


Empowering
Lives
Through
Literacy

Communicator

203 Landmark Drive, Suite B
Normal, IL 61761

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

Email: irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org
Web: www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org

 [@IllinoisReadingCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/IllinoisReadingCouncil)  [Twitter @ILReadCouncil #ircreads](https://twitter.com/ILReadCouncil)  [Instagram.com/ilreadcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/ilreadcouncil)  [Pinterest.com/illinoisreading](https://www.pinterest.com/illinoisreading)

2021 ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL CONFERENCE

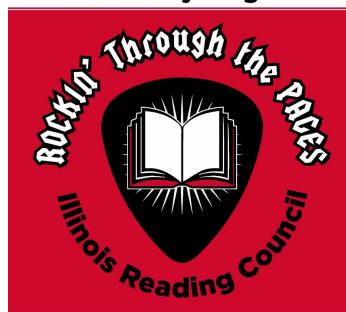
By the Illinois Reading Council

The [53rd Annual IRC Conference, Rockin' Through the Pages](#), will be held from October 19-20, 2021 at the Bank of Springfield Center, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel, and the Wyndham Hotel in Springfield, Illinois. The Preliminary Program is updated and online at www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org.

Highlights for 2021:

- **Hear the Authors Read:** Don't miss this incredible opportunity to hear the authors read from a new book or a work in progress.
- **Illinois Reads Event:** Join the Illinois authors of the 2021 Illinois Reads Books for a happy hour speed-dating experience.
- **Administrators Academy:** In partnership with the Illinois Principals Association, Alison Gordon will be presenting Understanding and Supporting Instructional Coaching: A Toolkit for Administrators. 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.

2021 Illinois Reading Council Conference
Preliminary Program



October 19 - 20, 2021
Springfield, Illinois

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

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Donalyn Miller• Ibi Zoboi• Blue Balliett• Jeffrey Brown• Debbie Diller• Lynne Dorfman• Alison Gordon• Jacob Grant• Carol Jago• Brendan Kiely | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Penny Kittle• Raúl The Third• Pernille Ripp• Jan Richardson• John Schu• Matt Tavares• Lauren Tarshis• Becky Anderson Wilkins• 2021 Illinois Reads Authors |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

To find out more about the IRC Conference, visit www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org.

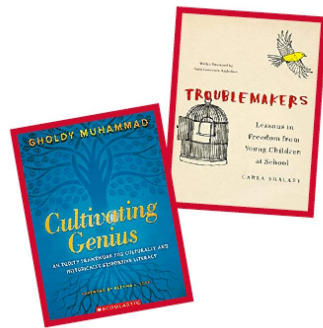
UPCOMING PD OPPORTUNITIES WITH IRC

By the Illinois Reading Council

The Illinois Reading Council is excited to share these upcoming PD opportunities with educators! IRC members can participate in these opportunities for free and earn up to 40 PD clock hours! Non-members can join today for only \$45 to also participate.

FALL 2021 IRC BOOK CLUBS

Educators from all over the state will be reading, reflecting on, and responding to *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy* by Gholdy Muhammad and/or *Troublemakers: Lessons in Freedom from Young Children at School* by Carla Shalaby. Beginning October 24th, these seven-week online discussions will present an equity framework that restores excellence in literacy education or a paradigm-shifting look at the typical expectations for children at school. Participants who complete all assignments will be eligible to receive 15 PD clock hours for each book club. Register by **October 15, 2021** to participate in the book clubs.



IRC WEBINAR SERIES

The Illinois Reading Council will be offering the 2021-2022 IRC Webinar Series for members only.

- **September 1, 2021** ~ Reconsidering “Three R’s”: Reading, Race, and Reckoning with **David Stovall**
- **October 6, 2021** ~ Webinar with **Sara K. Ahmed**
- **November 3, 2021** ~ Every Child Deserves #TheRightTools: Equitable Practices that Meet Students’ Needs with **Towanda Harris**
- **December 1, 2021** ~ Webinar with **Chad Everett**
- **January 5, 2022** ~ Webinar with **Liz Kleinrock**
- **February 2, 2022** ~ Discovering the 2022 Illinois Reads Books with **Becky Anderson**
- **March 2, 2022** ~ Webinar with **M. Colleen Cruz**
- **April 6, 2022** ~ Webinar with **Clare Donovan-Scane**
- **May 4, 2022** ~ Webinar with **Joelle Charbonneau**
- **June 1, 2022** ~ Webinar with **Aeriale N. Johnson**

Members can earn up to 10 PD clock hours for watching each live or recorded webinar until June 30, 2022. Registration links to the live webinars will be emailed to all members approximately two weeks prior to each webinar and the recordings and future registration links will be available through their online IRC Membership Account. Non-members can join online today and also immediately access the registration links and past webinars.

If you have any questions about these PD opportunities, please contact the [IRC Office](#) at anytime.

CALL FOR ARTICLES, TIPS, AND HELPFUL HINTS

By the Illinois Reading Council

The Illinois Reading Council is looking for members to once again share teaching tips, helpful hints, and/or short literacy articles on the following topics:

- **How to Transition Back into the Classroom** for August 2021 with articles due by August 20th.
- **Trauma Informed Practices** for September and October 2021 with articles due by September 5th.
- **Culturally Responsive Teaching** for November and December 2021 with articles due by November 5th.
- **Strategies for Struggling Readers** for January and February 2022 with articles due by January 5th.
- **Building the Reading and Writing Connection** for March and April 2022 with articles due by March 5th.
- **Books the Kids Loved This Year** for May 2022 with articles due by May 5th.
- **My New Favorite Professional Books and Resources** for June 2022 with articles due by June 5th.

By **August 20th**, members are asked to **email their intentions to submit an article** to the [IRC Office](#).

Articles can be up to 400 words and must be submitted by the above due dates to the [IRC Office](#). If your article is accepted for publication, it will be featured in the *IRC Communicator*. Other accepted articles may also be shared through the IRC social media sites.

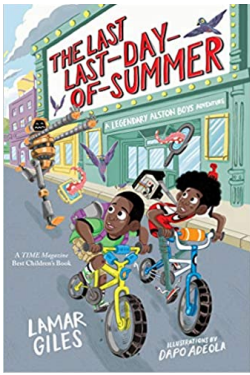
We are also looking for new volunteers to join our regular columnists who write for the Teachers in the Trenches column. Our hope is to bring varied voices to the monthly column from new teachers, urban teachers, rural teachers, experienced teachers, and more. These articles can be about your experiences in your classroom/school, teaching tips, reading strategies, best practices, struggles and solutions in the classroom, collaborations with colleagues, or based on the monthly themes detailed above. If interested, please send an email about yourself and possible article topics to the [IRC Office](#).

IRC looks forward to receiving your submissions and greatly appreciates you sharing your time and talents with the rest of the IRC members!

FAMILY LITERACY BOOKSHELF

By Barb Ashton, IRC Family Literacy Committee Chair

Store shelves and displays are reminding us that a new school year is fast approaching. However, August can still provide several days of enjoyable family summer fun and activities. Family Fun Month and National Picnic Month are among August's celebrations.



What student doesn't want summer vacation to last just one more day before heading back to school? This is the feeling of cousins Otto and Sheed Alston, two African American boys who solve strange mysteries in the book *The Last Last-Day-of-Summer (A Legendary Alston Boys Adventure)* by Lamar Giles (a founding member of We Need Diverse Books). Wanting to get another key to the city for their sleuthing skills the boys need to solve a town mystery. Riding their bikes to the hillside that overlooks the town of Fry in Logan County Virginia they meet a tall thin man in a stovepipe hat – Mr. Flux. He gives the boys an old-fashioned camera and insists they take a picture of the spectacular view. Upon taking the picture, everything becomes frozen in time. With the help of Time Star and some very strange looking characters with personified names such as Golden Hour, Clock Watchers, Witching Hour, Minute Man, etc., will they be able to save the town and get it moving again? You'll need to read *The Last Last-Day-of-Summer* to see if the Alston Boys earn another key to the city.

This is a fun and engaging sci-fi and STEM book that lets kids see that main characters of color can be smart, imaginative, and heroic. The maneuvers, Otto's notes, and the illustrations all help to make this a fun read for middle school readers. *The Last Last-Day-of-Summer* is Book 1 in the Alston Boys series.

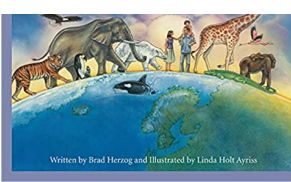


With news of the wild fires in the Pacific Northwest and California being shown on TV, a timely book to read is *I Survived the California Wildfires, 2018* by Lauren Tarshis. This is the story of eleven year old Josh and his mom, who leave their affluent New Jersey home and travel to northern California to stay with mom's sister's family. Mom does this to help protect Josh from the news and the trauma that is associated with his father, who has been convicted of white collar crime and sent to prison. At first Josh doesn't like staying there as he misses his friends and can't use his phone and doesn't have his computer. However, things get better after he meets Elinor and Lucas, who are both firefighters and tell of their experiences fighting wildfires. Then one day while getting something to eat, Josh spots his aunt's laptop. Curious to check the Yankees score, he not only gets the score but sees the news about his dad. Upset and devastated, he leaves the house crying and runs to the nearby

woods. His cousin Holly sees him and follows Josh into the woods hoping to comfort and bring him back home. As they're talking, they smell smoke and see fire surrounding them. Will Holly and Josh escape before they're trapped by the wildfire or possibly be saved by Lucas and Elinor and the other wildfire firefighters? You'll need to read *I Survived the California Wildfire, 2018*. Within the story are details about forestry, climate change, and wildfires. The back of the book includes additional facts and information about wildfires, equipment used to fight them, and suggestions on how to prevent wildfires.

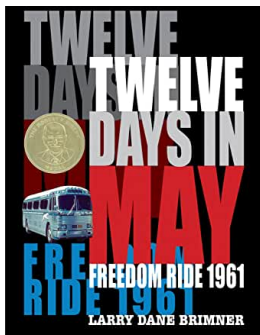


Every year Americans and people around the world generate millions of tons of trash. To help children understand the importance of protecting our environment and planet read *S is for Save the Planet: A How-To-Be*



Green Alphabet by Illinois author Brad Herzog. This is an alphabet book in which each letter is an environmental topic or issue. Written in poetic verse the author provides ideas on how children and their families can make the world greener, cleaner, and a more healthy place to live. In addition to the two rhymed stanzas, the side bars provide more detailed information on the environmental topic. The water-colored illustrations and diversified characters enhance the message that everyone needs to help protect our

environment and planet. The back of the book contains a wealth of website resources for further information. *S is for Save the Planet* would make a great addition to all libraries.



This year marks the 60th Anniversary of the Freedom Ride of 1961. **Twelve Days in May: Freedom Ride 1961** by Larry Dane Brimner is a chronological recount of the 13 individuals from different backgrounds (black and white, men and women, young and old, etc.) who boarded two buses in Washington D.C., bound for New Orleans. The planned trip to desegregate terminals, restaurants, washrooms, etc., was also taken to bring attention to the fact that the Jim Crow laws had been declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court but law enforcement was ignored. As they journeyed further south the freedom riders experienced violence, hatred, retaliation from the KKK (Ku Klux Klan), and sometimes endured serious injury. The riders continued their protest against segregation while practicing nonviolent methods of resistance.

The black and white text pages, photos, political cartoons, and other visuals all enhance the description and documentation of the Civil Rights Movement within America's history. *Twelve Days in May: Freedom Ride 1961* not only provides accurate information about this time period but also allows for discussion and expression of thoughts through writing. This is an informative and engaging book that needs to be added to all libraries. It can also be shared with families to help them talk with their children about racial segregation. The back of the book contains additional resource material, biographical sketches of the Freedom Riders who included former congressman John Lewis, a bibliography, videos, websites, and places to visit. *Freedom Riders: John Lewis and Jim Zwerg on the Front Lines of the Civil Rights Movement* by Ann Bausum is a nice complementary book.

August Reminders

August 1: Francis Scott Key Birthday – Wrote America's National Anthem

August 4: U.S. Coast Guard Day – Learn about this branch of the military that protects America's waters and coastlines

August 7: Campfire Day/Night – Make some s'mores to enjoy with family and friends

August 8: Closing ceremony of the Summer Olympics

August 12: World Elephant Day – Read about elephants and how we can protect them

August 14: World War II ends with Japan's surrender

August 21: National Senior Citizen Day – Thank a Senior Citizen by sending a card, phone call, or email to wish them a nice 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 Resources

[Reading Vine](#)

This resource provides access to a wide variety of different reading passages and related questions to share with students to help improve reading skills. There are fiction and nonfiction passages targeted for specific grade levels, skills and topic discussions.

Assessment Resources

[Edulastic](#)

This interactive multimedia assessment tool allows you to choose high quality questions and pre-built assessments from an item bank. Items include state-related test items. You can also embed video, audio

and images. A built-in tool allows you to create drag-and-drop, multipart, passages, graphing and more.

Web 2.0 Resources

[Theme Spark](#)

Quickly build a lesson from a rubric or standard. Select from thousands of standard-aligned lesson resources or add your own. Also, make a standards-based rubric in less than a minute. Common Core ELA and Math, NGSS, C3, Core Art & 21st Century standards.

UPCOMING PD EVENTS

By the Illinois Reading Council

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

- **August 1, 2021: Will County Reading Council** will launch an online Book Discussion on *Welcome to Writing Workshop: Engaging Today's Student with a Model That Works* by Stacey Shubitz and Lynne Dorfman.
- **August 20, 2021: East Central-EIU Reading Council** will host a Back to School Mixer from 4:00 to 6:00 pm at Roc's, 410 6th Street, Charleston, Illinois.
- **August 25, 2021: Will County Reading Council** and the **Wilmington Public Library** will co-host A Local Book Gossip from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at The Wine Cafe, 130 Bridge Street, Wilmington, Illinois.
- **September 1, 2021: IRC Webinar** on Reconsidering "Three R's": Reading, Race, and Reckoning with David Stovall
- **September 14, 2021: West Suburban Reading Council** will host Literacy Lessons Learned from COVID-19: Improving Instruction For All Moving Forward (Part I) with Jason Klein from 7:00 to 9:00 pm via Zoom.
- **September 16, 2021: Northern Illinois Reading Council** will host Building a Strong Reading Foundation – Phonics, Vocabulary, and Fluency with Timothy Rasinski from 6:00 to 7:30 pm via Zoom.
- **September 23, 2021: Chicago Area Reading Association (CARA)** will host the Fall Resilience and Global Read Aloud from 5:30 to 7:30 pm via Zoom.
- **September 23, 2021: Will County Reading Council** will host a Fall Author Visits with Kelly B. Jensen from 7:00 to 8:00 pm via Zoom.
- **October 6, 2021: IRC Webinar** with Sara K. Ahmed
- **October 19-20, 2021: IRC** will be hosting the 53rd Annual IRC Conference, *Rockin' Through the Pages*, at the Bank of Springfield Center, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel, and the Wyndham Hotel in Springfield, Illinois. Join IRC as we welcome and plan to learn from many diverse featured speakers who will help teachers, specialists, and administrators from every grade-level and content area.
- **October 24, 2021: IRC Book Club** will read, reflect on, and respond to *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy* by Gholdy Muhammad and/or *Troublemakers: Lessons in Freedom from Young Children at School* by Carla Shalaby. These seven-week online discussions will present an equity framework that restores excellence in literacy education or a paradigm-shifting look at the typical expectations for children at school. 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 summer will have the opportunity to participate in the other one during the fall session.

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:

