



IRC WORKSHOP SERIES ONLINE IN MARCH 2021

By Katie Russell, IRC President-Elect

Spring is right around the corner and IRC is excited to host three professional learning opportunities! Lucy Calkins, Jennifer Serravallo, and Matthew Kay will each present an online workshop covering relevant literacy topics.

- **Lucy Calkins** will present *Never Has Conferring Been So Important* from 4:00 to 6:15 pm on Thursday, March 11, 2021. Lucy Calkins is the Founding Director of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University. Her presentation will cover the importance of teachers having opportunities to listen to students' writing and giving them feedback that matters. This practical session will help you find efficient, powerful ways to confer with writers, and in so doing, to accelerate their skills and their commitment to literacy and to social justice.
- **Jennifer Serravallo** will present *Teaching Writing in Small Groups for Remote and In-Person Teaching* from 6:30 to 8:30 pm on Thursday, March 18, 2021. Jennifer Serravallo is the author of *Teaching Writing in Small Groups Connecting with Students Online*, as well as other popular Heinemann professional books. Drawing from Jennifer Serravallo's newly-released *Teaching Writing in Small Groups*, this workshop will show you how just a few minutes of purposeful, responsive teaching can have a big impact with your students whether you are in-person or teaching remotely. The emphasis will be on essential practices for optimizing small groups that will help you value each child's language and literacy practices, develop relationships with your writers, teach with efficiency, improve independence, and more. **Jennifer Serravallo will be presenting for 90-minutes followed by Katie Russell who will be sharing some of Jennifer's strategies.**
- **Matthew Kay** will present *Developing Your "Talking Game"* from 9:00 to 11:15 am on Saturday, March 27, 2021. Matthew R. Kay is the author of *Not Light, But Fire: How to Lead Meaningful Race Conversations in the Classroom* and a founding teacher at Science Leadership Academy where he teaches an innovative inquiry-driven, project-based curriculum. This workshop will help teachers develop the communication skills needed to lead meaningful classroom race conversations. Expect to walk through classroom race discussion scenarios that demand each participant's best facilitation, communication and — yes — conflict management skills.

Registered participants can earn up to **6 PD clock hours** and will also have the option of watching the **recorded workshops until April 30, 2021**. Registration is only **\$75 for members** or **\$120 for non-members** which includes 1 year of IRC membership. There are also discounted registration rates for retired and preservice teachers. If you would like to register for the March 2021 workshops and the October 2021 IRC Conference, we are offering a combined registration rate for a savings of \$50 of the combined registration rate. Please contact the [IRC Office](#) for more information.

Special thanks goes to **Stenhouse Publishers** for sponsoring Matthew Kay and to **Crossland Literacy** who will be giving away four (4) – \$50 Heinemann professional book gift certificates at the end of the workshops with Lucy Calkins and Jennifer Serravallo.

REGISTER TODAY!

ILLINOIS READS BOOK FESTIVAL ON MARCH 13, 2021

By the Illinois Reads Book Festival Committee



The **Illinois Reads Book Festival** will be held virtually from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm on **Saturday, March 13, 2021**.

The Book Festival includes author panels in addition to individual live Zoom sessions with some authors and prerecorded messages from others. Everyone is welcome to participate in this free event – no registration needed! The schedule for the day will be available by March 7th at www.illinoisreadsbookfestival.org. Simply click on the links for the sessions in which you want to participate.

Don't forget to follow the Illinois Reads Book Festival on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

TEACHERS IN THE TRENCHES: READ AROUND THE CASEL WHEEL: BOOKS TO SPARK SEL CONVERSATIONS (PART 2)

By Maria Walther

Are you looking for books to spark SEL conversations? In the [October 2020 IRC Communicator](#), I featured text sets to foster learners' self-awareness and self-management skills. This month I'll highlight three must-have text pairs that will promote social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. Happy Reading!

Social Awareness

If you haven't read *I Will Dance* (Flood, 2020) yet, it is sure to bring a tear to your eye. It's Eva's 10th birthday and her wish is to dance. Told from Eva's point-of-view, readers learn she was born prematurely and uses a wheelchair for mobility. Her wish comes true when one of her moms finds *Young Dance*—a studio for "all abilities, all ages." Continue the conversation with the 2021 Schneider Family Book Award Winner *I Talk Like A River* (Scott, 2020). Based on Scott's boyhood experiences on "bad speech days," we learn how his father's wise words help him to view his dysfluent speech patterns as natural. To help students read with an empathy lens, ask questions like these:

- Imagine you are this character. How would you feel?
- If you were in this situation, what would you say or do?

Relationships Skills

It seems that much of this school year has been about moving. Moving in and out of various teaching contexts, children moving in and out of classrooms. This picture book pairing highlights lasting friendships and keeping in touch (and both books have characters named Evelyn!). In *Evelyn Del Rey is Moving Away* (Medina, 2020), Daniela's "número uno best friend," Evelyn, is moving to a new home. Join the girls as they spend their last day playing together before they say goodbye. As the title *In a Jar* (Marcero, 2020) implies, Llewellyn and Evelyn collect everything imaginable. Throughout the seasons, they fill their jars with memorable moments and much more. When Evelyn tells Llewellyn she is moving away, his jar feels empty until the two collectors figure out how to share memories across the miles. Learners can write about the memories they've collected with their friends or family members.

Responsible Decision Making

You might want to save this duo for Earth Day because both young protagonists identify environmental problems and bring their communities together to solve them. In *Rocket Says Clean Up* (Byron, 2020), Rocket and her family are off to a tropical island to visit her grandparents. When Rocket finds a young turtle tangled in plastic, she enlists the help of fellow beach goers to clean up the trash. Similarly, in *Stand Up! Speak Up! A Story Inspired by the Climate Change Revolution* (Joyner, 2020) we meet a little girl joining a climate change rally. After an uplifting day, she returns home only to become discouraged by watching the environmental disasters portrayed on the news. Unable to sleep, she makes a plan. With her parents in tow, she speaks at a town hall meeting and invites her community to join the cause. After reading, invite learners to talk, draw, write, or research about ways they can help protect the Earth. If your students enjoyed these suggested titles, check out [The Ramped-Up Read Aloud](#) where I offer 101 read aloud experiences!

STRATEGIES FOR STRUGGLING READERS

By Rachel Lesinski-Roscoe, President of Secondary Reading League, and her fellow SRL Executive Board Members and Literacy Interventionists, Leigh Cavanaugh and Jenni Clesen

We teach high school students who struggle with literacy. We are part of a small group of literacy interventionists. Our job is complex in that we are asked to target students' literacy learning gaps, and

provide clear gaps. At first glance, it may seem like we are focusing on discrete skills as identified by the STAR screener. However, we know that the only way to truly teach literacy is through a balanced approach. So, how do we do it?

First we make sure to group skills together in groups of three. All three skills focus on one literacy goal, like sequencing, for example, but there are different layers to the skill. See Table 1.

Explain interactions between steps in a process
Analyze how events influence subsequent events
Analyze connections drawn between ideas/events

Table 1

Then we develop a gradual release lesson, *i.e.*, *I do, we do, you do* for each of the skills, ensuring that each skill builds on the last (see Image 1 and Image 2). This is critical so that we are not teaching discrete skills in isolation. We also have a formative assessment at the conclusion of each mini lesson (see Image 3) to encourage accountability and to support students in seeing their own progress.

After we teach the skills in a more direct way, we move to extension activities. Not only do we level the texts we use to accommodate different reading abilities, but we also level the types of assignments we ask students to complete. There are lessons that guide students through a text (see Image 4), ask students to drag and drop (see Image 5), others that ask for short answer responses with textual evidence (see Image 6), and even others that ask students to write a paragraph demonstrating their understanding (see Image 7). And, because we are remote, we are finding that when we speak to students directly in the moment, it is usually when we are all together. Classkick makes it possible to see all student work in real time. It is easy to spot check, correct, and compliment. The time it takes to move students into breakout rooms is unnecessary. Hearing each other learning is a powerful motivator. It removes the stigma of struggle. Instead, we are able to communicate that we are all in this together and we are all here to learn.

Happy Learning!

[Slideshow of Table and All Images](#)

Image 1

Image 2

Image 3

Image 4

SEQUENCING: THE CHILEAN MINERS

Part 1 DIRECTIONS: Read through pages 2 and 3 and highlight the signal words. Once you are done, take a moment to visualize the events and then place them in the correct order below.

1 Non-Chilean rescue workers arrived at the mine to determine how to save the miners.	2 The family members of miners visited the site often and prayed for their safe return.	3 Sebastian Pinera, the president of Chile, visited outsiders for helping in recovering the miners.
4 A mine collapsed on August 5th, 2010 and trapped Rianon and Florencio Juarez along with 31 other men.	5 A rock slid off a mountainside in Chile.	6 On October 12, 2010, hundreds of people watched as workers attempted to save the buried men.

Image 5

SEQUENCING: MYSTERIOUS MAYA

Part 2 DIRECTIONS: AFTER OBSERVING THE EVENTS, ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW.

1 Why was the event you typed into box 2 a possible cause in the sequence? (Use specific words or phrases to support your answer.)	2 If the event that you put into box 3 had not occurred, what do you think would have happened?
3 Explain what you think was the result of this entire sequence of events. (Use specific words or phrases to support your answer.)	4 HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR WRITING HELPED THE AUTHOR IN THIS PARAGRAPH? (Use specific words or phrases to support your answer.)

Image 6

PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT

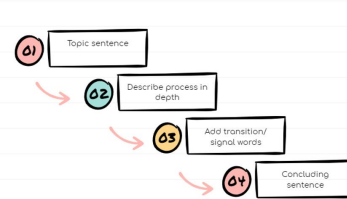
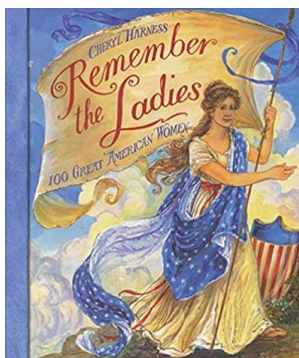


Image 7

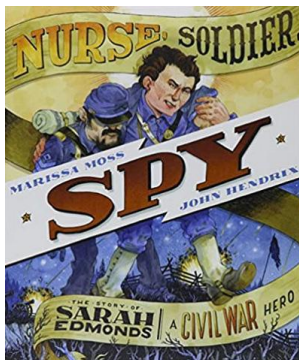
FAMILY LITERACY BOOKSHELF

By Barb Ashton, IRC Family Literacy Committee Chair

The snow and arctic cold of February is slowly giving way to some much needed sunshine and above freezing temperatures. The March winds, the return of birds chirping, and thoughts of spring and warmer weather are beginning to become a reality. During March we observe Women’s History month, celebrate St. Patrick’s Day, Ag in the Classroom, March Madness, and spring training of our favorite baseball team.

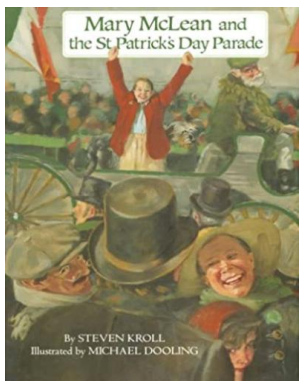


March is Women in History Month. To honor women and the part they’ve played in the history of America, **Remember the Ladies: 100 Great American Women** by Cheryl Harness is a compilation of one hundred of America’s famous women who were trailblazers, scientists, spies, nurses, first ladies, poets, etc., who contributed to America’s growth as a country. The short little blurbs or biographies of each lady accompanied by beautiful illustrations provide factual information of how they helped to shape America. Although the book ends with the dawn of the 21st century, the author encourages the reader to create their own list of one hundred women such as Hillary Clinton, Misty Copeland, Sarina Williams, Michelle Obama, etc., who are shaping America today. The back of the book provides a good glossary, websites, and bibliography for further reading. This is an excellent book for all grades and libraries.



Women have always played a part in America’s history. One such person is the main character in the book **Nurse, Soldier, Spy: The Story of Sarah Edmonds, a Civil War Hero** by Marissa Moss. This is the true story of Sarah Edmonds who runs away from home at the age of 19 to avoid a prearranged marriage. To protect her identity Sarah disguises herself as a young man and travels to Michigan. With the Civil War raging Sarah joins the Union Army as “Frank Thompson.” Throughout her military career Sarah learned to become a nurse. She was also a brave and courageous fighter. When called upon to be a spy Sarah used various disguises to infiltrate the Confederate positions and gathered valuable information. Having contracted malaria and fearful of being discovered if she went to the army doctor Sarah – AKA Frank Thompson – became a deserter.

Recovered from her illness, and after the war ended, Sarah got married and spent the remainder of her life working as a nurse, advocating for veterans and writing a book about her life. *Nurse, Soldier, Spy* is an exciting, adventurous, and informative book to read. The back of the book gives more information about Sarah Edmonds and additional books to read.



Saint Patrick’s Day will soon be here. To get in the spirit of the day along with some Irish history, **Mary McLean and the St. Patrick’s Day Parade** by Steven Kroll is a delightful book to read. Mary McLean and her family are immigrants from Ireland due to the Potato Famine. As Mary and her family settle in to life in New York her dad gets a job working on the docks, her mom works as a maid, and Mary and her siblings attend school. Learning about the St. Patrick’s Day parade, Mary would like to participate and asks the local grocer, Mr. Finnigan, if she could ride in his cart. Mr. Finnigan responds by telling Mary she must give him a shamrock if she wants to ride in his cart. While looking for the shamrock in snowy City Hall Park Mary meets a leprechaun. Will he be able to help her? You’ll need to read *Mary McLean and the St. Patrick’s Day Parade* to see what happens. This book gives a bit of Irish history and folklore and is a nice addition to your St. Patrick’s book collection.

Basketball season has returned and March Madness, though limited, will soon grab our attention. For your basketball fans **Pippa Park Raises Her**



Game by Erin Yun is a story to enjoy. Pippa is a likeable character who loves basketball and being of Korean descent. She lives with her married sister because her dad has passed away and her mom has been deported. Pippa attends the local public school and is on the basketball team. When her math grade falls, her sister makes her quit the team and registers her to get tutored in Math. In the meantime she receives a mysterious scholarship offer to play basketball at the prestigious private school across town. Wanting to give Pippa opportunities she didn't have, Pippa's sister agrees to the scholarship for Pippa with the demand Pippa maintain a 3.0 GPA in all subject areas. Pippa faces many challenges at her new school while trying to fit in with her new classmates and maintain her friendship with her former classmates. Will Pippa ever achieve a normal life and be able to follow her dreams? You'll have to read *Pippa Park Raises Her Game* to find out how Pippa learns some of life's lessons. This book is a great read for your middle school or Jr. High students coping with the aspects and pressures of this age group.

Looking Ahead

- March 2** – Read Across America Day
Formerly Dr. Seuss Day
Read books that are windows and mirrors
And diversity in the world around us
- March 14** – Pi Day
Albert Einstein Birthday
- March 15** – Ides of March
- March 17** – St. Patrick's Day
- March 20** – Spring Equinox
- March 23** – National Ag Day
- March 27** – Passover begins
- March 28** – Palm Sunday

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.

Assessment Resources

[Knowt](#)

This is a free service for turning documents into flashcards, quizzes, and other review activities. This is a fabulous tool for formative assessments.

Interactive Resources

[Quill](#)

This free online resource provides free writing and grammar activities for elementary, middle and high school students. Students receive immediate feedback and teachers can track students' progress with reports.

Web 2.0 Resources

[Nimbus](#)

This free extension allows the user to take screenshots and annotate them. This works with the Chrome web browser and there is also an app for Chromebooks.

UPCOMING PD EVENTS

By the Illinois Reading Council

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

- **March 2, 2021: Southern Illinois Reading Council and Lewis and Clark Reading Council** will co-host Celebrating Black History Month and Women's History Month through Literature as part of

their Book Talk Tuesday from 6:30 to 7:30 pm via Zoom.

- **March 3, 2021: IRC Webinar** on The Power of Wordless Picture Books with Matthew Cordell.
- **March 11, 2021: IRC WORKSHOP** on Never Has Conferencing Been So Important from 4:00 to 6:15 pm with Lucy Calkins.
- **March 11, 2021: Will County Reading Council** will host Reflective, Restful, and Thoughtful Teaching of Reading and Writing from 5:00 to 7:15 pm via Zoom.
- **March 13, 2021: Illinois Reads Book Festival** will be held virtually. Please visit the Illinois Reads website for more information.
- **March 15, 2021:** Registration is due for the Spring 2021 IRC Book Clubs.
- **March 17, 2021: 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.
- **March 18, 2021: IRC WORKSHOP** on Teaching Writing in Small Groups for Remote and In-Person Teaching from 6:30 to 8:30 pm with Jennifer Serravallo.
- **March 22, 2021: Western Illinois Reading Council** will host A Fresh Look at Phonics with Wiley Blevins via a virtual platform.
- **March 24, 2021: East Central-EIU Reading Council** will host Teacher Stress: Why It's There and What You Can Do About It with Alexis Jones from 6:30 to 7:30 pm via Zoom.
- **March 27, 2021: IRC WORKSHOP** on Developing Your "Talking Game" from 9:00 to 11:15 am with Matthew Kay.
- **April 6, 2021: Southern Illinois Reading Council and Lewis and Clark Reading Council** will co-host Capturing the Moment: What We Can Learn from Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman with Michelle Mohr as part of their Book Talk Tuesday from 6:30 to 7:30 pm via Zoom.
- **April 7, 2021: IRC Webinar** on The Literacy Lessons I Learned from Hamilton with Penny Kittle.
- **April 21, 2021: East Central-EIU Reading Council** will host I See What You're Saying: Using Visual Images, Multiple Genre, and Varied Text Structures to Expand Literacy Engagement with Roxanne Owens from 6:30 to 7:30 pm via Zoom.
- **April 21, 2021: 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. Following the discussion, participants are asked to share a reflective response of the topic.
- **April 22, 2021: Prairie Area Reading Council** will host Made with Maxine & STEM Challenge with Ruth Spiro from 6:15 to 7:30 pm via Zoom.
- **April 24, 2021: Chicago Area Reading Association (CARA)** will host a Literacy Spa for Unwinding around Remote Learning from 4:30 to 5:30 pm via Zoom.
- **April 26, 2021: Western Illinois Reading Council** will host New and Notable Books with Becky Anderson Wilkins from 7:00 to 8:30 pm via a virtual platform.

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:

