted. The editor selects these items.

If you have questions about the submission process, please e-mail Roxanne Owens, *IRCJ* Editor, at [IRCJournal@illinoisreadingcouncil.org](mailto:IRCJournal@illinoisreadingcouncil.org).

## ***IRCJ Submission Guidelines***

Article submissions should be eight to 25 double-spaced pages, including references. Please prepare and submit your manuscript consistent with the following guidelines.

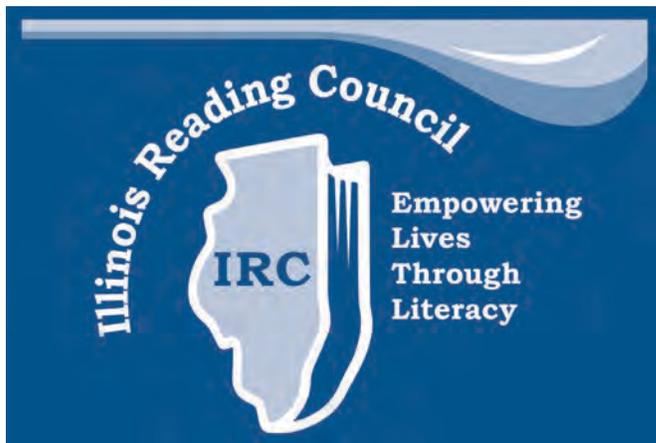
## ***Manuscript Submission Guidelines***

NEW! You can now submit your article online at <http://illinoisreadingcouncil.org/ircjournalsubmission.html>:

- *Anonymize the Manuscript Text:* Remove any names or references to the author(s) and affiliated institutions (clearly marked placeholders may be employed, e.g., [Author Name]; [Name of Institution]).
- *Text Formatting:* In general, apply APA style guidelines (7th ed.) to your text (e.g., Times New Roman 12 point or a similar serif font, double spaced, 1-inch margins, etc.).
- *File Type:* Save the manuscript as a MS *Word* document .doc or docx. (MS *Word* is used to provide in-text comments and revisions, so please do not submit pdf., .pages or .rtf.)
- *File Name:* This should conform to the following format: article v1\_{title of article}\_mm-dd-yy  
Example: article v1\_Reading is essential\_5-10-20
- Download the cover letter template from the submission webpage and fill it out.
- Rename the cover letter file name as follows: cover\_{title of article}\_mm-dd-yy
- Example: cover\_Reading is essential\_5-10-20

Additional questions can be sent to

***IRCJournal@illinoisreadingcouncil.org***



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Twitter: @ILReadCouncil #ircreads  
Instagram: [instagram.com/ilreadcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/ilreadcouncil)  
Pinterest: [pinterest.com/illinoisreading](https://www.pinterest.com/illinoisreading)  
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### **Executive Director**

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### **Editor of *Illinois Reading Council Journal***

Roxanne Owens  
[ircjournal@illinoisreadingcouncil.org](mailto:ircjournal@illinoisreadingcouncil.org)



# MEMBERSHIP FORM

1100 Beech Street, Building 8, Suite 2  
Normal, IL 61761

Phone: 309-454-1341  
Fax: 309-454-3512

Email: [irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org](mailto:irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org)  
Web: [www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org](http://www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org)

1 Please print or complete the form online.

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Bus. Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 School Name \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
 or  
 Business/Institution \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
 Are you a Preservice Teacher? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no College/University \_\_\_\_\_

2 List the council(s) you wish to join.

When you join, you receive membership in the IRC, as well as membership in a local or special interest council. You must select at least one of the councils listed on the back.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

3 List the dues amount of each council you are joining.

**\$50 - One year membership for IRC and one council.** If you join more than one council, each additional council is \$15.  
**\$30 - Preservice Teacher membership** and \$5 for each additional council.

4 Option to Purchase Print Journals.

IRC Membership comes with online access to the *IRC Journal*. Current issues will also be sent by email quarterly to you. If you wish to purchase a print journal, it is an additional \$20 per year.

Total Before Optional Print Journal \_\_\_\_\_

Add \$20 Fee for Print Journal \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL AMOUNT DUE** \_\_\_\_\_

5 Return this form with payment to:  
**Illinois Reading Council**  
**ATTN: Membership Dept.**  
**1100 Beech St, Building 8, Suite 2**  
**Normal, IL 61761**

Method of Payment:  Check to IRC  Visa  Mastercard  Discover  American Express  
 (Sorry, no P.O.'s accepted.)

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Cardholder's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card Expiration Date     Mo. Yr.

Paying by credit card? A \$2 service charge is added.  
 Join Online or Fax: 309-454-3512

Cardholder's Address \_\_\_\_\_ CVV Code \_\_\_\_\_

6 In our continuing effort to provide meaningful services to our members, IRC requests the following information.

Are you a member of the International Literacy Association (ILA)?

- a. \_\_\_\_ yes membership # \_\_\_\_\_ expiration date \_\_\_\_\_  
 b. \_\_\_\_ no

Professional Areas of Interest (Check 3)

- a. \_\_\_\_ administration
- b. \_\_\_\_ adult literacy
- c. \_\_\_\_ affective reading
- d. \_\_\_\_ assessment
- e. \_\_\_\_ children's literature
- f. \_\_\_\_ comprehension
- g. \_\_\_\_ content area reading
- h. \_\_\_\_ family literacy
- i. \_\_\_\_ holistic reading
- j. \_\_\_\_ multilingual/multicultural
- k. \_\_\_\_ newspapers in education
- l. \_\_\_\_ parents and reading
- m. \_\_\_\_ reading for gifted students
- n. \_\_\_\_ research
- o. \_\_\_\_ study skills
- p. \_\_\_\_ teacher education
- q. \_\_\_\_ technology in reading
- r. \_\_\_\_ Title I/remedial reading
- s. \_\_\_\_ young adult literature
- t. \_\_\_\_ young authors/writing

Age

- a. \_\_\_\_ 18-24
- b. \_\_\_\_ 25-39
- c. \_\_\_\_ 40-54
- d. \_\_\_\_ 55 and over

Years in Education Profession

- a. \_\_\_\_ 0-4
- b. \_\_\_\_ 5-14
- c. \_\_\_\_ 15-29
- d. \_\_\_\_ 30 and over

Highest Degree Earned

- a. \_\_\_\_ Bachelors
- b. \_\_\_\_ Masters
- c. \_\_\_\_ Doctorate

Present Position

**Classroom Teacher:**

- a. \_\_\_\_ preschool
- b. \_\_\_\_ K-3
- c. \_\_\_\_ 4-6
- d. \_\_\_\_ middle school/jr. high
- e. \_\_\_\_ high school
- f. \_\_\_\_ post Secondary

**Administrator:**

- a. \_\_\_\_ curriculum/reading supervisor
- b. \_\_\_\_ building principal
- c. \_\_\_\_ superintendent
- d. \_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

**Other:**

- a. \_\_\_\_ librarian
- b. \_\_\_\_ parent
- c. \_\_\_\_ special ed. teacher
- d. \_\_\_\_ gifted/talented teacher
- e. \_\_\_\_ Title I/remedial
- f. \_\_\_\_ reading specialist
- g. \_\_\_\_ retired

## Illinois Reading Council Membership

### Locations of IRC Local & Special Interest Council Regions by Counties

The annual membership of \$50 includes membership in the Illinois Reading Council **and** a local or special interest council. The annual preservice teacher membership is \$30 for one who has not been certified in the teaching profession and is working toward an initial teaching certificate. Please select the council(s) you wish to join from the list below. Residence in any of the designated council counties you join is not required. If you join more than one local or special interest council at this time, each additional council is \$15. Preservice teachers pay \$5 for each additional council. IRC Membership comes with online access to the webinars, book clubs, *IRC Journal*, and more. The *IRC Journal* and other membership benefits will also be sent by email to you. If you wish to purchase a print journal, it is an additional \$20 per year. Follow the steps on the front of this form.

REGION 1	REGION 4	REGION 7
<p><b>Northern Illinois Reading Council</b> - (Boone, DeKalb, Winnebago, Eastern Lee &amp; Ogle)</p> <p><b>Northwestern Illinois Reading Council</b> - (Jo Daviess, Stephenson, Carroll)</p> <p><b>Sauk Valley Reading Council</b> - (Eastern Whiteside &amp; Henry, Western Lee, Ogle, &amp; Bureau)</p> <p><b>Starved Rock Reading Council</b> - (LaSalle, Grundy, Kendall, Livingston, Eastern Bureau)</p>	<p><b>Black Hawk Reading Council</b> - (Rock Island, Mercer, Western Henry &amp; Whiteside)</p> <p><b>Illinois Valley Reading Council</b> - (Stark, Putnam, Marshall, Peoria, Woodford, Tazewell, Eastern Fulton, Mason)</p> <p><b>Mississippi Valley Reading Council</b> - (Adams, Brown, Pike, Scott, Greene, Calhoun)</p> <p><b>Western Illinois Reading Council</b> - (Henderson, Warren, Knox, McDonough, Hancock, Schuyler, Western Fulton)</p>	<p><b>East Central-EIU Reading Council</b> - (Moultrie, Shelby, Cumberland, Coles, Clark, Edgar, Douglas)</p> <p><b>Illini Reading Council</b> - (Champaign, Piatt, Southern Ford)</p> <p><b>Vermilion Valley Reading Council</b> - (Vermilion)</p>
REGION 2	REGION 5	REGION 8
<p><b>Chicago Area Reading Association (CARA)</b> - (Chicago Area - Cook County within the Chicago city limits)</p> <p><b>Lake Area Reading Council</b> - (Western Lake, McHenry, Northwestern Cook)</p> <p><b>Suburban Council of IRA (SCIRA)</b> - (Eastern Lake, Northern Cook)</p>	<p><b>South Suburban Reading Council</b> - (Those parts of Cook Co. bounded on west by Will-Cook Rd., north by 115th St., and/or Chicago City limits)</p> <p><b>Two Rivers Reading Council</b> - (Kankakee, Iroquois, Northern Ford)</p> <p><b>Will County Reading Council</b> - (Will)</p>	<p><b>Lewis and Clark Reading Council</b> - (Macoupin, Jersey, Madison, St. Clair, Monroe, Washington, Clinton)</p> <p><b>National Road Reading Council</b> - (Bond, Effingham, Fayette, Marion)</p>
REGION 3	REGION 6	REGION 9
<p><b>Fox Valley Reading Council</b> - (Kane)</p> <p><b>Prairie Area Reading Council</b> - (Western DuPage County)</p> <p><b>West Suburban Reading Council</b> - (DuPage County east of Route 83 and those parts of Cook County west of Austin Boulevard excluding all areas within the Chicago city limits)</p>	<p><b>Central Illinois Reading Council</b> - (Logan, Menard, Cass, Morgan, Sangamon, Christian, Montgomery)</p> <p><b>Macon County Reading Council</b> - (Macon)</p> <p><b>MID-State Reading Council</b> - (McLean, DeWitt)</p>	<p><b>South Eastern Reading Council</b> - (Lawrence, Richland, Crawford, Jasper, Edwards, Clay, Wabash, Wayne, White)</p> <p><b>Southern Illinois Reading Council</b> - (Jefferson, Randolph, Perry, Franklin, Williamson, Saline, Gallatin, Union, Johnson, Pope, Alexander, Hardin, Pulaski, Massac, Jackson, Hamilton)</p>
REGION 10		
<p><b>CIRP</b> - (College Instructors of Reading Professionals)</p> <p><b>ICARE</b> - (Illinois Council for Affective Reading Education)</p> <p><b>SRL</b> - (Secondary Reading League)</p>		

# IRC

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