



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

By Maria Walther

When planning morning meetings or other Social-Emotional Learning experiences, I always turn to my trusted teaching partner — picture books. To support you as you engage in these essential interactions (especially this year!) with your students, I'll share a few read aloud text sets that will spark conversations around the core SEL competencies of self-awareness and self-management. Then, in February, I'll continue with social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

Self-Awareness

Self-aware children can recognize their own emotions and consider how those feelings impact their behavior. This text set highlights happiness. Kick off the conversation by reading aloud *Where Happiness Begins* (Eland, 2020) to help students recognize that "Happiness begins with you." Continue the dialogue by sharing *Layla's Happiness* (Tallie, 2019) and inviting students to tell you all of the things that make them happy. Demonstrate how they could make their own little book entitled *[Student's Name's] Happiness*. Finally, after reading *Happy Right Now* (Berry, 2019), you can return to the page where she shares the strategies she uses when "troubles and sadness are much too much" and co-create with your students a list of ways to reach for happiness.

Self-Management

Helping students regulate their emotions and manage stress is another essential component of social-emotional learning. Many of us have incorporated mindfulness experiences into our instructional day. Try these texts to launch discussions about relieving tension. The rhyming text in the book *Hurry Up! A Book About Slowing Down* (Dopirak, 2020) begs to be read aloud. The book starts off at a frantic pace, and then after a two-page spread with the giant word "STOP!" offers readers many different ways to be mindful and in the moment. This book could lead to each student creating a Flipgrid video of their advice for slowing down. Then, to explore different paths to happiness read aloud *Happy: A Beginner's Book of Mindfulness* that defines mindfulness as "connecting with ourselves and the world around us" and includes a series of two-page spreads empowering children to practice mindfulness as they listen, relax, discover, and so on. If your students enjoyed these suggested titles, check out [The Ramped-Up Read Aloud](#) where I offer 101 read aloud experiences!

SHARING STORIES TO FOSTER READING FLUENCY

By LaShay Jennings, Jessica Dunker, and Edward J. Dwyer

Reading fluency is smooth and seemingly effortless reading of text. The fluent reader reads in logical phrase units while observing conventions of print in the text such as commas, periods, **BOLD** text, question marks, exclamation points, etc. The web site titled www://storylineonline.net is a wonderful resource for providing models for fluent and entertaining reading.

Introduction: The introduction is an invitation to the listener. A sample introduction is presented below: "The book we will be reading today is *The Dog Who Cried Wolf* by Keiko Kasza. My name is Ima Reeder and I will be reading the story. Let's look at the book cover. There you will see a dog who is howling at the moon. (Pause briefly, about five seconds.) Now, let's look at the title page. There you will see a picture of a dog looking at a book. Let's turn that page and there you will see a picture of a dog and a girl reading a book. Now, let's begin the story."

Choice of Selection: Practice through guided repeated reading of the selection is essential before recording. Students are very serious when they say, "I want to sound good." In all areas of reading instruction, we avoid having students struggle through a selection and then go on to another selection before mastering the selection just completed.

Energy Level and Enthusiasm: Presenting the audio and visual rendition of the reading selection in a lively and energetic manner is critical for holding audience interest.

Diction and Fluency: We advise our students that recording is not the same as engaging in conversation. We admonish them not to lose word endings. Sometimes readers let their voices trail off as they approach the end of a sentence. We encourage students to be aware of appropriate phrasing by observing conventions of print and maintaining logical thought units. We do not record until the reader provides an effortless and fluent rendition of the text.

Volume: We advise the students to be sure to keep the volume level appropriate for the context of the material being read. For example, the reader's voice might be a little softer or a little louder in places when maintaining a sense of drama. We often remind students that the volume does not fade at the end of a sentence.

Pace: We advise students to read at a natural pace in logical thought units at a speed that is comfortable and to make a short pause after finishing a page.

An advantage in using the phone recording platform is that the reading performance can be sent to relatives and friends, some of whom live far from the reader. (However, we never upload our students' recordings to social media platforms.) Needless to say, grandparents are an extraordinarily positive audience for the recordings.

DIGITAL LITERACY

By Christy Ziller, IRC Director of Membership

Literacy alone can be defined as reading and writing skills. It makes sense to think that when you use the word "digital," you just add computers. However, the heart of digital literacy is reading, writing, and using technology together. According to the American Library Association, digital literacy is the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information requiring both cognitive abilities and technical skills.

When you think of reading on your phone, a Kindle or Nook, an iPad, you're using an alternative format that replaces paper, or as I refer to it, a hard copy. However, these activities now include tasks that are interactive. When this experience includes additional steps like posting notes, highlighting, advancing to exterior links to websites or videos, this activity may require more skills. There are a host of abilities students require in order to read a selected piece of text online in order to understand its meaning when presented in a different format. In order to obtain information from additional hyperlinks, videos, auditory clips, reading images, and interactive graphics, students need opportunities to learn how to break down the text and make sense of it. Educators should be thinking about authentic lessons for advancing students' abilities and skills as each child develops as a 21st century reader and writer.

It's also important that students be educated on how to evaluate digital sources for their reliability. If students or educational professionals are going to use information to create a podcast or a blog space, they should definitely want to make sure that the presentation contains correct information from reliable sources. Teachers have a responsibility of teaching digital literacy in a classroom setting. These lessons are not only about possessing the skills to use different devices but to be able to navigate the web and find reliable information. Students need to be able to weed out false information. This is a critical life skill.

Students who are asked to create a blog, website, email, podcast or whatever, will need to learn to incorporate additional informational add-ons. These could include photos, graphics, tables, videos, or embedded links that share websites or YouTube videos. These skills go beyond just reading and writing. The ability to comprehend and disseminate information from reliable sources and their meanings in order to form a coherent opinion is an advanced digital literacy skill that takes practice. Writing on a digital platform will require additional lessons to bring students up to the 21st-century skills. When adding links, pictures, or videos to a piece of writing to make it more inviting, interactive, and engaging, educators need to be hyper aware of their digital information that is shared.

When we're sharing what we have learned or reporting out, we need to think about what information is being uploaded to a digital platform. When I think of student writing as being a traditional paper and pencil task, I have little worries. The world of information is at our fingertips, but it is a dangerous place. We need to be safe and not over share private data. We have to protect our digital footprint. Students also need to be warned of the dangers of inappropriate imaging and texts on line as well as the traditional aspects of learning. In most cases, educators need to think about providing lessons about proper online behavior and provide useful thoughtful criticism without being offensive. As an educator, always err on the side of caution when teaching students about internet safety and sharing personal information. These

lessons need to be embedded and taught in the curriculum.

To conclude, if I were to go back to my team at school, and they were to ask me about this term digital literacy, I would have to say that it really truly means your ability to move through different platforms and be able to create and communicate information. There, of course, is an understanding that you must know how to use the technology as well. Some experts call digital literacy “digital platforms” or “digital skills expanding the foundation of literacy.” Also, “visual literacy and computer literacy mixed together” one researcher said. Dr. Leu, from the University of Connecticut, refers to these digital literacies as “new literacies,” “multiliteracies,” or 21st-century literacies. This idea of digital literacy will be constantly evolving depending on developments from science and tech geniuses. This point must be taken under advisement, anyone who lacks digital literacy skills may be at a disadvantage that is similar to those who cannot read or write at all. If underprivileged or underserved student populations do not have access to digital platforms or digital literacy educational opportunities, this gap in their education and fundamental skills will continue to grow and create isolation and an inability to assimilate into 21st-century jobs and beyond.

Resources

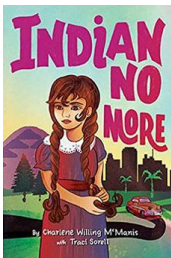
Heitin, Liana. “Education Week American Education News Site of Record.” *Education Week*, 8 Nov. 2016, www.edweek.org/.

390, et al. “Authoritative EdTech News & Commentary.” *The Tech Advocate*, 17 May 2020, www.thetechadvocate.org/.

FAMILY LITERACY BOOKSHELF

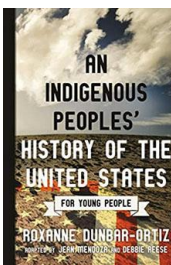
By Barb Ashton, IRC Family Literacy Committee Chair

The fall colors have helped to brighten this difficult time. November is fast approaching. During this month, we are reminded to vote, that it is Diabetes Awareness Month, and Native American Heritage Month. On Veteran’s Day we honor those who served our country. This year as we “Give Thanks” on Thanksgiving Day, it is also the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower and its passengers arriving in Plymouth, Massachusetts.



Indian No More by Charlene Willing McManis and Traci Sorell takes place during the 1950’s and the Civil Rights Era for 10-year-old Regina Petit who lives with her Native American family, younger sister Peewee, and grandmother (Chich) on the Grand Ronde Reservation in Oregon. When the federal government signs the Indian Relocation Act, Regina and her family become “Indian No More,” lose their tribal identification number, and are encouraged to move off the reservation. Unable to purchase the land Regina’s family lives on and her father unable to secure a job, he signs up for the relocation program with the promise of good jobs, housing, schooling, etc. Regina’s father moves the family to Los Angeles where life is not what was expected although Regina’s father is able to obtain a good job. Regina and her family

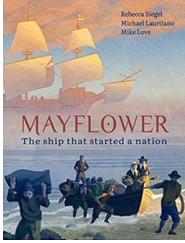
face racism and many other challenges adapting to life in an urban city. *Indian No More* presents a different perspective on Native Americans and is a great historical novel to read with your middle school/Jr High students.



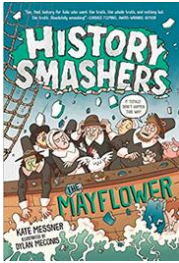
An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States for Young People by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz and adapted by Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese is told from the perspective of the Native Americans. This book provides the reader with information and details about native Americans that is often not covered in history textbooks. While Native Americans are often portrayed as being “uncivilized” or on “warpaths” they were/are very intelligent people who lived in communities, developed medicines that are still used today, and formed a government within each tribe. The visuals, maps, and side boxes provide additional information. There are also activities and prompts that lead to further discussion, writing, research, and fostering critical thinking. The back of the book includes timelines, a glossary, and recommendations of

children’s literature by Native American authors for further reading. *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States for Young People* is written for Jr High/High School students but is also a great text for teachers and librarians, and a great addition to your curriculum and all libraries. Head over to the National Museum of the American Indian at the Smithsonian for a wealth of resources.

Thanksgiving is just a few weeks away. **Mayflower: The Ship that Started a Nation** by Rebecca Siegel celebrates the 400th Anniversary of the Pilgrims’ perilous journey across the Atlantic Ocean to start a new life in a new country. This book is factual in nature but also contains beautiful illustrations by Michael Lauritano and Mike Love. As you read this book, you will learn about why the Pilgrims took this journey, details about the Mayflower ship, things the Pilgrims packed and brought with them, details



about the crew and their jobs aboard the ship, as well as information about the Pilgrims. The book also includes information about the weather and storms they encountered on their journey. The book tells about the Wampanoag people, the Pilgrims interaction with them, and their assistance in helping the Pilgrims survive. The back of the book has a beautiful timeline, websites, and a list of modern descendants. Find out which eight American Presidents are descendants of the Pilgrims. Go to www.Plymouth400inc.org for some great educational resources and activities. Visit Plimoth Plantation at www.plimoth.org/learn for additional teacher resources and a virtual tour of Plymouth Plantation. ILA Bridges has a complete unit called Pilgrims and Wampanoag of the 1620's that has many lessons to help teach this important part of America's History.



History Smashers: The Mayflower by Kate Messner is another book within this series. Again the author compares the myths versus the real facts about the Mayflower, the Pilgrims, and Thanksgiving. The addition of little known facts and the graphic novel illustrations add interest and engage the reader while helping the students to understand what really happened in the new Plymouth settlement. *History Smashers: The Mayflower* is a nice read aloud for young students and a fun and easy read format for 3rd grade.

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

[JLab Reading Passages](#)

These close reading passages include a variety of topics for practicing reading comprehension while also learning about a variety of topics. This website also has a variety of other resources for learning.

Interactive Resources

[Brainscape](#)

This flashcard tool allows you to create flashcards as well as use those that have already been created. Flashcards can include text, images, sounds, videos, and any other media that works well in a bite-sized study format. You can even track students' progress.

Web 2.0 Resources

[NoRedInk](#)

This online resource provides opportunities for students to write and revise passages along with practice and assessment activities for writing and grammar. Teachers can set up classes and track students' progress with a diagnostic, exercises for practice, and quizzes to evaluate students' understanding.

UPCOMING PD EVENTS

By the Illinois Reading Council

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

- **November 7, 2020: Chicago Area Reading Association (CARA)** will host The Pathway to Prize of Success with Allen J. Bryson from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm via Zoom.
- **November 10, 2020: East Central-EIU Reading Council** will host Literacy Strategies in the Content Areas via a virtual platform.
- **November 11, 2020: IRC Webinar** on Using Poetry to Expand Content Knowledge and Structure Informational Text with Clare Landrigan.
- **November 11, 2020: Fox Valley Reading Council** will host a Wired Webinar Discussion following the IRC Webinar with Clare Landrigan at 8:00 pm via Zoom.

- **November 12, 2020: Secondary Reading League (SRL)** will host the Day of Reading with Cornelius Minor from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm via a virtual platform. **Please note that this event is being rescheduled to 2021.**
- **November 14, 2020: Fox Valley Reading Council** will host An Innovative Approach to Reading and Writing with Maria Walther and Karen Biggs-Tucker from 9:00 to 10:30 am via a virtual platform.
- **November 19, 2020: Family Reading Night** is an annual statewide event sponsored by Jesse White, Secretary of State and State Librarian, and the Illinois Center for the Book at the Illinois State Library that encourages families to spend quality time reading together
- **December 2, 2020: IRC Webinar** on Inspiring Lifelong Readers with Jon Scieszka.
- **December 2, 2020: Fox Valley Reading Council** will host a Wired Webinar Discussion following the IRC Webinar with Jon Scieszka at 8:00 pm via Zoom.
- **December 3, 2020: MID-State Reading Council** will host a Binge-Watch Book Talk with high school books from 7:00 to 7:45 pm via a virtual platform. Sign up today to attend
- **December 3, 2020: Prairie Area Reading Council and Anderson's Bookshops** will host the Illinois Reads Relaunch Party at 7:00 pm via a virtual platform.
- **December 5, 2020: Illinois Title I Association (ITA)** will host How to Do MTSS/Special Education During This Time at 9:00 am via Zoom.
- **December 12, 2020: National Road Reading Council** will host Stories with Santa at 10:00 am at the Effingham Pubic Library, 200 N 3rd Street, Effingham, Illinois.

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:

