



Independence/ Fort Osage Council
International Reading Association
Newsletter
September 2007

From your Presidents

Welcome back to school! Routines are being set and new books are being chosen and read. This is a fabulous time for us to relight the flame to the love of reading in our students. Including ways to pick out "just right books" as part of your procedures and information to your parents can be important in starting the year off as a reading community. I like to teach my students use the rule of five. As they read the first page of a book, they should count on their fingers how many words they do not know. If that first page has five or more, it is too difficult for them at this time. Picking a "just right book" will help pass on the love of learning all of us have.

I am honored to be part of our council's board this year. Vicky Myres and I will be co-presidents working side by side with our board to have great literacy activities for this upcoming year. For those of you who do not know me, I am a fourth grade teacher this year at Glendale Elementary in Independence. Reading is truly one of my passions which tends to become "contagious" in my learning community.

There are many literacy activities planned for this year that can get everyone in the mood for reading. It would be great to see you at any of our council meetings, Teachers as Readers and Teachers as Researchers activities as well as the special literacy events that occur during the year. Our job, together, is to promote the love of reading. IRA is strong because of people like you.

Thank you for your continued support.

Julie Birks
Co-President, Glendale

Your Council Board Members For 2007-2008 School Year

Co-Presidents Vicky Myres, Benton
Julie Birks, Glendale

Co-Vice Presidents Kathy Swanson, Glendale
Jennifer Epperson, Glendale

Treasurer Stephanie Merriott, Sycamore
Hills

Secretary Judy Zeih, Mill Creek

Membership Janet Miller, Glendale

Past-President Vicky Myres, Benton

Membership

[Celebrate the Gift of Literacy](#)

[Join IRA Today!](#)

[2007 Fall Membership Drive](#)

[Now through November 9th](#)

[Win cash for your library](#)

[Greatest percentage IRA membership per building](#)

[1st place = \\$100](#)

[2nd place = \\$75](#)

[3rd place = \\$50](#)

[Send dues and completed forms to your building rep or to Janet Miller at Glendale](#)

General Meeting Information

We will be having a meeting on Wednesday, September 26th at Glendale Elementary
How Can Technology make my life easier with Reading and Writing--

*come away with various website resources for:

Author study

Integrating the internet

Phonemic posters ready to print

6 + 1 trait ideas

We will be meeting in the Glendale Library Media Center, so you will be able to check out these resources yourself right way, so many resources so little time!! Career Ladder participants this would be a wonderful beginning for a technology goal--I'll show you what goal! If nothing else come for the 3 R's renew ideas, relaxation, & refreshments!

TEACHERS AS READERS

This is a relaxing meeting where teachers informally chat about their favorite books. Get ideas to use with 6 +1, great read alouds for the holiday season, wonderful camaraderie and refreshments. The meeting is at Glendale Elementary--please bring your books with you if possible!

Another great Career Ladder opportunity you won't want to miss!

See you on December 5th!

Respectfully submitted by:

Kathy Swanson & Jennifer Epperson

Co-Vice Presidents, Glendale

News in Reading

Teachers as Researchers

Welcome to another great year with IRA! This year for our Teachers as Researchers book study we will

be taking a more relaxed approach to our visits. I found a great book entitled *How we "Do" School* by Karen Morrow Durica that "offers reflective conversation about how educators do school". Each chapter begins with a poem to ponder which will help to "examine and reflect on your own classroom practices in order to grow as a professional". I read this book over the summer and felt that it would offer our members a great way to delve into our reasons for becoming teachers. I hope that you, too, will find it interesting and take part in our meetings that will be held at Barnes and Noble Café. At our first general meeting, five lucky members will receive a free copy of the book. We also have a few for sale at the meeting. Our first Teachers as Researchers meeting will be October 18th at 4:30. I look forward to seeing you there,

Vicky Myres
Co-President, Benton

International Literacy Day-

A Focus on Worldwide Literacy was on Sept. 8th, 2007. In Washington D.C., IRA celebrated this special day on Sept. 12th. Reading is celebrated in classrooms everyday in many different ways from Read Alouds to book buddies. Here are some other ideas to...

Celebrate reading!!!

- Donate books
- Have older students make and share books with younger students
- Create alphabet books, comic strips, flip books, & newspapers
- Read and compare Folk Tales from different countries
- Match different alphabets to countries
- Celebrate authors of ethnic or cultural groups
- Have a community member share their favorite book

Have an idea that you want to share? Send all ideas to jzeih@indep.k12.us and we will publish it in the next IRA District News!

Ideas from Around the Independence/Ft. Osage Council

Hello fellow IRA members! I hope that your school year has gotten off to a great start. It is always fun and exciting getting to know your new students and settle into classroom routines. While I do not profess to be an expert in any field or claim to know answers to great mysteries in the educational world, here are some things that I like to do in my classroom. If you like one, try it if you aren't already...just add it to your list of stuff to teach in your spare time! ☺

- ❖ Block in a time for your students hold "book chats" with each other about the

books they are reading. I always tell my students that I get great ideas about what books to read from my good friends.

- ❖ Commit to a daily read aloud time. Even if it's only ten minutes, your students need to hear traits of good reading expressed through you!
- ❖ Have the students keep a personal dictionary/fab. vocab.: when your students proofread their writing with you or a friend, have them enter words they have misspelled into their personal dictionary (index cards on a key ring work well). This way, it is meaningful to them and it becomes a valuable resource for them to use. If they come across an awesome word in conversation with you or in their reading, tell them to enter it in their "fab. vocab." and try to incorporate it into their own writing and conversation.
- ❖ Use the resources from the Book-It program. Even if you aren't a huge advocate of using pizza to lure kids into reading, (especially with all of the ABC for fitness incentives) look through the packet of information. There's a flier advertising the "America's Biggest Bedtime Story" hosted by John Lithgow. There are ideas to "get your class in on the fun" and prize packages to win. Consider sponsoring a school-wide pajama reading party on October 26th for America's Biggest Bedtime Story!
- ❖ Use the Classrooms Care reading poster from Scholastic as incentive for your students to read 100 books. When they do, books get donated to needy children (This is a great tie in with the Honduras Project and Friends United).
- ❖ Last but not least, let your students know how much YOU love reading!!! Talk with them about books that you are reading in your free time and what you loved as a child. Making this connection with your students helps to instill a love of reading in their own minds.

Respectfully submitted by
Stephanie Merriott,
Treasurer, Sycamore Hills

*Join us for our next meeting
September 26, 2007 at Glendale
Elementary from 4:30-5:30.*

Hope to see you there ☺