



St. Louis Suburban Council
of the INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION
Recipient of the Honor Council & Show Me Awards
50 Year Anniversary



Spring 2008

Message from the President

Hello to all of our members and friends. We sincerely hope you will join us for our exciting upcoming events. At our December general meeting, Tim Rasinski gave a fabulous presentation titled "From Phonics to Fluency to Proficient Reading." There was a terrific turnout and Tim is so talented and engaging, he did not leave us disappointed. He shared many clever reading strategies and has continued to stay in touch, e-mailing additional handouts and other valuable information. His web-site is www.timrasinski.com.

The Spring Banquet will take place in the Monsanto Room at Maryville University. Peter Brunn, known for his outstanding presentations at literacy conferences and Director of Professional Development for the non-profit Developmental Studies Center, will be our presenter and his topic will be writing. This should be an exceptional presentation and will provide the latest information for teaching a subject known to be challenging at all grade levels. We will also celebrate the 50th Anniversary of St. Louis Suburban Council with presentation of special "Service Recognition Awards" for those who have made a substantial contribution St. Louis Suburban Council since its inception in 1958. A notable special guest from the council's earlier leadership will make a rare appearance at the Spring Banquet. Surprising details of the early history of our council will be shared. Our 2008-2009 Slate of Officers and Board of Directors ballot will be voted on for your approval. See inside this issue for the award nomination form, ballot, and to make your reservations.

Our St. Louis Suburban Literacy Mini-Grant deadline has been extended, so don't hesitate to e-mail for an application. Your literacy project could be the winner! See inside for more details.

The upcoming International Reading Association 53rd Annual Convention takes place in Atlanta, Georgia May 4 - 8, 2008. International IRA members receive a substantially discounted registration. Jamie Lee Curtis, Actor and winner of

two Golden Globe Awards and children's book author of *Tell Me Again About the Night I Was Born* and *When I Was Little, A Four-Year-Old's Memoir of Her Youth* and other novels, will be a Keynote Speaker. Another Keynote Speaker will be Andreas Schleicher, expert on International Assessments. It will be fascinating to hear about the assessments given in some of the best performing countries in the world. Rafe Esquith, one of America's most celebrated educators and winner of the President's National Medal of the Arts, will be another Keynote speaker. Walter Dean Myers, is a Newbery and Coretta Scott King Award-winning author who wrote *Fallen Angels*, *The Glory Field*, and more and Alfred Tatum, author of *Teaching Reading to Black Adolescent Males*, are powerful adolescent literacy advocates, and are Special Featured Speakers. David Baldacci, bestselling novelist of *Absolute Power*, *Simple Genius*, and many more, is also a Special Featured Speaker. Go the www.reading.org for all of the details.

The 2008 MSC/IRA 42nd Annual Fall Conference takes place closer to home in Springfield, Missouri October 2 - 4, 2008 and has a wonderful schedule full of top presenters. Harvey Daniels of Literature Circles fame, Sharon Taberski, author of *On Solid Ground: Strategies for Teaching Reading K-3*, and Sara Holbrook and Michael Salinger authors of *Outspoken!: How to Improve Writing and Speaking Skills through Poetry Performance* are some of the fine authors and educators scheduled for this conference. Go to www.missourireading.org to register.

Lillian Katzenmeyer
President- St. Louis Suburban Council
of the International Reading Association
lk Katzenmeyer@aol.com



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Fluency: Part of a Comprehensive Reading Program

Susan Artis, Assistant Professor, St. Louis University

In the year 2000, The National Reading Panel identified areas of reading that should be included in reading instruction. Based upon extensive research, it was determined that phonemic awareness skills, phonics skills, fluency, and comprehension strategies are all important components of a reading program. Vocabulary is considered part of the comprehension component.

The Panel report also quantified fluency and described it as “the ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression.” Within this article, we will consider questions such as: What are the best practices for teaching fluency? How does fluency relate to comprehension? Why would you teach for fluency when comprehension ---making meaning---is the ultimate goal of reading instruction? Finally, what the research seems to be telling us.

Instructional Methods

What are the recommended methods of fluency instruction?

Research (Pikulski & Chard, 2005; Griffith & Rasinski, 2004) suggests the following practices for improving reading fluency:

Modeled reading: This is the practice of a teacher reading aloud to the students. This strategy provides the student a model of pace and expression. In the student’s mind, he or she can mentally conceptualize the linking of words to convey the thoughts, content and feeling.

Repeated reading of familiar text: Students reread the text several times. During each reading, speed, accuracy and expression is emphasized; perhaps one more than another on each attempt. This repetitive technique also improves familiarity with the content. Research indicates that generally when fluency improves, comprehension improves.

Wide independent reading: As the heading indicates, this strategy is the activity of the student reading independently. The reading materials selected for the student should be at his/her own independent reading level. If the materials are beyond the student’s reading level, the comprehension will be inconsistent and fluency will suffer.

Chunking of text and phrase boundaries: The student is provided material containing words or phrases that are grouped together. The grouping or phrasing may be designated with slashes. This practice will improve student’s ability to read with expression by allowing him or her to become familiar with chunking groups of words. The student’s increased comfort will allow him to read the word groups with continuity.

Reader’s theatre: This strategy is based upon reading a theater script geared to the student’s reading level. In the beginning exercise, the content of the script is discussed with the students. Students are then assigned the roles contained in the script, and practice reading their respective parts. Students reread their part numerous times prior to actually performing the play. Unlike an actual play, the script is not memorized. Students perform the reader’s theatre production from the script.

Partner reading or paired reading: With this strategy, students read a passage together numerous times until it is read accurately and with expression. The students may be at similar reading instructional level or may benefit from cross-aged tutoring.

Coached reading or assisted reading: This approach provides students with explicit fluency lessons with specific positive and corrective feedback from the teacher.

Many educators have utilized some of the methods, but have not systemically incorporated them into regular classroom instruction. For additional information pertaining to the methods above please see the “References” at the end of this article.

Readers with Comprehension Difficulties

Teachers identify students who read quickly and accurately, and with expression; but remark comprehension is weak. They would *not* consider these students fluent readers as the National Reading Panel’s definition suggests.

It could even be suggested that these students “sound like” fluent readers because educators provided a continuous high scaffold level of fluency instruction without explicit instruction or monitoring the students’ understanding of why their reading should “sound like talk”? These students simply applied the teacher’s direction to that text without the guidance as to *why* they should read quickly or slowly at certain parts or *why* pitch, voice, phrasing occurred at other times?

Keeping the high scaffold did not move students to a level of understanding fluency or improving comprehension. Very little or no teacher guidance or discussion followed an oral reading concerning the links between the author’s message, comprehension of the passage and why it was performed in that fashion.

In the Classroom: Coached Practice with explicit discussion

Fluency coached or assisted practice needs to be incorporated with strategic comprehension instruction.

These instructional components, fluency and comprehension, that the National Reading Panel proposed *must* be intertwined on a deliberate and consistent basis. The teacher needs to systematically link comprehension with the specific passage that is being used for fluency instruction.

Students in large and/or small groups require explicit instructional discussions with teacher guidance and feedback before *and* during fluency lessons to ensure an understanding of the elements of fluency building for that lesson. In addition, the discussions must include teaching points connecting students' oral reading to an understanding of particular story elements and/or comprehension of the passage.

After the reading or performance, a post discussion with teacher guidance should occur. Discussion should include students sharing specific text references of the reading or performance and linking it to their understanding of the passage or author's message. The teacher needs to observe and note students' comments in order to properly scaffold the students' oral reading instruction, which would lead to improved comprehension and fluency.

Concluding Remarks:

The Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read (2006) refers to a similar instruction procedure, guided oral reading, as noted in Coached Practice with explicit discussion. The Panel reported findings of guided oral reading, a method which "had a significant and positive impact on word recognition, fluency, and comprehension across a range of grade levels. Studies were conducted in a variety of classrooms

in both regular and special education." These findings continue to confirm the teacher's impact of specific feedback to student's successful reading and achievement!

References:

Griffith, L. & Rasinski, T. (2004). A Focus on Fluency: How one teacher incorporated fluency with her reading curriculum. *The Reading Teacher*, 58, 126-137.

Hudson, R, Lane, H. & Pullen, P. (2005). Reading fluency assessment and instruction: What, why and how? *The Reading Teacher* 58(8) 702-714.

Lenhart, L. & Rasinski, T. (2008). Explorations of fluent readers. *Reading Today* 25(3), 18.

McCornick, S. (2007). *Instructing Students Who Have Literacy Problems*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

National Institute of Child Health & Human Development. (2006) *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read*.

<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/nrp/findings.cfm>

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Report on Research-Based Approaches to Reading Instruction; Expert Panel Offers Its Groundbreaking Findings to U.S. Congress and the Nation*. <http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org>

Pikulski, J & Chard, D. (2005). Fluency: Bridge between Decoding and Reading Comprehension. *The Reading Teacher*, 58(6), 510-519.

Tompkins, G. (2007). *Literacy for the 21st Century*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.



Dinner with Dr. Alfred Tatum

On February 15, 2008, Maryville University hosted a dinner presentation by Alfred Tatum, Assistant Professor in Department of Literacy Education at Northern Illinois University. He is known for his book: Teaching Reading to Black Adolescent Males. He has also published "Engaging African American Males in Reading" in *Educational Leadership Journal*, February 2006. Dr. Tatum grew up in a poverty-stricken neighborhood and attended Chicago Public Schools. Because of the inspiration he received from his teachers who understood his surroundings, Dr. Tatum came to believe he was empowered to become successful, and went on to advance through college and doctoral studies. He believes that "today, our current Civil Right is Literacy".

Dr. Tatum stressed that teachers should encourage African-American males to read texts that reflect their own situations and provide hope for rising above challenging circumstances. According to Dr. Tatum, many African-American adolescent males experience an "out-of-school literacy overload and an in-school literacy under-load,". He said they live among race-based and class-based "turmoil" before and after school while their teachers fail to provide the texts that could "serve as road maps" to a better outcome for their lives. Literature should have the road maps of doing, living, and character education: "If we have to use text for reading instruction, how can we close the Life-Outcome Gap and help kids become responsible citizens in a democracy?"

Literature suggestions by Dr. Tatum: (www.alfredtatum.com).

**St. Louis Suburban Council of the International Reading Association
50th Anniversary Celebration Service Recognition Awards**

We are proud of our St. Louis Suburban members and their many contributions to literacy and the education of our young people. With this in mind, we will be presenting 50th Anniversary Service Recognition Awards at our Spring Banquet to St. Louis Suburban IRA members who have dedicated so much talent and time to our council's mission. Please fill out the nomination form below for those individuals who meet this description and send it to me as soon as possible. (Feel free to submit your own name.)

Nominee's name and contact information:

St. Louis Suburban positions held: offices, committees, contributions, and other pertinent details. Be as specific as possible:

Your contact information, should we need to follow up:

Attach additional sheets if needed. For consideration, please submit by **March 28, 2008**. Send to: Lillian Katzenmeyer
3700 Hampton Ave., Suite 100
St. Louis, MO 63109
E-mail: lkatzenmeyer@aol.com

2008-2009 Slate of Officers and Board of Directors

The following slate of officers and board members for the St. Louis Suburban Council of the International Reading Association will be submitted to the general membership for a final ratification vote at the Spring Council Meeting.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

- | | |
|--|--|
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| Deb Dickerson, Hazelwood (Newsletter Editor) | Betty Porter Walls --University of Missouri, Columbia |

*Indicates new board member nomination

Write-in Candidate: _____

St. Louis Suburban Council's Professional Development Opportunities

St. Louis Suburban Council Literacy Mini-Grant

The St. Louis Suburban Council of the International Reading Association (IRA) administers a mini-grant program for literacy-based instructional activities in the communication arts curriculum. Mini-grants up to \$500.00 are available to IRA member teachers and administrators in grades pre-kindergarten through twelve.

Projects funded by the mini-grant program are intended to enhance the literacy instruction in classrooms for students to improve academic achievement in communication arts – reading, writing, speaking, listening, information literacy. Mini-grant projects must be aligned to the Missouri Show-Me Standards and the Grade Level Expectations (GLE's). The mini-grant program targets educators who are interested in strengthening their instruction by infusing literature and/or trade books into curriculum content areas. Applicants should plan a mini-grant project that is both needed and timely. Instructional creativity and innovation are encouraged.

The application deadline for the fall semester of the 2008 – 2009 school year is May 16, 2008. The application deadline for the spring semester is November 19, 2008. All grant funds must be spent by May 27, 2009 and final reports submitted by June 12, 2009. Applicants will be notified about the status of their mini-grants for the fall

semester by June 13, 2008 and for the spring semester by December 12, 2008. Applications will be reviewed by the Board of Directors of the St. Louis Suburban Council of the IRA who will make the decision of mini-grant awards.

Who Can Apply

Teachers/teams of teachers and/or administrators in grades PK – 12 who are members of the St. Louis Suburban Council of the International Reading Association can apply for a literacy mini-grant. Mini-grants are limited to one person/team per year with priority being given to those applying for funds for the first time.

Application Deadline

The deadline for our fall 2008-2009 review is May 16, 2008. The deadline for next spring 2008-2009 is November 19, 2008. All applications must be received or postmarked by the deadline date to be considered. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

For Further Information

For complete mini-grant guidelines and an application, contact Dr. Betty Porter Walls at drbpwalls@earthlink.net, or Lillian Katzenmeyer at lkattenmeyer@aol.com.

3rd Annual Fontbonne University Summer 2008 Literacy Institute:

Classroom Strategies and Assessments to Improve Reading Comprehension, K-12 July 7, 8, 9 & 10, 2008

Keynote Speakers:

Jeffrey Wilhelm, author of *Reading IS Seeing: Learning to Visualize Scenes, character, Ideas, and Text Worlds to Improve Comprehension and Reflective Reading* and many other books.

Carol Gilles, author of *Retrospective Miscue Analysis with Struggling Readers, Grades 4-12*

Kathryn Mitchell Pierce, author of *Talking About Books: Literature Discussion Groups in K-8 Classrooms*.

Created For:

- *Classroom teachers,
- * K-12 Literacy Coaches
- * Special education teachers
- * Reading specialists
- * Curriculum Coordinators
- * Building and district administrators

For more information contact:
Betty at egeeser@fontbonne.edu

St. Louis Suburban membership includes your membership to Missouri State Council of International Reading Association.

St. Louis Suburban Council

of the
International Reading Association
 August 2008 - August 2009
 Does not include membership in International Reading Association

Join or renew with this form to get the prices below. Send to the address below!
 Online membership or renewal will be \$20.00!

- Regular individual membership** \$18.00 each person
- Partners membership** \$15.00 each person
 2-4 individuals join together - Checks and applications from both partners must be mailed in together.
- Literacy Team membership** \$12.00 each person
 5 or more individuals from one school join together - Checks and applications from all team members must be mailed in together.
- Student or Retiree membership** \$8.00 each person

Save \$3.00 each!

Save \$6.00 each
 Or \$30.00 per team!

St. Louis Suburban Council IRA Membership Application

August 2008 - August 2009

All information with an * is required! If you do not have an email address, please indicate that on the form.

Last name* _____ First name* _____ Middle initial* _____

Home address* _____ City* _____ State* _____ Zip code* _____

(____) (____) Home phone* Cell phone e-mail address* or check: I do not have an email address

School District if not retired* _____ School name if not retired* _____ School phone if not retired* _____

- Position (Check any that apply)*
- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre K/Elementary Classroom Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> College Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jr. High/Middle School | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Specialist | <input type="checkbox"/> College Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary | <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy Coach | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator | <input type="checkbox"/> Librarian | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

- Check Membership category and dues*
- \$18 Regular Individual Membership
 - \$15 Partners Membership
 - \$12 Literacy Team Membership
 - \$ 8 Full time student or Retiree

New Member*
 (2008-2009 membership year)
 Renewal*
 New Address*

Are you a member of the International Reading Association? _____
 If yes, please indicate your **IRA Membership number*** _____ Expiration date _____
 If no, would you like to receive information about International Reading Association membership? Yes No
 (Please circle)

Please make checks payable to **St. Louis Suburban IRA**

Mail to: 
 Carol Kemper
 IRA Membership Director
 778 Cypress Knoll Dr.
 O'Fallon, MO. 63368

Please join today!

SAVE \$\$\$ on state, regional, and international conferences...
JOIN INTERNATIONAL.
It's easy to join! Just go to
www.reading.org/membership
 IRA's 53rd Annual Convention will be held in Atlanta, Georgia
 May 4-8, 2008

St. Louis Suburban Council Spring Banquet Information



St. Louis Suburban Spring Banquet

Presenting : Peter Brunn

"Revisiting What's Important in Elementary Writing Instruction - Writing, Writing, Writing..."

Over the past few years we have focused lots of time and energy on assessing writing, teaching traits, or teaching revision strategies. In short, we have spent lots of time focusing teachers on teaching skills and strategies. The problem is, that while this instruction is vital, kids just aren't doing enough writing. In the end, it is the volume of writing that will make the difference between a good writer and one who struggles. In this talk I will share strategies to get students to do large quantities of writing while not giving up on skills and strategies.

Peter Brunn is Director of Professional Development at the non-profit Developmental Studies Center (DSC) in Oakland CA. At DSC, he oversees a cadre of 65 full- and part-time staff developers who work in schools and districts across the country to support the adoption of DSC's literacy and community-building programs. He was formerly a classroom teacher in New York City, a staff developer at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, and co-author of DSC's Making Meaning reading comprehension program.



When: Wednesday, April 23, 2008

**Where: Monsanto Auditorium
Maryville University
650 Maryville University Drive
St. Louis, MO 63141**

Menu:
Grilled Chicken Breast with Supreme Sauce
Rice Pilaf, Fresh Vegetable Medley
Classic Caesar Salad, Dinner rolls & Butter
Chef's Gourmet Dessert, Iced Tea, Water, Coffee

Agenda:
4:45-5:15 Registration and Networking.
5:15-6:30 Dinner Buffet
6:15-6:45 Business Meeting
6:45-7:45 Speaker - Peter Brunn
Topic: "Revisiting What's Important in Elementary Writing Instruction - Writing, Writing, Writing..."
7:45-8:00 Closing and door prizes
A special thanks goes to Carla Nieman and Developmental Studies Center for sponsoring Peter Brunn.

**Wednesday, April 23, 2008
Council Meeting and Dinner
Reservation Form**

Last name	First name	Middle Initial

Street	City	State/Zip

Home phone	School phone	

e-mail address	School District	

International IRA Membership # _____		

I am a member and plan to eat dinner.	\$15.00	_____
I am a non-member and plan to eat dinner.	\$20.00	_____
I am a non-member attending without dinner.	\$5.00	_____
I am a member, but not eating dinner.	\$0.00	_____

I prefer a vegetarian meal _____
Total amount enclosed: _____

**All reservations must be received
by April 11, 2008.**

**For questions contact:
Carol Kemper at 636-561-3114**

**Mail completed form and check payable to
St. Louis Suburban IRA. Send to:**

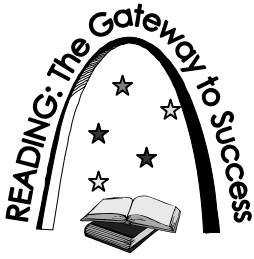


Thanks!

**Carol Kemper
778 Cypress Knoll Dr.
O'Fallon, MO 63368**

St. Louis Suburban Council of the
International Reading Association
3700 Hampton Ave., Suite 100
St. Louis, MO 63109

stamp



Inside:

- * **RSVPs for our April 23rd meeting and dinner *must be received* by April 11th. See page 7.**
- * **RSVP for our next Wine and Wisdom, June 21, 2:30 – 3:30 P.M., page 3.**
- * **St. Louis Suburban Literacy Mini-Grant Information is on page 5.**
- * **St. Louis Suburban/Missouri State Council of the International Reading Association Membership form is included. Please join or renew your membership for 2008-2009!**

St. Louis Suburban Council Service Projects

HOW MUCH IS A PENNY A PAGE WORTH?

One of the literacy service projects sponsored by the St. Louis Suburban IRA Council is Penny a Page. This project is a partnership with First Book –St. Louis, a nonprofit organization that provides free new books to disadvantaged children, encouraging early reading for at risk families. Students who participate help others by reading and earning a penny (or other amount) for each page read. Funds are used to provide grants to purchase books. The project took place January 21-26. **Participants included 352 students who read 86,815 pages, and collected \$6364.66 in donations.** These are figures as of February. One school has not yet completed their project, so their amounts will be added later. We would like to thank all who helped make this project a success, especially the following participating schools: Andrews Academy Creve Coeur, Andrews Academy Lake St. Louis, Bel Ridge, Crestwood, Ellisville, Kennerly, Lee-Hamilton, Mesnier, Rohan Woods, Rossman. A Penny a Page is worth a lot. We look forward to continued success with the project next year. Information on participation will be included in the first newsletter of the 2008-2009 school year.

Maya Centre Village Scholarship Fund

Did you know that in 1994 no children from Maya Centre, Belize were continuing on past the 8th grade. Some were not even attending the last year of the village school because it was preparation for the Secondary Entrance Exam and they had no hope of attending high school at about \$500/year. Many fathers were subsistence farmers and provided for their families largely outside of the cash economy. The government's primary school budget was only \$.50 per student per year! Our Rachel Crandell **Mayan Project** provides funds to help support school attendance and literacy for Mayan children. We provide funds for school supplies and books. Thank you to our members for their support of this project.

Community Service Collections

We will be collecting for our community service projects at the April 23rd Spring Banquet. Please help us support the following projects:

1. Crayons and coloring books for Cardinal Glennon Hospital
2. Tab Tops for Ronald McDonald House Charities
3. Cash donations for the Mayan Scholarship Project and Philippines Project