ARF 2020 (un)Conference

Literacy in Uncertain Times

Conference Co-Chairs: Amy Broemmel, Rachelle Savitz, and Nora Vines

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the ARF membership who are joining us for this year's (un)Conference. The ARF board has put in many hours trying to put together a meaningful and manageable program that remains true to the spirit of our traditional face-to-face gathering. Though we cannot replicate the learning, mentoring, and camaraderie we enjoy every December on the beaches of Sanibel Island, we hope that we have provided virtual opportunities for such to occur. Under the umbrella of this year's revised theme, "Literacy in Uncertain Times," we are offering a keynote focused on digital citizenship along with the opportunity to engage in a Q & A session with the keynote speakers. Both evenings include 5 thematic breakout sessions in which presenters will share lightning (short!) talks and then engage in discussion with those present. And, to continue facilitating our learning and sharing, the second night will also include an opportunity for sharing books and resources around each of the sub-themes. We ask that, if possible, participants come to those sessions ready to share a resource, book or tool that they find helpful. Our facilitators will compile the resources and will make them available through the members only page of our ARF website. Finally, we have done our best to integrate social opportunities, like our virtual Spirit of the Times and our Awards Ceremony, throughout the conference. Thank you each for taking the time to renew your membership and join us in this two-night event! And, if you get a moment, please join us in thanking Dr. Nance Wilson and Dr. Jennifer Van Allen for their work in coordinating the virtual platform and Zoom sessions used to host this conference. Enjoy!

Wednesday, December 9

5:00-5:10pm Welcome & Intro to Keynote

5:10-6:10pm Keynote: Gary Moorman, Beth Buchholz, & Jason DeHart
"The Urgency of Digital Citizenship"

6:10-6:30pm Q & A with Keynotes

6:35-7:35pm Breakout Sessions/Lightning Talks

- **Trauma & Centering Antiracism in Literacy Teaching and Research** (facilitated by Rachelle Savitz, Brandon Sams & Jeanne Dyches)

  "Fostering Disciplinary Literacies in STEM: Lessons from a Youth Participatory Action Research Project," presented by Susan Watts-Taffe, Alecia Boards, Storey Mecoli, & Whitney Butler

  This presentation focuses on disciplinary literacy learning within an ongoing Youth Participatory Action Research project focused on substance abuse within students' local communities. The project follows eleventh graders and their teachers in two school districts through observations, artifact analysis, and interviews across two years. The lightening round presentation will showcase snapshots of student engagement in disciplinary literacy practices

alongside specific instructional supports. Session participants' questions and insights related to teachers' instructional practices will support our efforts to identify and disseminate the key understandings and pedagogical tools needed for teachers to implement similar YPAR projects within their own communities.

"Refugee Students' Transnational Literacies and Narratives," presented by Sarah Williams

This qualitative study is a narrative inquiry of three Afghan high school refugee students' pre-migratory experiences, transnational literacy practices, and post-settlement lives. This study is situated within critical literacy (Vasquez, 2014), specifically these three tenets: (1) critical literacy involves having a critical perspective, (2) texts are never neutral, and (3) students' cultural knowledge and multimodal literacy practices should be valued. The participants' narratives revealed how post-settlement hardships were exacerbated by their pre-migratory experience, which highlighted the importance of understanding refugee students' backgrounds.

"Creating Culturally Relevant, Virtual Classrooms in Uncertain Times," presented by Tania Gordon & Joyce Fine

As the U.S. cultural landscape becomes more diverse, it calls for culturally relevant pedagogies rooted in the life experiences and heritage of our diverse student population. This proposal responds to the increasing need to incorporate culturally responsive teaching into the world of virtual learning. This strategy, in which students build a virtual classroom with culturally relevant objects including Bitmojis, is a simple e-learning activity in which culturally relevant teaching and technology are fused. Throughout this activity, teachers and students engage in a conversation about culture, languages, and literature while promoting a safe learning environment and online collaboration.

"Using One of Us is Lying for Critical Witnessing and Testimony of Traumatic Experiences in Secondary Classrooms," presented by Julia Kate Bentley (Graduate Student)

Trauma is a sad reality for many students. Teachers may be hesitant to address these issues in the classroom. However, the use of young adult (YA) literature for Critical Witnessing and Testimony of traumatic experiences can promote healing in students who have experienced trauma and foster empathy in those who have not. YA novels contain the same elements of complexity as canonical texts while being more relatable to contemporary students. This presentation explains how one complex YA novel, *One of Us is Lying*, can be used to discuss traumatic experiences in the classroom and prompt students to take action.

- **K-5 PD in uncertain times** (facilitated by Shalander *Shelly* Samuels)

  "Fostering higher order reading comprehension in K-5 classrooms: A Preliminary Report of a series of Virtual Professional Developments," presented by Shuai Zhang, Alida Hudson, Kacee Lambright, & Kay Wijekumar,

  This work introduces a series of virtual professional developments (PD) provided to teachers, specialists, literacy coaches, and principals over the summer of 2020. The entire PD focused on all teachers from K-12, but this work will focus specifically on K-5 general classroom teachers. The PDs focus on helping teachers develop lesson plans that can foster higher-order reading comprehension skills among students, and we also aim to improve teacher knowledge of reading comprehension via the PDs. The primary presenter of this work is a university professor who is one of the PD leaders and has served the K-2, Grade 3, and Special Education groups. In this presentation, the presenters will introduce the structure of the PD sessions, the outcome measures that were used to assess the effectiveness of our PDs, and the data analysis plan. We also hope to share the resources of this PD and provide suggestions for future virtual PDs.

  "A Professional Development Model on Genre-Based Strategy Instruction: Supporting Teachers as Architects of Lessons and Students as Independent Learners," presented by Zoi Traga Philippakos

  The goal of strategy instruction is for learners to use strategies independently and flexibly in response to task demands and goals. The purpose of this session is to share with participants a model of professional development on K to 5 genre-based strategy instruction on writing, its effects on teachers' fidelity of implementation, and on students' development as readers and writers.

  "Social media: Click bait for Teachers?" presented by Catherine Miller (Graduate Student)

  This presentation looks at how social media sites, specifically Pinterest, have turned into a clickbait mecca for teachers. The growing number of teachers who click and print these resources without checking them for academic validity and reliability is concerning. This presentation demonstrates how teachers can sharpen their skills and become critical consumers of digital information in an oversaturated environment. This project came out of the necessity to better equip teachers to be critical consumers of the online resources they plan to use during their literacy instruction. This presentation provides dual perspectives, both that of the course instructor and the graduate candidate, who is a literacy interventionist in an urban school in Washington, DC.

- **Digital and online instruction** (facilitated by Emily Howell)

  "Online Instruction: Building a Community of Coaches Using TPACK Principles," presented by Joyce Fine

  This presentation will share a remote teaching strategy for building Master of Science in Reading/Literacy Education candidates' personal and professional identities. Using a graphic organizer to pre-write answers about their identity, they discover points of similarities in their experiences and backgrounds as well as differences. They make the realization that when they are coaches, they should not try to clone themselves but, instead, help teachers to become the best teacher they can be. This content knowledge is used along with technological behaviors to emphasize the need to be open to diverse populations of teachers and students.

  "Online Inquiry-Based Literacy Intervention for Uncertain Times," presented by Brittany Adams and Nance Wilson

  This presentation reports on the experiences and observations of literacy specialist candidates as they conducted online inquiry-based literacy intervention as part of their practicum experience in an M.S.Ed. program. The implications of this study may be of interest to literacy educators and teacher educators alike, as the experiences of these literacy specialist candidates provide important insight into the needs of literacy educators during and beyond these tumultuous times. The presentation will touch on the affordances and constraints of online literacy intervention, issues of access and equity, and student motivation and engagement during online learning.

  "Poster's Purpose: Students' Evaluations of the Credibility and Purpose of a Tweeted Image," presented by Gillian Mertens

  This presentation will discuss findings from a study in which students (n=111) evaluated a Tweeted image and its social media context by rating their skepticism, explaining their rating, and predicting the poster's purpose. The presentation will detail the intervention and instrumentation, which is contextualized within a year-long information literacy curricular intervention. The presenter will discuss findings relevant to information literacy and reading comprehension by explicating how students conceptualized the "poster's purpose" on social media.

7:40-8:30pm Virtual Spirit of the Times

Thursday, December 10th

5:00-5:10pm Welcome & Intro to Breakout Sessions

5:10-6:10pm Breakout Sessions/Lightning Talks:

- **Recognizing bias in children's literature** (facilitated by Adam Ulenski)

  "The power of authentic contexts for social justice," presented by Sherron Killingsworth Roberts, Patricia A. Crawford, Nancy H. Brasel

  Using children's books to highlight social justice and engender empathy, this paper focused on utilizing purposeful writing with elementary students for authentic audiences to engender goodness. Findings note preservice teachers' projects ranked higher on the Social Justice Continuum as well as emerging themes from reflections that recognize the power of words and the opportunity to boost writing skills. This study's educational significance relies on the power to leverage children's books and literacy activities so as to possess agency and to serve a greater good in a turbulent world so clearly in need of repair, empathy, and action toward social justice.

  "Promoting Anti-Racist Dialogue in Elementary Literacy and Language Arts Classrooms," presented by Bill Kerns and Peggy Semingson

  Participants in this lightning round session will:

  Gain an understanding of anti-racist pedagogical practices in the context of the study of children's literature and graphic novels "(Ten Stages of Genocide" graphic novels series from the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum) as well as digital resources to prepare teachers such as the Shoah Foundation's iWitness online program for educators.

  Gain an understanding of how graphic novels and digital resources and information about the ten stages of genocide can be used to promote anti-racist and anti-bias literature study of texts, graphic novels, and primary sources.

  "Picturebook Portrayals of Refugees: Springboards for Examining Issues of Empathy, Power, and Social Justice," presented by Patricia A. Crawford, Sherron Killingsworth Roberts

  Children's literature can serve as an excellent and powerful resource in the quest to help children develop empathetic and socially just perspectives of the world. In this session, we will explore portrayals of the refugee experience in the pages of recently published (2011-2020) picturebooks. Using critical content analysis, the goal of our study was to explore the identity of refugees as portrayed in these texts, as well as the circumstances that surround the refugee experience; thus, making it possible to better understand the ways in which refugee-themed texts can serve as invitations to praxis, spurring readers to empathy and socially just action.

"Supporting diversity in the classroom with children's literature: An inquiry approach to a content analysis," presented by Angela Curfman (graduate student)

Varied cultures, linguistic backgrounds, families with diverse socio-economical, and academic backgrounds constitute our public school classrooms. Children's literature provides readers an opportunity for self-affirmation; therefore, they often seek a mirror in books, (Bishop, 1990). The thoughtful selection of children's literature in the classroom is essential; however, the mindful awareness of representation of our students and communities must be considered (Boyd et al., 2015). The goal of this study is to analyze children's literature that in-service teachers employ to support diversity in the classroom. The presentation seeks advice from colleagues to inform research design of this dissertation.

"Lessons Learned from a Review of Diverse Literature in The Reading Teacher (2015-2020)," presented by Kaira Kelly-Howard (Graduate Student) and Vicky Zygouris-Coe

In this session, I will share the lessons learned from my review of literature from articles discussing diverse and multicultural literature in *The Reading Teacher*. From this review of literature, implications for elementary teachers' instructional practices for improving their literary environments and discussing the experiences of diverse characters in texts will be shared. This session represents the most recent body of literature in culturally sustaining pedagogies from *The Reading Teacher* and implies the importance of recognizing the unique learning opportunities that are needed by students from historically marginalized communities.

- **Community Literacy & Access** (facilitated by Constance Beecher)

"Teacher Candidates' Development as Literacy Teachers in a Summer Camp Designed to Promote Community Literacy: A Sociocultural Perspective," presented by Janet C. Richards & Hope M. Zikpi

This inquiry applied a sociocultural lens to explore preservice teachers' development as literacy teachers in a Community of Practice literacy camp designed to promote community literacy in which teams of master's and doctoral students mentored small groups of preservice teachers. We explored the preservice teachers' learning following Rogoff's (1995,1997) notions of the personal, interpersonal, and community planes of analysis and employed a postmodernist crystallization imagery to capture multiple perspectives on the preservice teachers' growth as literacy teachers, which illuminated the importance of contextual dimensions in which learning takes place, and how learning is nourished by community interactions with others.

"You've elevated Reading to a Sport": Express, Engage, and Experience Literacies Outside the Classroom, presented by Emily Pendergrass & Melanie Hundley

Our goal as educators is to work alongside 4th-8th grade students to experience novels and other media outside the classroom. In this session, we will share how we build on what teachers are doing in school to provide space for book discussions and response to literature through art, music, and drama.

- **Digital and Online Instruction** (facilitated by Megan Adams)

"Leveraging YouTube Content Creation in the Pandemic Era and Beyond: Examples from Higher Education and K-12 Literacy Instruction," presented by Peggy Semingson & Leigh Hall

This session provides ways two experienced literacy teacher educators have leveraged YouTube by becoming content creators over a long time span as well as a central focus on ways to use YouTube creation for K-12 remote teaching. A brief rationale for creating original content and ways to leverage microlearning and student-centered videos for literacy teacher education at the graduate and undergraduate level will be shared. Key ways to create highly engaging and/or high-interest video content will be shared with a visually-focused session with examples and screenshots will be shared. Exemplar K-12 literacy YouTube videos will be curated and demonstrated.

"Teaching Writing in Digital Space Shifting from Uncertainty to Opportunity," presented by Tracy Hodges

The shift to digital instruction has been in development for many years, but in 2020, has increased in momentum and push with the global pandemic. In the best of times, writing instruction may be overlooked and teachers report feeling unprepared for this instruction. Simultaneously, teachers report varying levels of skill and identity when teaching with and through technology. Combine these two skillsets and some teachers may feel overwhelmed by teaching technologically-rich writing lessons. This systematic literature review synthesizes 79 articles to determine best practices for teaching writing virtually to help teachers better understand successful methods for implementing writing and technology.

"Tool Talk – Let's Talk about Technology," presented by Susan Taylor (Graduate Student)

This proposal specifically focuses on the *Tool Talk* assignment from a three-hour, graduate level online class for literacy educators titled *Content and Disciplinary Literacy Instruction*. The *Tool Talk* assignment was developed using the Community of Inquiry (COI) framework (Garrison, Anderson, &

Archer, 2000) and the characteristics of effective professional development (Desimone, 2009) as well as Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956) and the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). This assignment integrates the VoiceThread tool offered by the program's Learning Management System, eCampus.

6:15-7:15pm Small Group Book/Resource Shares:

- Trauma (facilitated by Rachelle Savitz)
- K-5 Teaching & PD in Uncertain Times (facilitated by Zoi Philippakos)
- Digital and Online Instruction (facilitated by Emily Howell & Megan Adams)
- Recognizing Bias in Children's Literature (facilitated by Adam Ulenski)
- Community Literacy & Access (facilitated by Constance Beecher)
- Centering Antiracism in Literacy Teaching and Research (facilitated by Jeanne Dyches & Brandon Sams)

7:20-7:45pm Business Meeting, Announcement of Awards & Closing