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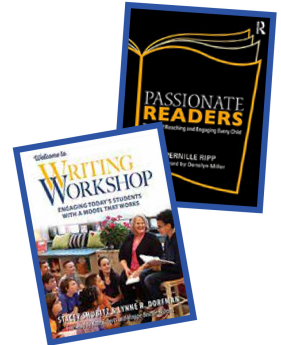
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WINTER 2022 IRC BOOK CLUBS BEGIN JANUARY 23, 2022

By the Illinois Reading Council

Join educators from all over the state in the online [IRC BOOK CLUB](#) that will begin on January 23, 2022! Choose one or two books!

Read, reflect on, and respond to ***Passionate Readers: The Art of Reaching and Engaging Every Child*** by Pernille Ripp and/or ***Welcome to Writing Workshop: Engaging Today's Students with a Model That Works*** by Stacey Shubitz and Lynne R. Dorfman. Beginning January 23, these seven-week online discussions will help you learn the five keys to creating a passionate reading environment or how to create a thriving writing workshop. Participants who complete all assignments will be eligible to receive 15 PD clock hours for each book club. Participants who complete one book club during the winter will have the opportunity to participate in the other one during the spring session.



Required for participation:

- Gmail address (free at <https://mail.google.com/>). The Book Club uses Google Classroom, which does not work with Yahoo, AOL, Hotmail, etc.
- Texts: *Passionate Readers* by Pernille Ripp is available through Routledge (www.routledge.com) and *Welcome to Writing Workshop* by Stacey Shubitz and Lynne R. Dorfman is available through Stenhouse Publishing (www.stenhouse.com).

Register by **January 15, 2022**, to participate in the book club. Registration is FREE for IRC Members. The cost for non-members is \$45, which includes IRC membership for one year. PLEASE NOTE: The cost of book(s) is not included.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR THE 2022 IRC CONFERENCE

By the Illinois Reading Council

The [2022 IRC Conference, Literacy in Bloom: Growing](#)

2022 ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL CONFERENCE
PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

Readers and Ideas, will be held from March 10-11, 2022 at the Bank of Springfield Center, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel, and the Wyndham Hotel in Springfield, Illinois. If you haven't registered yet, this is a great time as the early registration rates don't end until **February 5th**. There are also discounted group registration rates for 10 or more participants. Special rates have also been negotiated with Springfield area hotels.



Highlights for 2022:

- **Hear the Authors Read:** Don't miss this incredible opportunity to hear the authors read from a new book or work in progress on Thursday evening at the conference.
- **Illinois Reads Event:** Join the Illinois authors of the 2022 Illinois Reads Books for a happy hour speed-dating experience on Thursday afternoon at the conference.
- **Conference Shirts:** Order your *Literacy in Bloom* merchandise by February 1st.
- **Administrators Academy:** In partnership with the Illinois Principals Association, Alison Gordon will be presenting Understanding and Supporting Instructional Coaching: A Toolkit for Administrators on Friday at the conference. Administrator Academy Credit and PD Clock Hours will be available.
- **Preservice Teachers' Pizza Party:** A special time for undergraduate preservice teachers to network and leave with a door prize for their new classrooms.
- **Over 200 PD Sessions:** At the conference, educators will be able to learn about diverse literacy topics through a professional and collegial exchange of ideas.

The Illinois Reading Council is pleased to announce this year's featured speakers:

- Blue Balliett
- David Biedrzycki
- Jeffrey Brown
- Joelle Charbonneau
- Sonja Cherry-Paul
- Debbie Diller
- Lynne Dorfman
- Alison Gordon
- Chris Grabenstein
- Jacob Grant
- Carol Jago
- Brendan Kiely

- Donalyn Miller
- Raúl The Third
- Jan Richardson
- Pernille Ripp
- Jason Reynolds
- John Schu
- Brian Selznick
- Lauren Tarshis
- Matt Tavares
- Becky Anderson Wilkins
- Ibi Zoboi
- 2022 Illinois Reads Authors

To find out more, download the Preliminary Program at www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org.

NOBODY SAID IT WOULD BE EASY

By Cindi Koudelka, IRC State Coordinator

The idea of culturally responsive teaching has been around for decades. It has gone by many names and a variety of iterations. Culturally relevant teaching, culturally sustaining practices, and multicultural education are all terms that have been synthesized in Gloria Ladson-Billings' (1992) work on culturally relevant pedagogy. She proposed a form of teaching that engaged learners whose experiences and cultures were traditionally excluded from mainstream settings by incorporating the students' ethnic and cultural identities and the recognition of societal inequities to empower the students both emotionally and cognitively. Building on the work of Ladson-Billings, Geneva Gay (2000) expanded the concept beyond race and ethnicity and developed a framework with a focus on teachers' practices—emphasizing “the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them” (31). A myriad of other researchers and brilliant theorists have explored the idea of culturally relevant teaching, but you didn't click this article to read a whole book, and this isn't really about the history of the movement. It seems so

obvious that obvious want to incorporate the students' lived experiences into the classroom to help make their learning relevant and create meaningful connections to their existing schema, but it isn't that simple.

Between mandates, lack of resources, curricular challenges, and a tiny pandemic impacting our daily work in the classroom, it can be particularly challenging to honor and embed the experiences of our students into our instruction. Those challenges, however, are the very reason we must continue focusing on culturally responsive approaches. Nobody ever said it would be easy, and if it were easy, we probably wouldn't need to be doing it because that would mean the world was already positioned to meet everyone's individual needs. You don't need to be reminded that teaching is a challenging career or that it may feel extra challenging these days. However, we may need reminding that staying the course with culturally responsive teaching is exactly the way to address those challenges. Don't worry about teaching your content ... focus on teaching your kids. Meet them where they are. Find inclusive books that fill their souls. Help students develop positive identities and empathy for others. The content will flow more smoothly making it more likely for the learning to stick and ultimately become a transferable lifelong skill.

By focusing on maintaining a culturally responsive classroom, teachers are able to honor and celebrate their students' identities and experiences and use those as the bridge to new and lasting learning that benefits all students. If you need some resources to help you create or reinvigorate your culturally responsive practices, please visit these sites:

- [The Center for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning](#)
- [Culturally Responsive Education Hub](#)
- [New America: Culturally Responsive Education Resources for Federal, State, and Local Stakeholders](#)

References

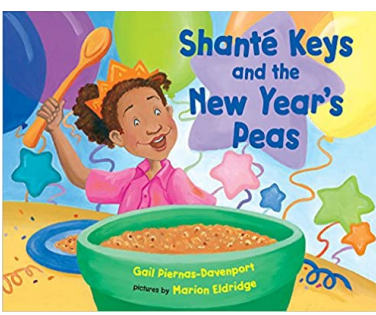
Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Teachers College Press.

Ladson-Billings, Gloria (1992). Reading between the lines and beyond the pages: A culturally relevant approach to literacy teaching. *Theory into Practice*, 31(4), 312–320. doi:10.1080/00405849209543558

FAMILY LITERACY BOOKSHELF

By Barb Ashton, IRC Family Literacy Committee Chair

Happy New Year! During January we honor and commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday and anticipate our favorite football team making the trip to the Super Bowl. January is also a good time to enjoy some winter family activities, or doing a 500 – 1000 piece puzzle in honor of National Puzzle Month while having some hot cocoa, or reading a few good books.



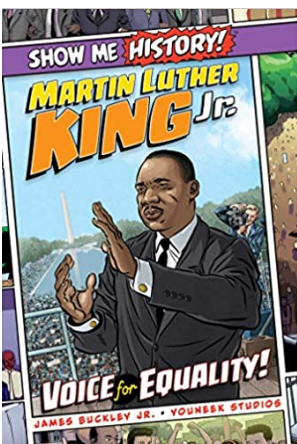
Does your family have a New Year's tradition? If yes, great! You'll want to read *Shante Keys and the New Year's Peas* by Gail Piernas-Davenport to learn about other families throughout the world who have New Year's traditions. Shante is visiting her grandmother who lives in the southern part of America for New Year's. She's looking forward to having the traditional dish that includes black eyed peas which are believed to bring "LUCK." Shante helps grandma add the ingredients to make the traditional dish but grandma soon discovers that she forgot the black eyed peas. So grandma sends Shante out into the neighborhood to search for some black eyed peas. As Shante goes from place to

place within the neighborhood, she meets people/families of various diverse cultures and learns of their cultural traditions. She finally stops at her aunt's home who has extra peas and then hurries back to grandma's home and they finish making the traditional dish. Shante enjoys the New Year's dinner with grandma but also with all the people she met on her journey to get the black eyed peas for the traditional New Year's dinner. *Shante Keys and the New Year's Peas* is a fun read told in rhyme and accompanied by vibrant illustrations. The story also provides a nice introduction for students to learn about how other people around the world celebrate New Year's Day. *Shante Keys and the New Year's Peas* can be viewed on You Tube as well.



New Year's Kiss by Lee Matthews is a cute New Year's story that takes place between Christmas and New Year's Eve. Sixteen year old Tess and her older sister Lauren are sent to their grandmother's ski lodge in Vermont over the holidays. Their parents are getting divorced and want the girls to spend some time together to enjoy the various activities grandmother has planned for them at the lodge. Lauren, who is outgoing, plans on skiing, dancing, and having an enjoyable winter fling. Tess, who is shy and more introverted, plans on spending time curled up with a series of good books. However, Tess's plan changes when she meets Christopher in the lobby. He's a cute boy who has a broken leg due to a skiing accident. They spend time during the week chatting with each other. This leads Tess to create a "Bucket List" to be completed before New Year's Eve. Tess's list helps her to become more adventurous and less shy. Will Tess complete her list? Will the flirtation between Tess and Christopher turn into a more serious romance? At the same time Christopher has a secret that he keeps from Tess. When the ball drops on New Year's Eve will Tess have completed her

bucket list and share a kiss with Christopher? To find out the answers to these questions, you'll have to read *New Year's Kiss*. This is a fun and cute YA novel for the early teens who are just beginning to read this genre.



Martin Luther King Jr.: Voice for Equality! by James Buckley Jr. is a graphical biography that tells the story of Dr. King and his work during America's Civil Rights Movement. The story of Dr. King is narrated by "Libby" (Lady Liberty) and "Sam" (Uncle Sam). It begins with Martin's early childhood, progressing through many of his life experiences as a young man, as a minister, a "fiery" orator, a civil rights leader, and his death by assassination. The detailed colorful illustrations capture the feelings and emotions of this time period. Many of ML King's exact words/quotes and dialogue are shown in different colored speech and thought balloons that enhance the story. Side bar commentary by "Lady Liberty" and "Uncle Sam" give the reader additional little known facts about Dr. King. At the back of the book is a nice glossary to help readers with the vocabulary. *Martin Luther King Jr.: Voice for Equality!* is part of a great series for your middle grade students, ESL students, and special needs students. The *Show Me History* series is a nice addition to all libraries.



Getting your first pair of ice skates and heading to the local frozen pond/rink on a cold, brisk winter day is a special memory. *A Day for Skating* by Sarah Sullivan gives the reader a return to that day. The story begins with a young girl and her family driving to the local frozen pond to spend some family time together skating. The pond is crowded with boys playing hockey and skaters of various skills. The little girl is a novice and takes a few gliding steps and falls. Dad helps her up and explains to her that's "part of the process and the



way we learn.” After gaining more confidence in her skating the young girl and her family take a break and head to the warming shed for some sandwiches and hot cocoa. Having finished their meal and getting warmed up, the family heads back out to take a few more whirls around the pond. Soon it’s time to take the skates off and head home for a warm bath and bedtime. *A Day for Skating* is told in rhyming verse enhanced by watercolor and colored pencil illustrations. This is a great winter book about family time, learning a new sport, and making friends. This is a delightful book to share with your preschoolers and early primary students. Hear the story read on You Tube.

Looking Ahead

January 4: World Braille Day – In honor of Louis Braille and the importance of Braille as a means of communication for blind people.

January 11: Amelia Earhart Day – First Woman to Fly Solo

January 17: Benjamin Franklin's Birthday

January 18: Winnie the Pooh Day – A. A. Milne’s Birthday

January 20: Penguin Awareness Day

January 21: Squirrel Appreciation Day

January 28: Multicultural Children’s Book Day - Visit the multiculturalchildrensbookday.com for a wealth of materials and activities to celebrate Read the World through children’s literature and help bring about inclusion and kindness within your classroom, library, and other school settings.

January 29: National Puzzle Day

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.

Reading Passage Resources

[Read Theory](#)

This free online resource of reading passages provides access to over 1,000 interactive reading comprehension exercises that adapt to individual ability levels. This program teaches students to think critically, draw inferences, understand scope and global concepts, find or recall details, and infer the meanings of useful vocabulary words.

Assessment Resources

[QuizStar](#)

QuizStar is a web-based quiz maker that enables you to create, administer and automatically grade your quizzes online. With QuizStar you can manage classes and quizzes, attach multimedia files to questions, make quizzes in multiple languages, and you can access it from any computer.

Web 2.0 Resources

[Flashcard Stash](#)

This online tool allows you to create and customize your own digital flashcards. You can create flashcards with anything, and it allows you to include images as well.

UPCOMING PD EVENTS

By the Illinois Reading Council

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

- **January 5, 2022: IRC Webinar** on Concretizing Antibias and Antiracism in our Schools with Liz Kleinrock from 7:00 to 8:00 pm via Zoom Webinar.

- **January 11, 2022: 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.
- **January 15, 2022: IRC Book Club** registrations are due.
- **January 19, 2022: Central Illinois Reading Council** will host the monthly CIRC Book Chats on alternating professional books and literature topics from 7:00 to 8:00 pm via Zoom.
- **January 25, 2022: West Suburban Reading Council** will host Literacy Lessons from COVID-19: Improving Instruction for All Moving Forward (Part II) with Jason Klein from 7:00 to 9:00 pm via Zoom.
- **January 26, 2022: Starved Rock Reading Council** will host March Madness at 6:00 pm at JJ's Pub, 104 W Main Street, Ottawa, Illinois.
- **January 30, 2022: Secondary Reading League** will host 6-weeks of the SRL Online Strategy Sessions via Google Classroom.

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 or by phone at 309-454-1341.

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

