Newsletter

A Call to Colleagues…

From your Leadership Team

Betsy   Gwen   Dave   Marcelle

LRA Members:

We seek to bring LRA together to support our communities in these times that are unprecedented for our generation. Along with you, we are concerned about the impact of COVID-19. We hope that you and your loved ones are healthy and safe.

Due to COVID-19, many of you have moved your university teaching as well as research projects online. Similarly, K-12 teachers, parents, principals, and policymakers, are faced with providing robust online literacy teaching and learning.

As the leaders of your professional community, we want to meet your needs and the needs of the people we serve. Please help us by taking a moment to list any valuable resources or tools that you think might be beneficial to LRA members. You might share online teacher education research reports, online management systems (e.g., Canvas, Moodle, others), web sites, learning tools, podcasts, and such.

We would also like to be a resource to LRA members who have opportunities to support K-12 literacy learners, teachers, parents, principals, and policymakers. Many of you conduct research that examines online literacy learning as well as online literacy pedagogy. You might list research and resources that support robust digital literacies learning and digital pedagogies.

To capture your recommendations, in the next few days you will receive a survey link. In the meantime, please start your list of helpful resources.

We plan to post the results of this survey to LRA's website and continue to gather useful resources for you.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to LRA Headquarters, lrahq@literacyresearchassociation.org.

Let's encourage and support each other.

Stay safe.

Conference 2020

Gwendolyn Thompson McMillon, Conference Chair

David B. Yaden, Conference Associate Chair

> **70th LRA Annual Conference**
> **DECEMBER 2–5, 2020**
> All of Us are Smarter than Each of Us: **Collaborate for IMPACT**
> LITERACY RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
> Hilton Americas Houston | Houston, Texas

Mitigating the spread of Covid19 has been the reason for the cancellation of many events, including national and international conferences. At this time, we are preparing for our LRA Conference 2020. We assure you that we are thinking ahead and envisioning multiple

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Member Publications

Gabriel DellaVecchia recently published "Reading proficiency or else? Examining third-grade reading laws and their potential impacts" in the March/April 2020 issue of Literacy Today. The article provides a brief introduction to these widespread laws, highlights both good intentions and unintended consequences, and suggests action steps. To read the article, click here.

Dr. Kelly Johnston recently published "Tapping into the Feeling Power: Considering the Affordances of the Affective Nature of Multimodal Literacies" in Language Arts (January 2020 themed issue: Multimodal Literacies). This article offers an affective perspective on multimodal literacies and encourages teachers to consider students' affective responses as a form of literacy engagement. Kelly also published "Attention to Affect: Rehumanizing Literacy Pedagogy through a Focus on Affect" in Literacy Today, the International Literacy Association's member magazine. This article encourages practitioners to value students' affective engagement in the classroom and to consider how affect moves us to humanize literacy pedagogy in ways we might not have yet experienced or normalized? This question builds from affect theory's push to look toward what we might not yet know but what could be.

Manuscripts Wanted

Literacy researchers and educators: please consider submitting a manuscript for a special issue of English Teaching: Practice and Critique, titled "Theorising Multimodality through Children and Youths' Perceptions and Experiences." The issue hopes to broaden the lenses by which we understand multimodality by asking how young people make sense of it. Manuscripts are due July 15, 2020.

For more details, follow this link.

Submit Your News!

possibilities. Please email me at gmcmillon@literacyresearchassociation.org if you have ideas or suggestions.

Update and Shout Out to Area Chairs

Conference 2020 proposals have been submitted and our phenomenal area chairs are busy matching proposals with reviewers, recruiting additional reviewers, and contacting reviewers to make sure that they have whatever they need. Our area chairs rock! Why? Because they are fulfilling all of their responsibilities in the midst of transitioning their face-to-face university courses to online sessions in the middle of the semester. Many of them are also homeschooling their children, and/or taking care of elderly parents. If you know an area chair, please take time to send them a quick email to say "thanks" for their work.

Calling all Nominees for the Edward B. Fry Award

Purpose of Award

The purpose of the **Edward B. Fry** Book Award is to recognize LRA members who author a book on literacy research and practice. The award was established by **Edward B. Fry** who contributed a fund to support it. The first award was presented in 1995. An award seal was designed and used for the first time in 2000.

Criteria for Consideration

Eligibility for the award is limited to current members of LRA who have written or been one of several authors of a book. The book must have a copyright date within 5 years of the date when the award is made.

The book that receives the award will:

- Advance knowledge about literacy
- Display inquiry into literacy
- Show responsible intellectual risk-taking

Procedures for Nomination

Letters of nomination and a copy of the nominated book must be sent to the Chair by or before May 1st. Nomination letters must directly address the ways in which the nominated book meets the criteria outlined above. Letters cannot simply reiterate the endorsements or summaries designed to promote the text. Self-nominations are accepted. A book may be re-nominated if it has been previously nominated but did not win the award. **Please submit nomination letters to Iliana Reyes by May 1, 2020 (NO Exceptions).**

Presentation of Award

The **Edward B. Fry** Book Award is presented at the annual conference and the author receives a plaque, a monetary award. The monetary award will be in the amount of 5 percent of the principal in the Fund. If there is more than one author, the amount will be distributed equally among co-authors.

Edward B. Fry Book Committee

Iliana Reyes (ilianareyes2000@gmail.com), Chair

Albert J. Kingston Distinguished Service Award

The Albert J. Kingston Award is awarded annually to honor an LRA member for distinguished contributions of service to the Literacy Research Association. This notable honor has been presented annually since 1985. A complete list of past recipients is featured on the LRA website. Do you know an exemplary member of the Literacy Research Association who is an exemplar of outstanding service to the organization? Nominations for the 2020 Albert J. Kingston Award are now being accepted! Check out the LRA website for nomination guidelines.

Please email nominations to Paola Pilonieta, Committee Chair, at pilonieta@uncc.edu by August 15, 2020.

2020 Early Career Achievement Award Committee: Call for Nominees

Purpose of Award

The Early Career Achievement Award is awarded annually to honor the new members of the LRA community who have been actively involved in research, teaching, and service for approximately 3-7 years, and have demonstrated outstanding commitment and accomplishment.

Criteria for Consideration

Nominees for the Early Career Achievement Award can be of any rank. However, nominees must: (1) be members of LRA (for at least three years, but not necessarily consecutively) (2) possess a terminal doctoral degree, and (3) have worked in the field seven years or less from the conferral date of their degree to the posted deadline for this competition.

Procedures for Nomination

An LRA member may be nominated by a peer member of LRA through a recommendation letter outlining the candidate's contributions to the field of literacy research and the nominee's participation in LRA. **Please submit nomination letters to Julia López-Robertson by midnight, April 15, 2020.**

Nominees will then be asked to submit in ONE DOCUMENT: (1) a current curriculum vita, including affiliations, degrees, research honors and awards, publications, and service on editorial

boards of research journals; (2) a statement of approximately 1,500 words delineating professional growth and research agenda; (3) a letter of support from the candidate's current institution (e.g., teaching/research colleague, department Chair). **These materials are to be submitted to Julia López-Robertson by midnight, May 15, 2020.**

Contact Information:

Julia López-Robertson, PhD

Chair, Early Career Achievement Award Committee

University of South Carolina, Columbia

Email: lopezrob@mailbox.sc.edu

LRA Members Speak...

As we move forward, the newsletter will offer opportunities for LRA members to provide relevant information. Our first voice speaks out about online teaching. Let's hear from Dr. Rachel Karchmer-Klein.

Hurry Up and Teach Online

by Rachel Karchmer-Klein

Like universities around the world, my place of work is requiring faculty to transition all coursework to online delivery - as of today, or tomorrow, or in our case, next week since we're currently on spring break. I taught my first course online in 2003 and I coordinate two fully online graduate programs (Literacy and Teacher Leadership) so although this is certainly a chaotic time, teaching online is second nature for me. Yet, this call to action is quite a disruptor for those who have little experience teaching in virtual environments or frankly, have no interest in it. If you find yourself struggling with this challenge know that the most common pitfall is attempting to translate your traditional coursework into an online environment. Instead, consider these guiding principles if you find yourself in this situation:

1. It's Not About the Tool
Right about now your work email or social media accounts are overflowing with lists of online tools. In fact, many companies are even offering them for free to educators for a limited time. My recommendation is to forget the tool until you've identified your learning objective.

2. It's About the Content and Instructional Design
Online instruction should begin with your learning objective. Once you know what it is you want your students to learn, then consider the process you want them to follow to engage with course content. My recommendation is to incorporate the most familiar digital tools into your instruction. For instance, if your university uses a Learning Management System (e.g., Canvas, Blackboard), students should already know how to submit work, download a PDF, participate in discussion boards, and create and upload videos. This will cut down on the time it will take to learn the nuances of a new tool, and instead, allow students to leverage them easily to participate in your learning activities.

3. All Online Instructors are Teachers of Digital Text
When you teach online you will incorporate multiple modes, signs or symbols that represent meaning (e.g., still and moving images, oral and written language). For too long, literacy education has ignored the importance of preparing teachers to effectively read and write in digital environments. In turn, we've done a poor job of teaching K-12 students how to do the same. Teaching online provides a fertile ground for considering digital multimodality and how such modes can be interpreted. Transitioning to online instruction will inevitably encourage faculty to consider how they communicate with students and vice versa.

I recommend two books for those seeking guidance at this time.

1. *Improving Online Teacher Education* (Karchmer-Klein, 2020, Teachers College Press).

This book is unique in that the examples are drawn from different programs in education, allowing the content to be applied to a wide range of situations and education-related disciplines. It also stands apart from other technology books because it does not cover every aspect of online teaching and learning. As I said earlier, instructional design is what makes or breaks online teaching. The book's focus is on establishing a framework for systematically integrating evidence-based practices into digital teaching.

2. *Effective Practices in Online Teacher Preparation for Literacy Educators* (Karchmer-Klein & Pytash, 2020, IGI Global)

This book is a compilation of 16 research papers authored by literacy educators experienced with online teaching. Each descriptive study presents findings and lessons learned from implementing evidence-based practices in online undergraduate or graduate literacy courses aligned with the International Literacy Association's Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professional-2017 (ILA, 2018). The book is divided into three sections and the papers are grouped by one of three themes: developing reflective literacy professionals, developing collaborative literacy professionals, or developing evidence-based online programs in literacy.

As I reflect on the current state of education, I can't help but wonder if literacy educators now see the importance of digital literacies and where and when they should be taught.

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