Illinois Reading Council
IRC
Empowering Lives Through Literacy

Communicator

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and follow us on:

"She read books as one would breathe air, to fill up and live."

~ Annie Dillard



The Illinois Reading Council is excited to share that registration and housing are open for the

2027 IRC Conference,
Each One Reach One,
March 11-12, 2027
in Springfield, Illinois.



Download the 2027 Preliminary Program to find out all about the conference and the featured speakers and presenters who will be joining us this year.

You will also not want to miss the **Wednesday Welcome Reception**, the **Hear the Authors Read Event**, the **Illinois Reads Author Panels,** and close to **200 PD Sessions** that are being planned.

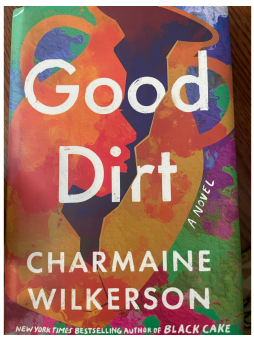
Program Proposals to present a session are also being accepted until December 15, 2026.

To find out more, visit **www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org**.

Download the Preliminary Program

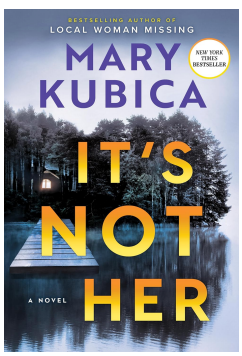
#WhatIAmReading

I am reading *Good Dirt* by Charmaine Wilkerson
~ Lynn Keck



Having seen beautiful works of pottery created by enslaved artisans while visiting South Carolina, I was happy to learn of their history yet saddened by their origin. In this fictional multigenerational family saga, the author switches between present day and the time of enslaved peoples to tell their stories. Thought-provoking and timely topics were laced between the narrative. The feelings of guilt and regret deeply affected the characters, but the ending was cathartic. Well worth the time.

I am reading *It's Not Her* by Mary Kubica
~ Carrie Sheridan



I'm reading my first book from the **2027 Illinois Reads book list**. It is about two families on vacation at a secluded Lake Resort. While reading this chilling crime thriller, you won't be able to put this book down The book is full of twists and turns that have you trying to uncover the terrible mystery. But the closer the ending gets, the harder it is to know who—or what—to trust. It was my perfect scary Halloween book for October!

IRC MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

If each member – "EACH ONE"
invites someone to join – "REACH ONE,"
IRC can share our *"MISSION & LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES"* ***with everyone!***

SHARE YOUR "EACH ONE, REACH ONE" STORY FOR A CHANCE TO WIN BOOKS OR A CLASSROOM LIBRARY!

Congratulations to the six (6) October Raffle Winners in our **"Each One, Reach One" Membership Campaign**.

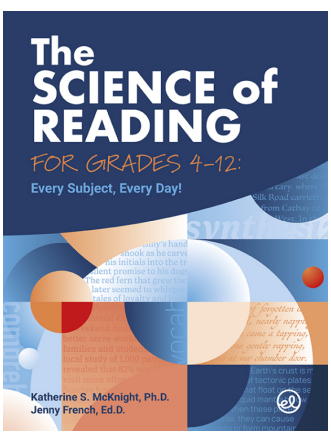
- **Brooke Hall** (new member) from Central Illinois Reading Council
- **Christine Dunn** (current member) from Central Illinois Reading Council
- **Carly Lopez** (new member) from Starved Rock Reading Council
- **Kristen Connor Walsh** (current member) from Fox Valley Reading Council
- **Stephanie Tenenbam** (new member) from West Suburban Reading Council
- **Jessica Parra-Valverde** (current member) from SCIRA

Please consider sharing your story today. Or, consider creating a new story by gifting a membership to a colleague or friend. IRC greatly appreciate your stories to help inspire the new generation of IRC members!

CLICK HERE TO SHARE YOUR STORY TODAY!



Dear Fellow Educational Leaders,



I'm writing because of a gap I keep hearing about across Illinois: the Comprehensive Literacy Plan gives a clear vision for secondary literacy, but very little of the available support is built for grades 4–12. Content-area teachers, principals, and instructional coaches are left translating it themselves.

That's the problem my co-author and I set out to solve in ***The Science of Reading for Grades 4–12: Every Subject, Every Day!*** and its companion ***Professional Development Guide*** — strategies a content-area teacher can use tomorrow in history, science, or math; four sequenced modules a coach or PLC lead can facilitate without bringing in an outside consultant; and a structure principals can build the secondary section of a local literacy plan around.

Alongside those, we built **two Illinois-specific documents**: a standards alignment guide mapped to the ELA standards and the Plan's seven components, and a crosswalk showing how the PD lines up with the Plan's evidence-based criteria. Both are **free** and **ungated**, and they're useful whether or not a school ever buys the book.

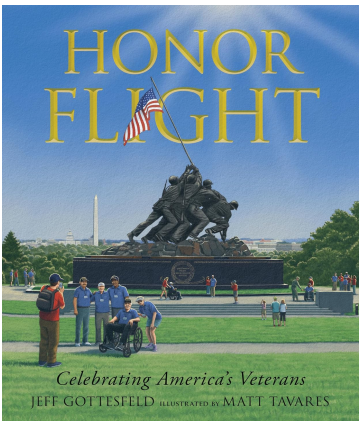
Please feel free to share with teachers, coaches, and other IRC members.

Warmly,

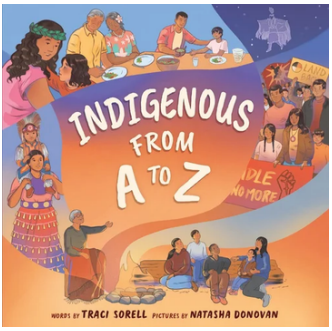
Katie McKnight
Engaging Learners, LLC

Family Literacy Bookshelf
By Barb Ashton

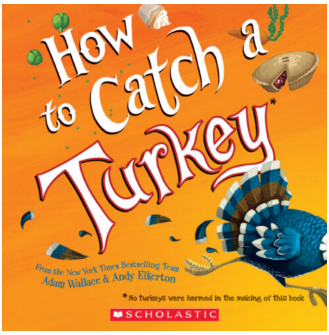
During November, we are reminded it's Diabetes and Epilepsy Awareness Month and Native American Heritage month. On Veteran's Day we remember and honor all those who served our country. Let's not forget to "Give Thanks" for the many blessings we've received this year on Thanksgiving Day.



Honor Flight: Celebrating America's Veterans is written by Jeff Gottesfeld and illustrated by Matt Tavares. This book tells about the monuments located in our nation's capital dedicated to the service members who fought in the last century's wars. Visitors line up to gaze at the Iwo Jima Memorial, stark against the sky; the solemn Tomb of the Unknown Soldier; the national World War II Memorial with its circle of unity; the Korean War Veterans Memorial; and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, engraved with tens of thousands of names. It is here that the Honor Flight program has brought some 300,000 aging veterans, all of them deserving a chance to see their commitment and sacrifice honored and commemorated.



Indigenous from A to Z written by Traci Sorell is an alphabetical introduction to the rich history of Native peoples across the USA. Letter by letter, this book offers terms that speak to both the vast diversity among Native Nations and the many connections they share, building an essential foundation of understanding for young readers. B is for Before 1492 and C is for Colonialism to J is for Joking and M is for Music to the dynamic future promised by O is for Organize and R is for Reclaim. This book concludes with a Z to A listing of twenty-six Native Nations, coming full circle to say: We're surviving, Striving towards thriving, and Indigenous to this land—Always.



In ***How to Catch a Turkey*** by Adam Wallace, a turkey is running loose in a school right before a Thanksgiving play. In the book, the reader has to help catch it so the show can go on. It follows along as students turn their school upside down trying to catch the turkey, ending with a twist that ensures no turkeys are harmed (or eaten!). This hilariously zany children's picture book combines STEAM concepts and traps with a silly story and fun illustrations, perfect for starting a new fall family tradition this autumn or giving as a Thanksgiving gift!

Looking Ahead

November 1: All Saints Day
November 2: Dia De Los Muertos – A celebration of the life and death of family members
November 11: Veteran's Day – Thank a veteran for his/her service
November 26: Thanksgiving Day – Time to give thanks and be grateful
November 27: Black Friday
November 29: Advent begins



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

- **November 1, 2025: IRC is accepting submissions for the following awards and grants:**
    - **IRC Service Award:** This award will recognize an outstanding IRC Leader for time, commitment, and service to the Illinois Reading Council.
    - **IRC Hall of Fame Award:** This award recognizes significant contributions to reading and reading education.
    - **Barack Obama Library Award:** This award is a classroom library valued at $1,000, given to a teacher of 5th to 8th grade students each year.
    - **Family Literacy Award:** This award recognizes an IRC member who promotes and supports parent involvement in children's reading.
    - **Jerry Johns Reading Educator of the Year Award:** This award will recognize an outstanding teacher who makes significant contributions in promoting literacy among students, colleagues, and school communities.
- **November 4, 2026: IRC Webinar** on Real Life Revision Strategies with Barb Rosenstock from 7:00 to 8:00 pm via Zoom Webinar.
- **November 5, 2026: Western Illinois Reading Council** will host Power Up Your Writing Think SRSD with Becky Miller from 6:00 to 7:30 pm at Western Illinois University, Horrabin Hall Room 1, 1 University Circle, Macomb, Illinois.
- **November 7, 2026: Lake Area Reading Council (LARC)** will host Curing the Secondary Reading Epidemic by Cultivating Engaged Readers with Niki Woodruff and Katie Hoving from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Grant Community High School, 285 East Grand Avenue, Fox Lake, Illinois.
- **November 10, 2026: West Suburban Reading Council** will host the Barnes & Noble Book Tasting from 5:00 to 7:30 pm at Barnes & Noble, 1144 Lake Street, Oak Park, Illinois.
- **November 11, 2026: Join Prairie Area Reading Council (PARC)** for the Reading Between the "Wines:" A Virtual Monthly Book "Tasting" from 7:00 to 7:30 pm via Zoom.

- **November 14, 2026: Fox Valley Reading Council** will host the Illinois Reads Family Reading Event from 10:00 to 11:00 am at Santori Public Library, 101 S River Street, Aurora, Illinois.

- **November 16, 2026: Secondary Reading League (SRL)** and **Illinois SLD Support Project** will co-host the Addressing Reading Difficulties in Secondary Classrooms: Instruction and Intervention with Kellyn Sirach from 6:30 to 7:30 pm via a Virtual Event.

- **November 17, 2026: Fox Valley Reading Council** will host a Virtual Bookelicious Presentation with Jason Reynolds from 12:30 to 1:30 pm. Registration includes access to the event and a variety of resources.

- **November 19, 2026: Illinois Family Reading Night** is an annual statewide event.

- N**ovember 21-22, 2026: Central Illinois Reading Council** will host the Books for Babies Book Fair at Barnes and Noble, Southwest Plaza, 3111 S Veterans Pkwy, Springfield, Illinois.

To view the full **IRC Events Calendar**, please visit the IRC Website.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Members are encouraged to submit articles at any time to **irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org**.

#WhatIAmReading: Share a book that you are reading, in 3 to 4 sentences. Creative pictures of you and your book in your favorite reading spot are encouraged.

IRC Highlight Reels: Share snapshots of successes in your classrooms in 100 to 300 words. Remember no success is too big or too small to share and pictures welcomed!

Other Literacy Topics:

- Books the Kids Loved This Year
- My New Favorite Professional Books and Resources
- Skills and Strategies
- Current Research in Literacy
- And any other literacy topics that interests you!

Thank you for helping to inspire your fellow educators! Posts will be shared on social media too!

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: