Editor’s Note
Growing a Reader
By Sharon Verbeten

It’s hard for me to believe that by the time you get this issue, my “baby,” my only child, Holland, will be eleven years old. She’s grown up with me as CAL editor—even travelled with me, in vitro!—to the ALA Annual Conference two months before she was born in 2006.

And with me also working as a children’s librarian, and spending much of my free time reading, it’s no doubt Holland has grown up loving books and reading. Despite the fact that she was lucky enough to be born with one extra chromosome, reading has never been much of a struggle for her. I guess that’s firmly embedded in her genes!

When I thought reading might be a bit challenging for Holland, I decided to give audiobooks (and Tumblebooks) a try. Not only were they great to keep her interested and busy (while I was making dinner!), but hearing the words and following along in books really helped her learn to read. I’m convinced of that. She listens to them in her room (on an old-school pink boombox), in the car (on a CD Walkman!), and even when riding in the boat!

Thanks to my role as editor, I’ve been able to meet some amazing authors and illustrators at ALA conferences, and I get as many books signed for my daughter as possible. It’s worth the heavy suitcase home to see her excitement as I unpack books signed JUST FOR HER!

Making up silly stories at night, giving books as prized gifts, and visiting bookstores often only add to raising a literary child and growing a reader. Holland’s voraciousness for reading is exciting to see. I no longer worry about what reading level she’s at or if she’s listening to a Disney audiobook for the umpteenth time. I’m just glad my love of words, reading, and books has rubbed off on her . . . now, if I could just get my husband to pick up a book . . . &

So proud of my not-so-little reader!

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