

Children & Libraries

the journal of the Association for
Library Service to Children

Volume 7 Number 1 Spring 2009 ISSN 1542-9806



ALSC
Association for Library Service to Children
50 East Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

Special Focus: Every Child Ready to Read
An Apiary in the Library • Talking Tweens

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On the cover: A cozy reading corner at Kress Family Branch Library in DePere, Wis., a branch of the Brown County Library.

—Photo by Sharon Verbeten.



Editor's Note Books Galore!

Sharon Verbeten

My daughter, Holland, is only 2½ (that's her on our cover), but she has already absorbed a great love of books. I'm sure I had a little to do with that.

All you have to do is look in her room—there are books on the shelf, books on the floor, books in a box, books galore! I have a *Horton Hears a Who* growth chart (now slightly ripped) on the back of the door, and a friend made her a beautiful *Very Hungry Caterpillar* quilt that hangs on the rocking chair.

When she moves into a new room with a "big-girl" bed, I've decided to carry forward that children's book theme. Like me, I hope she, too, finds books to be a comfort to be around and something special to share.

We've had several great pieces in past issues of *CAL* about the joy and importance of sharing books with children, and I'm constantly inspired by our local librarians and booksellers who offer suggestions for new ways to do that.

I'll try to keep all those powerful influences in mind next time I pick up the zillion books off her bedroom floor . . . for the fiftieth time! ☺



Executive Director's Note ALSC Honors

Aimee Strittmatter

Hello ALSC! ALSC is more than just a professional organization to list on your resume—it's a warm and welcoming community of members who offer ideas, resources, support, and lasting friendships. I'm deeply honored to

continue to be a part of such a fine organization in my new role as Executive Director.

I'm pleased to share that ALA has launched ALA Connect (<http://connect.ala.org>), a new Web-based site that allows members to engage in ALA business and network with other members around issues and interests relevant to them regardless of geographic location and one's ability to attend a conference. The ALSC community is at your fingertips, and I encourage you to explore, discover new connections, and establish new friendships!

In this issue, we have a few features that focus on early literacy and Every Child Ready to Read @ your Library®, a topic near and dear to my heart. This past year the ECRR project has undergone a comprehensive evaluation by University of Michigan professor Susan B. Neuman. The results of the evaluation and recommendations for next steps will be presented to both the ALSC and Public Library Association Boards of Directors at ALA's Annual Conference. This issue is also packed with other great articles such as Charmette Kendrick's Bechtel Fellowship survey of horror in nineteenth-century children's literature; generating "buzz" in a library with honeybees; and using primary source material with students.

I look forward to building the ALSC community with you! ☺

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Website

www.ala.org/alsc

Circulation

Children and Libraries (ISSN 1542-9806) is published three times per year by the American Library Association (ALA), 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. It is the official publication of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of ALA. Subscription price: members of ALSC, \$20 per year, included in membership dues; nonmembers, \$40 per year in the U.S.; \$50 in Canada, Mexico, and other countries. Back issues within one year of current issue, \$12 each. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Children and Libraries*, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Members send mailing labels or facsimile to Member Services, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Nonmember subscribers: Subscriptions, orders, changes of address, and inquiries should be sent to *Children and Libraries*, Customer Service—Subscriptions, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611; 1-800-545-2433, press 5; fax: (312) 944-2641; e-mail: subscriptions@ala.org.

Statement of Purpose

Children and Libraries is the official journal of ALSC, a division of the American Library Association. The journal primarily serves as a vehicle for continuing education of librarians working with children, which showcases current scholarly research and practice in library service to children and spotlights significant activities and programs of the Association. (From the journal's "Policies and Procedures" document adopted by the ALSC board, April 2004.)

Production

ALA Production Services—Troy D. Linker, Chris Keech, Tim Clifford, and Justine Wells.

Advertising

Bill Spilman, Innovative Media Solutions, 320 W. Chestnut St., PO Box 399, Oneida, IL 61467; 1-877-878-3260 or (309) 483-6467; fax: (309) 483-2371; e-mail: bill@innovativemediasolutions.com. The journal accepts advertising for goods or services of interest to the library profession and librarians in service to youth in particular. It encourages advertising that informs readers and provides clear communication between vendor and buyer. The journal adheres to ethical and commonly accepted advertising practices and reserves the right to reject any advertisement not suited to the above purposes or not consistent with the aims and policies of ALA. Acceptance of advertising in the journal does not imply official endorsement by ALA of the products or services advertised.

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Manuscripts and letters pertaining to editorial content should be sent to Sharon Verbeten, editor, 820 Spooner Ct., De Pere, WI 54115; (920) 339-2740; e-mail: CALeditor@yahoo.com. Manuscripts will be sent out for review according to the journal's established referee procedures. See www.ala.org/alsc, "Communications & Publications" for author guidelines. If you are interested in serving as a volunteer referee for manuscripts submitted to *CAL*, contact Editor Sharon Verbeten at CALeditor@yahoo.com. More information about the referee process is available on the Web at the above address.

Indexing, Abstracting, and Microfilm

Children and Libraries is indexed in *Library and Information Science Abstracts* and in *Library Literature and Information Science*.

Children and Libraries is indexed, abstracted, and available in full text through EBSCOhost. For more information, contact EBSCO at 1-800-653-2726.

Children and Libraries is also available from ProQuest Information and Learning in one or more of the following ways: online, via the ProQuest information service; microform; CD-ROM; and via database licensing. For more information, call 1-800-521-0600, ext. 2888 or online at www.il.proquest.com.

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1992.

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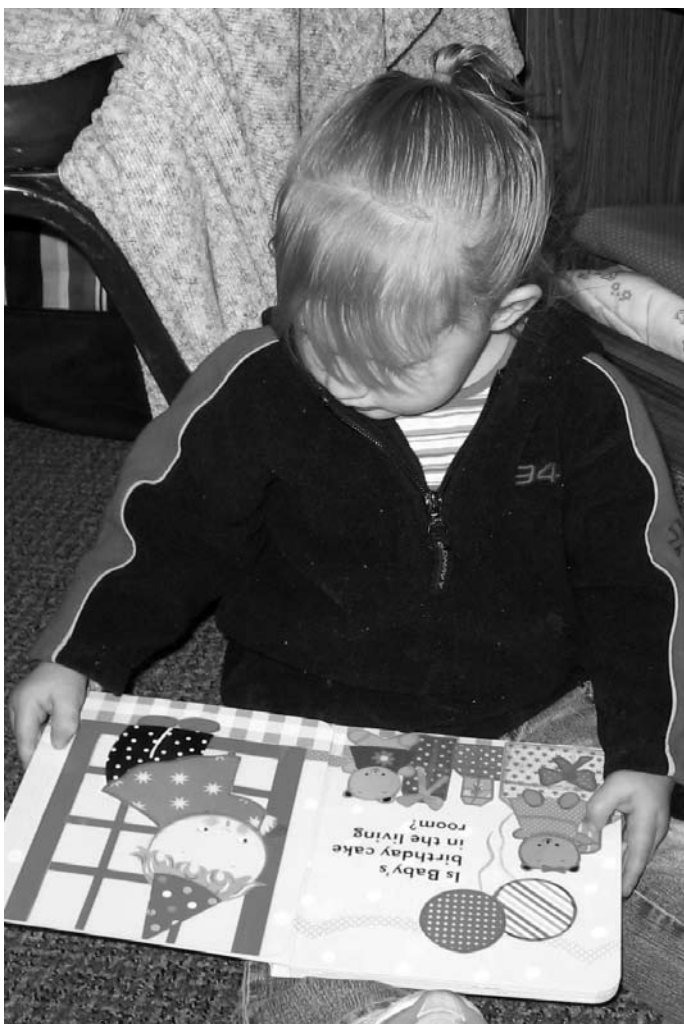
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Every Child Ready to Read @ your library[®]

How it All Began

Viki Ash and Elaine Meyers

Photos courtesy of Safford City–Graham County (Ariz.) Library



Rielley Campbell, 2, peruses a board book.

With eleven divisions, seventeen round tables, and countless committees in ALA, it's often difficult for a single idea to attract the attention of multiple groups within the larger whole. In 2000, however, as remarkable research on early brain development was finding its way into the mainstream news, the Public Library Association (PLA) and the ALSC both took note.

In that same year, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) published a report from the National Reading Panel that provided research-based findings on how children learn to read, including the importance of early childhood experiences that promote literacy development. Again, both organizations took note and both took action.

*Retired librarian **Elaine Meyers** works as an independent consultant in Phoenix, Arizona. She served as Manager of the Phoenix Public Library's Burton Barr Central Library Youth Services Unit from 2002 to 2008. She worked previously as Coordinator of Children's and Young Adult Services at the Phoenix Public Library from 1993–98 and Head of Phoenix Public Central Library Children's and Young Adult Area from 1988-93. She served as Program Coordinator for the Carroll County Public Library from 1978-86. She serves as adjunct faculty in the graduate library programs at the University of Arizona and UCLA.*

***Viki Ash** is an ALSC representative to the Every Child Ready to Read Evaluation Task Force. Since 2005, she has served as Coordinator of Children's Services for the San Antonio (Tex.) Public Library.*

By fall 2001, PLA and ALSC had

- formed a partnership for early literacy;
- overseen the development of a research-based curriculum for parents and caregivers in support of early literacy; and
- identified multiple demonstration sites to test and evaluate the curriculum materials.

Those familiar with the workings of any large national organization will recognize that things were moving at top speed—a fact that speaks to the excitement the research and the resulting project engendered. The work of public librarians had never been associated so closely with nor bolstered more fully by the findings of educational research. The connection between early literacy experiences and a child's later success as an independent reader had never been so firmly established.

In 2002, PLA and ALSC conducted a second year of pilot projects with a slightly revised curriculum and a refined evaluation tool. Ultimately, a polished tool kit for promoting early literacy with parents and care providers was published, an extensive website was developed, trainers were made available, and libraries around the country began to embrace and implement Every Child Ready to Read @ your library® (ECRR). These tasks were undertaken by both the PLA and ALSC.

From its outset, ECRR sought to firmly establish public libraries as partners in the educational continuum and to strengthen the link between library activities and relevant research on early literacy. Additionally, ECRR championed the core belief that public librarians must partner with the young child's first and most important teachers—parents and caregivers—to impact positively a child's development. Early literacy was not seen as a job for the librarian alone but as a job that belonged primarily to parents and care providers with help and support from the library community.

The Components

The basic tenets of ECRR were developed by Dr. Grover C. Whitehurst and Dr. Christopher Lonigan, well-known researchers in emergent literacy. Their task was to develop a model program that would enlist parents and caregivers as active participants in preparing their children to read. To achieve this end, the men created a structure based on the distinctive phases of a young child's emerging literacy—early talkers, talkers, and pre-readers. Within this structure, six prereading skills



Participants at the Early Literacy classes held at the Safford City-Graham County (Ariz.) Library.

were identified—narrative skills, print motivation, vocabulary, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and print awareness.

Through the ECRR workshops, parents and care providers are exposed to strategies that can enhance these six skills during each phase of their child's development. For example, in the early talker phase, a parent can lay the groundwork for letter recognition by simply identifying and naming shapes. By the time the child moves on to the prereader phase, a parent or caregiver can enhance letter recognition by writing and saying the letters of the child's name and by pointing out specific letters when reading books, signs, or labels.

ECRR is filled with similar simple and practical activities that are firmly grounded in research. These activities empower parents and caregivers because they are so satisfyingly doable.

The publication and distribution of the ECRR materials were greeted by a wave of enthusiasm in many public libraries. Both practicing children's librarians and forward-thinking library directors readily saw the value of putting so many of the things libraries had always known and done into a research-based structure. Such a structure could be appreciated by our colleagues in early childhood education, understood by parents from widely varied backgrounds, and valued by the boards and councils that govern (and fund) our libraries.

Implementation: Three Case Studies

The success of ECRR stems from the adaptability of materials to particular community needs. While the ideal delivery of early literacy information remains the scripted and evaluated work-

shop model, libraries around the country have been adapting portions of the workshops to meet specific community goals. The following three case studies demonstrate adaptations in libraries of diverse size, location, and resource availability. Considering these cases reveals the powerful need for parents and caregivers to receive information when they are ready to listen. Partnerships are at the heart of these stories, and as ALA divisions have come together for early literacy success, so must libraries as they implement ECRR.

Safford City–Graham County Library in south-

eastern Arizona serves approximately twenty-five thousand residents. A visit to their website provides an easy link to Every Child Ready to Read @ your library® (<http://saffordlibrary.org/children.php>).

Library assistant Vicki Foote said, “I will tell you we are dedicated and committed to early literacy. Being an excellent library is not about money, it is about dedication. We have expanded our website and have a forum for parents to talk about early literacy online. All of our interactions have changed. We emphasize the six early literacy skills with every-



Jerry Riddle reads to his seven-month-old son Harley at an Every Child Ready to Read: Early Literacy Skills class at Safford City–Graham County (Ariz.) Library.

ECRR is filled with simple and practical activities that are firmly grounded in research. These activities empower parents and caregivers because they are so satisfyingly doable.

one. I even talk to parents when I am in line with them at Wal-Mart.”

Foote joined other library coworkers in a series of ECRR workshop training sessions provided by the Arizona State Library in 2007. Safford City/Graham County provides ECRR workshops in the library and in local high schools for childcare workers and for parents at monthly meetings of WIC (a supplemental nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children). Strategies for building the six prereading skills are shared with parents in regular library storytimes as well.

“The WIC meetings are my favorite,” said Foote. “I only have fifteen minutes to talk to the parents and children. I focus on one skill. I tell them about it and then give them ideas of things they can do with their children to build this skill—fun, practical things. We have created a form to use when they sign in to record what they have practiced since our last meeting. Parents are enjoying this practical approach, and lots of them are bringing friends with them to these morning meetings. I saw more than four hundred people last year.”

Safford Library Director Jan Elliott has a place at her local First Things First Council (Arizona’s Early Childhood Development and Health Initiative) and spreads the ECRR word to this group. Under Elliott’s leadership, early literacy is a core component of the library’s strategic plan (<http://saffordlibrary.org/plan.php>). Safford promises its community that it will “create young readers.”

Pierce County Library System (PCLS) serves approximately 520,000 residents in midwest Washington state. When Library Director Neel Parikh arrived in 1994, early literacy was on her agenda, and PCLS served as a pilot and test site for the development of the ECRR materials from 2002 to 2004 as a natural extension of the pioneering work Pierce County has been doing in early literacy since the mid-1990s. Judy Nelson, youth services director at PCLS, said, “First of all, we have excellent administration that understand the essential value of vitally serving young children and their families. They fully support outreach services, since they are aware that many of the people who really need the ECRR information do not use the library on a regular basis. This has led to the creation of an Early Learning Department that oversees early literacy and early learning information for our staff and community.”

PCLS has incorporated the six prereading skills into storytimes as well as outreach. Staff training continues to expand with “early learning moments” at Youth Service meetings, the distribution of an early learning newsletter to all Youth Service librarians and childcare providers, and internal and external blogs. “Everyone knows the importance of reading every day with a



This one-year-old girl works a puzzle.



Puzzles are a great early literacy tool.

young child—they all know that chewing a board book is how we all begin,” said Nelson.

Early literacy is highlighted on the PCLS website and a “Reading House” with the six prereading skills as foundation blocks for early literacy is featured at www.piercecountylibrary.org/kids-teens/parents-caregivers/early-learning.htm.

Nelson affirms staff commitment: “ECRR has been a galvanizing force for early learning for our library system. It has pulled staff together with a common purpose: using a shared language and vocabulary with research driven techniques to prepare all children for school and for a lifetime love of reading. ECRR has also given the library direction for formulating relationships in the early learning community of Pierce County.”

Nelson acknowledges that ECRR’s research-based approach was pivotal in changing the library’s role in the community. “Being able to use the correct language and know about early literacy allowed PCLS to take a seat at the table in early discussions about communitywide efforts. PCLS encouraged the Youth Services coordinator/director to become involved in advisory boards that supported these efforts. These networking opportunities got the word out in the community that PCLS was a viable partner, and positioned PCLS as a partner in new grant efforts. Today our materials are used extensively, and we have been able to translate materials through grant opportunities into multiple community languages. We are seen as valuable partners.”

Cuyahoga County Public Library (CCPL) is located in northeast Ohio in the most populous county in the state, with nine library systems. CCPL serves 610,000 people. Library Director Sari Feldman has long been a leader in early childhood learning and literacy, and her experience with Family Place workshops began in the early 1980s at New York’s Middle Country Public Library’s. Feldman served on the original Every Child Ready to Read @ your library® task force. When Feldman arrived at CCPL in 2003, she was immediately appointed to the county’s early childhood planning initiative. It created new opportunities for the library to take a leadership role in early learning.

“It was a convergence of ideas and an institutional willingness to put resources into early literacy. We invested in ECRR, and we began to realize the challenges of holding ECRR workshops in all our libraries. We needed a variety of models of ECRR to train our many families, and we needed training for our staff,” said Feldman.

Feldman’s push to make early literacy a top priority has resulted in an investment of funds through the Early Learning Opportunities Act (ELOA) grants and county monies. More community partnerships were fostered through a strong youth services department, and together the partners built on Art Rolnick’s 2005 Federal Reserve Board research, which determined that for every dollar spent on a young child, a community will get a \$17 return. One of CCPL’s important investments was the creation of a new baby kit that has been distributed through a countywide home visiting program.

“We have an average of nine thousand births annually, and because of our efforts, each baby is given a new baby packet and rhyme book. They are distributed to every new parent and teen parents. When the home visitor identifies a family at risk for early learning delays, a library-based literacy specialist can be dispatched to continue the home visiting program,” said Feldman. Youth Services created a Ready for Kindergarten kit three years ago and distributes twenty thousand kits annually to the kindergarten cohort groups. The purpose of this literacy kit is to extend the child’s learning into the home. “We are also working on a preschool literacy kit to prepare children and their families for the preschool years.”

CCPL hired Sue Kirschner as its early childhood specialist in 2005. She has continued to facilitate the adaptation of ECRR

into storytimes and other programs to address recruitment, engagement, and involvement of parents. Particularly challenging were childcare issues for parents attending programs. As a result, staff were trained to infuse storytimes with ECRR's six pre-reading skills, and children's spaces were adorned with reminders of ECRR on bulletin boards and print pieces. Kirschner visits college and university classes and parent groups from schools and childcare centers.

"Introducing ECRR validates our work," said Kirschner. "We do not just read to children but we also provide literacy tools. As a community partner on various agency/college advisory boards, colleagues often ask about the six skills. I have been able to visit groups demonstrating how the library incorporated ECRR in our programs and outreach."

Moving Forward: Evaluating ECRR

For some libraries, ECRR has burned brightly and successfully since its introduction almost eight years ago. In other libraries, ECRR has waxed and waned—demanding attention upon its introduction, losing that focus as new issues come to the fore, and, in some cases, resurfacing as library staff recommit themselves to early literacy in partnership with parents and caregivers. As in the examples of our case studies, materials have been adapted as partnerships and communities demand.

In 2007, PLA and ALSC created a task force to evaluate ECRR—to study the extent to which ECRR has been institutionalized across the spectrum of U. S. public libraries and to determine what outcomes the project has yielded. Under the direction of researchers Susan Newman and Donna Celano, the task force is currently surveying children's librarians who have received ECRR training as well as those who have not.

Similarly, the task force is polling library directors to determine their awareness, involvement, and support of ECRR practices. Library school faculty and state library consultants are being asked a complementary set of questions—all with the intent of both understanding the impact this ground-breaking, research-based project has had and assessing its sustainability over time.

The success of this work depends on the feedback from professionals in both PLA and ALSC. We encourage the curious to find out more about ECRR, to participate in the evaluation should you be contacted, and to share your stories on the ECRR wiki. As resources become short, the need becomes even greater for libraries to be strategic and accountable to their communities increases. ECRR provides opportunities to be both.

Librarians wanting more information about ECRR can visit www.ala.org/everychild.

Librarians with anecdotes and opinions regarding the ECRR project participate on the project wiki at http://wikis.ala.org/ecrr/index.php/Main_Page. ↻



Thomas Gowin selects a board book from the many choices in the Early Literacy Room, Safford City-Graham County (Ariz.) Library.



Vicki Foote, library assistant at the Safford City-Graham County (Ariz.) Library, is the main trainer for the Every Child Ready to Read: Early Literacy Skills classes given at the library.

Taking it to the Streets

Every Child Ready to Read on the Go

Rhonda Fulton

Photos courtesy of Cleveland Public Library

Cleveland Public Library (CPL) has mobilized the Every Child Ready to Read @ your library® (ECRR) initiative by creating a grassroots effort to change how parents and childcare teachers view their roles in preparing their children to read.

Taking the basic principle that caregivers are the first teacher a child has, CPL created the On the Road to Reading (OTRR) program—a bookmobile program that gives vital information to caregivers on the six skills of early literacy, showing them how to create a literacy-rich environment in their homes or in their childcare centers.

OTRR is the latest project for CPL, which has a long history of service to children. In 1889, it was one of the first libraries in the country to provide a separate space and collection for children. For the past decade, the library has attempted to address the literacy needs of its youngest patrons and the needs of the declining urban population of Cleveland.

In 1997, CPL created an early literacy project, the Family Learning Connection, becoming the first library in the state to link with the national Family Place program. The project was designed to encourage families with young children to visit and attend library programs, but the evaluation of the program showed that outreach programs that are delivered directly to the intended audience would produce better results.



Rhonda Fulton has been a Children's Librarian at Cleveland Public Library since 2004. She currently works in the mobile services department in charge of the "On the Road to Reading" program.

In December 2002, the CPL board of trustees approved a strategic plan that is based on a study by a library consulting firm and feedback from community focus groups and town hall meetings. The study recommended the addition of a mobile library targeted to daycare centers and other early childhood programs as an enhancement to the existing mobile service. A levy was passed in 2003 to fund the plan. One of the service points of the levy was to increase services to children.

In April 2006, CPL literacy coordinator Merce Robinson and mobile services manager Linda Sperry wrote a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant application to fund an early childhood vehicle; it was received in September 2006.

The program's core is training adults in the six literacy skills so they can be used consistently and effectively with preschoolers. The OTRR program has two main components. The first focuses on the early childhood centers and home daycare teachers. The program starts by requesting the attendance of teachers at one of the many workshops held in August and September. At these workshops, teachers learn the foundation of ECRR and the six preliteracy skills. They are also taught that children in their classrooms can learn the six early literacy skills through interactive storytimes.

After the teachers attend one of the workshops, OTRR staff visits monthly (September through June). At these visits, a children's librarian, two part-time library assistants, and a part-time clerk help to reinforce the information through model storytimes that focus on teaching one of the six early literacy skills. At these visits, the classroom teachers receive a set of books and are encouraged to re-create storytimes that would be similar to the ones performed in their classrooms by the OTRR staff.

The second part of the program is centered on finding parents or guardians of children birth to five. Visits to medical centers



The dedication ceremony at William Patrick Day Childcare Center in Cleveland, Ohio featured a program by author Ashley Bryan and the unveiling of the new vehicle to both teachers and children.

and Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) offices throughout Cleveland are held once a month, wherein OTRR staff talk with individuals who care for young children about the importance of reading to their children. The parents learn of the six early literacy skills and receive a brochure and a free book to help them get started with providing a rich literacy environment in their homes.

The Start of the Process

I was hired in 2007 to implement a workable program by the end of the grant year, October 31, 2007.

One of the first tasks was selecting the design for the exterior of the vehicle. We wanted people to know that our program pertains to children, but we didn't want it to appear too juvenile. It was also very important that the vehicle have similarities to our larger bookmobile unit, so we used matching colors.

The final design for the Sprinter Van consisted of a bright blue wrap with three different skills illustrated on the two sides of the van so that all six skills are represented. The focus was to get parents of young children interested in seeking out more information about the six skills of literacy and how to apply them when reading to their children. The back of the van has the name of the program, address, and telephone number where staff can be reached for more information.

The van has been one of our best promotions. People have called and inquired about the service because they saw the van parked somewhere or they were driving behind it. Even on our

lunch breaks, we have had parents come up to us in the parking lot and ask what our program is about.

The size of our vehicle allows us to prepare for a week's worth of deliveries at a time and portrays the program to the general public as only a moving billboard can.

In November 2007, we held a kickoff event at one of our larger participating childcare centers. The program was held in conjunction with CPL's celebration of Children's Book Week, and award-winning author Ashley Bryan gave a masterful storytelling presentation at the event.

The van was parked outside and covered with a large blue tarp. After the speeches and storytelling, the staff invited everyone to come outside to unveil the van. Library staff, children, and caregivers helped pull off the big blue tarp to "oohs" and "ahhs" at the beautiful van, which has become our signature piece.

Spending the Grant Money

Starting a brand new collection from scratch is both a dream and a nightmare. We were fortunate to receive a \$40,000 grant from Starting Point, the licensing agency for home care providers in the Cleveland area. But since we received the grant money toward the end of their award year, we had only one month to spend all of it.

I wanted the collection's foundation to include the classics, the up-and-coming, and, of course, fan favorites. We decided that books with multicultural themes were also important.



A group of children and teachers listens as Cleveland Public Library children's librarian Rhonda Fulton models a literacy-rich storytime that features tips for teachers while keeping the children engaged.

Since the focus was on teaching ECRR to caregivers who may never have heard of these skills before, we wanted the books to be exemplary examples of the skill they best represented. What I considered was, Would a teacher easily be able to highlight one of the six skills from this book without too much effort?

For some teachers, this would be their first time interacting with a book and trying to convey a literacy skill. Therefore I wanted to make sure that the books would help teachers emphasize the various skills. National ECRR trainer Sue McCleaf Nespeca offered a list of books she used in her workshops.

Time was running out, and we had a sizeable chunk of money left to spend. To provide further resources to parents, we spent the remaining money on giveaway books for events and pediatric visits. These have proven to be an easy way to initiate conversation with reluctant parents.

In several instances, I have walked into waiting rooms and given my opening speech, "Hello, my name is Rhonda Fulton. I'm a children's librarian for Cleveland Public Library. I'm in charge of a literacy campaign called 'On the Road to Reading,' and we partner with (insert name of the medical site here), and we would like to walk around and talk with the parents of children five and under about reading techniques that will help your child be an early reader."

Some parents are eager and will raise their hands right away. Other times we may have to approach a parent with the young child clearly on his or her lap and they will still refuse to speak to us. We don't push; we just politely say "okay" and move on.

We also visit several WIC centers, where many mothers are expecting their first child. Often, these women do not think this information applies to them. We assure them that they are the most important mothers because they have the opportunity to start these reading techniques as soon as their child is born, and if they do, their child will have the skills necessary to learn to read when entering school.

In many cases, we have provided these mothers with their child's first book. We also notify the parents of all the programs they can get involved in at their local libraries.

Circulation Practices

One of the big concerns for this project was processing the books. Some systems we consulted checked out their books to the center directors, who were held responsible for any lost or damaged materials.

We didn't want directors to decline the full program because they didn't want to accept books that they would be held accountable for. Since this was a strong concern,

we decided that the books would be uncataloged and tracked manually by the OTRR staff. This eliminated the need for having a library card, but would allow us still to credit the circulation and apply it to our monthly statistics.

We modeled the circulation on one of our library's successful teen programs called YRead (www.yread.org). This is a non-cataloged circulation based on the honor system of the educators who receive the book sets. We have most materials returned because we remind the teachers and center directors that we are expecting all the books back in good condition.

It took several months before we created an easy and accurate way for tracking the approximately one thousand books we circulate per month. We have 106 kits in our circulating collection, and we track them by their assigned number. When items are not returned, CPL records the titles under the center's name and the month that it came up missing. In most cases, the centers find the missing books later and put them in the next month's kit.

When we get extra titles in a bag, we check our list to see if these were any of the missing books from past months. We do not track by classroom but by center; many classrooms will share the books between different classes. It makes it far easier to track the books, and at the end of the year we give them a list of books not returned. We ask them to please search their center for them. If they are found, we ask that they return them to their local CPL branch or call us to come pick them up.

Since the books are not catalogued, we decided to stamp all books with a CPL and OTRR stamp to better our chances of recovering lost books in case they are returned to branch libraries or elsewhere.

However, we still need to be conscious of how many books a year we are losing to order replacements and to assess the costs and benefits of the program to the library system. After completing one full year of service, the program circulated nearly ten thousand books in a nine-month period, and the loss rate was minimal.

Gaining Access to Childcare Centers

You can have all the books in the world, staff to help you, and a great idea for outreach, but unless you can get your foot in the door of the places you want to go to visit, you have nothing.

When I started calling centers in May 2007, I could only give the directors a starting month for the program. Other than that, I would tell them the idea of what was to happen at our visits, but I was working with a lot of unknowns.

I couldn't answer their main question about what day or time we would be at their childcare center until I had all thirty centers signed up for the program. After that, I would need to map out their locations and work around everyone's nap times, so I couldn't promise anyone the coveted 10:30 a.m. time. Since I

couldn't guarantee a time, they couldn't guarantee they would participate.

To make the final agreement happen with the centers, I needed to offer them something. I decided if they could commit in spring, I would give them a schedule in August that would tell them their dates and times from September through December. With this strategy, several centers came on board for our first year. We met our final goal of having thirty centers with a total of fifty-six classrooms.

The next task was to present an accredited professional development workshop to the caregivers. I had to create an original workshop of no less than four hours that would incorporate the library's ECRR agenda and include information on the state of Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards.

Writing the workshop took almost two full months. While it was not a mandatory requirement for a center's participation, we strongly encouraged their teachers' participation. We felt the workshop provided a strong foundation for what we would be modeling for them when we visited their classrooms.

We offered ten workshop dates and tried to accommodate most people's schedules. We presented some on the weekends, but most were held during the week with both afternoon and morning start times.

Centers that sent their teachers to the workshop had a better concept of this programming being a learning tool, not just entertainment for their children. The teachers understood the concepts we talked about throughout the storytimes and could comprehend the ECRR terminology. Teachers who did not attend workshops lacked this foundation and had issues with understanding that we were not just a typical storytime session.

Reflections and Survey Results

At the end of our first year (May 2008), we surveyed our childcare centers and medical sites. After looking at our survey results, we hoped to increase teacher attendance at the workshops. Now when I call to recruit a center, I mention that workshops are a main component and that attendance is strongly recommended.

We've also reduced the number of workshops offered from ten to six—a positive change that definitely helped us meet our goal for increasing attendance.

Book circulation will remain the same as it did our first year. Even though the manual circulation and calculations are sometimes difficult to keep up with, we feel we finally have a manageable system. Plus we have created workable databases in Microsoft Excel that quickly do the calculations and keep all statistics in one convenient place.

This year's recruitment efforts went much more smoothly. With major contacts made over the last year with leading early child-

hood educators and organizations, word of this program has been spreading. We had a waiting list of at least fifteen centers before the start of our recruitment period in mid-June 2008.

Many of the centers requested that we come back for the next school year. However, for now the OTRR program will continue to be a one-time, nine-month service. This decision was made to continue the concept of spreading ECRR to as many caregivers as possible. The OTRR program is first and foremost a training model that focuses on caregivers so that after the program ends they will be confident and able to continue to teach the six literacy skills through interactive storytimes on their own.

The centers commented that they would like more frequent visits to their classrooms, so we have changed the program from once a month to bimonthly. So far this has been successful, and classroom teachers seem to appreciate the impact it is having, because students are able to relate to us better.

Also we have allowed teachers to share books at our second visit of the month. We will continue to revise this aspect of allowing participants to have a more active way of showcasing their improved knowledge of ECRR.

Making an Impact

Why should other libraries contemplate such an outreach program? That's perhaps best summed up in a personal anecdote. I was ready to leave one of our medical centers when a young

girl came in with a little baby covered head-to-toe in a blanket. I went over to the girl and told her about the program. The girl was still in high school, and her baby was only five days old.

She listened to every word I had to say and was, by far, the most interested parent I had ever met. I was impressed by this girl's sincere interest in helping better her child's life.

As I turned to leave, she said, "Thank you. You have no idea how much of a blessing this was. I was just telling my mother how my baby was going to be smarter than my brother's baby, and my mom started to laugh at me and asked, 'How are you going to make your baby smart—you don't know nothing about nothing,' and I told her I would do anything to make sure my baby learned what he needed to know so that he would be the smartest child he could be."

This story is just one of many wonderful success stories that the OTRR program has created. Libraries are known as a place to go when a person needs information, but CPL has changed the way we share information through the OTRR program.

In the past, services to young children required parents to come to the library and seek them out themselves. Now at CPL, we go directly to our patrons. The program utilizes ECRR principles in a grassroots effort that has already begun to produce change that will be felt for years to come. Thus this is just the beginning of a story of how a library program might have the power to change the way parents view early literacy and create a new generation of readers in the city of Cleveland. &

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The Evolution of Early Literacy

A History of Best Practices in Storytimes

Meagan Albright, Kevin Delecki, and Sarah Hinkle

What do you think of when you picture storytimes from decades past? Do you see rows of children sitting silent and attentive as a story is read aloud? Are parents in the room, active participants in their child's early literacy experiences, or are they banned from storytime and relegated to the stacks?

An understanding of the storytimes of the past enriches those of today. Research into early examples shows surprising similarities to modern storytimes, which owe much to the techniques and methods developed during these early years.

The concept of today's preliteracy skills is rooted in concepts (such as reading readiness) and storytelling techniques (such as repetition and rhyme) originally used in the 1940s. Other concepts, such as dialogic reading, are a more recent innovation, but nearly every aspect of the best practices and standards of today's storytimes has evolved over decades, using both time-tested techniques and modern research and development, to provide children with storytimes that entertain, educate, and make them lifelong learners and readers.

The Evolution of Literacy

In the 1940s and early 50s, librarians began to understand their value as a resource for children learning to read. Libraries began offering a form of story hours in the early 1940s as a response to the emerging theory of "reading readiness."¹ Reading readiness was the theory that children needed to be mentally prepared for reading by being exposed to literature before being given physical books to read.²

The stated goal of these first story hours was to begin a child's socialization with peers, as well as to foster a love of books and facilitate a child's adjustment to school.³ It was not until the mid 1950s, however, that libraries and librarians across the nation began to use their skills and resources to actively participate in helping children learn to read. This wide-scale effort, which resulted in literacy-focused story hours for preschool-aged children nationwide, was the library's first step toward becoming a major player in early and emergent literacy. It is in these early story hours that the framework for today's best practices can be found.



Meagan Albright (left) is a youth services librarian at the Alvin Sherman Library, Research and Information Technology Center at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. **Kevin Delecki** (center), manager of the Main Library Children's Room at the Dayton (Ohio) Metro Library, is chair of the ALSC Early Childhood Programs and Services Committee. **Sarah Hinkle** (right) is children's librarian at Elmhurst Community Library/Queens (N.Y.) Library.

Story Hour in the 1950s: Selecting Stories for Story Hour

Fifty years ago, story hours began using many developmentally positive techniques, including dramatizing stories, repetition, and clapping to songs and rhythms. However, these techniques were not known by their current terminology, or pointed out to the parents as positive learning techniques. Instead, libraries used them because of their obviously engaging effect on children.

Librarians also used two of these developmentally positive techniques to assist them in selecting books for story hours: rhythm (or rhyme) and repetition. Not only did a book with strong rhythm make for an excellent story to read aloud, the cadence of the story also held a strong appeal for a child's developing mind. Parents in the 1950s were told,

You discovered that long before your child could speak he responded to rhythm. So the lullabies came to be. Then came pat-a-cake and other rhymes which, mixed with action, held your child's attention.⁴

Additionally, while the theories of early literacy had not yet been developed, librarians recognized the depth and importance of the rhymes they shared with children, stating that

Mother Goose rhymes have much more to offer than their rhythmic construction. A Mother Goose rhyme is really a little drama, and so should be a little child's first story. It has a beginning, bringing on the characters and starting the action. This action rises steadily to a climax, corresponding to the big scene of a play and then comes down rapidly to a satisfactory conclusion.⁵

Nursery rhymes were also used to prepare children for larger books that followed the same literary patterns. According to Marie B. McDonald, "There could not be any finer model for stories [than the nursery rhyme] for very small children, and you will find it present in the best stories."⁶

Librarians also considered the importance of another tool, repetition. Repetition was intentionally incorporated into story hours in a number of ways, even though it was already inherent in the books selected, for "most programs have a certain amount of repetition in opening and closing . . . this is done in order to give the children that confidence which comes with a feeling of familiarity."⁷

Many of the books favored for story hour—such as Margaret Wise Brown's *The Runaway Bunny*, H. A. Rey's *Curious George*, Robert McCloskey's *Blueberries for Sal*, and Virginia Lee Burton's *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*—feature a combination of repetition and rhyme and are still favorites of modern children's librarians.

The Values of Story Hour

In the 1950s, story hour was generally seen by both the public and library administrators as a fun diversion, not an educa-

tional experience.⁸ Despite this, many librarians tried to change the focus. As early as 1945, the idea that story hour could encourage learning was already being suggested. Different methods were used, including "stories, games, Victrola records, and other things of educational value."⁹

In 1954, the Newark (N.J.) Public Library created a list of the things children could be expected to learn at story hour. The list included the following learning activities

- Enjoying looking at picture books
- Listening to stories
- Borrowing books
- Talking in a group
- Listening to and following instructions
- Playing with others
- Leading a group
- Being a follower
- Thinking and talking about problems
- Counting
- Distinguishing between colors
- Learning the names of animals
- Practicing the concept of rhythm
- Learning rhymes, jingles, songs, games, and dances¹⁰

Also at this time, librarians began to encourage young children to read with the inclusion of what is known today as basic pre-literacy skills. These theories were applied without knowing the concepts as defined by modern standards and research. Previously, librarians selected stories based on what children were interested in and what they enjoyed, but not why they enjoyed it, or why it was developmentally important. However, even in the 1950s and 1960s, many librarians intentionally chose books that contained repetition and used traditional rhymes to bolster learning.¹¹

While storytime usually focused on services to children of a preschool age, librarians also supported reading to younger children. As early as 1959, librarians began noting that "interest in books begins far earlier than we often realize . . . as young as eight or nine months of age the infant may pick out a book from an assortment of toys."¹² In 1959, children's librarian M. Elizabeth Leonard wrote that the "development of a love of reading is dependent, to a great extent, on exposure to books in early childhood."¹³

She further stated that a "child [who] finds himself in an environment of books and, moreover, is encouraged by an interested person to read books . . . will come to realize what wonderful companions books can be to him."¹⁴ While the concept of preliteracy skills was not defined at this time, librarians

often emphasized many important factors that later developed into these more modern ideas.

The Role of the Parent

One issue that often perplexed librarians in the past, and still is undecided today, was whether or not parents should stay with children in story hour. In libraries of the 1950s, there were differing ideas. Some libraries allowed parents to remain in the room with their children, while at others parents were encouraged to “take an hour for themselves.”¹⁵ Other libraries only asked that parents remain “in the building while the children’s programs are in progress.”¹⁶

Librarians always encouraged parents to play an active role in reading to their children at home. Librarians recognized the importance of this role and also realized that by modeling appropriate reading behavior, they could encourage this further. Just as in today’s libraries, storytime in the 1950s was used to offer parents an idea of how to go beyond basic reading and fully use books at home.¹⁷

Best practices in story hours have evolved over the years. A number of practices commonly employed in modern storytimes are a result of methods begun by librarians of the 1950s. For example, preliteracy skills, which began with librarians selecting books with strong rhythm and rhyme, have been heavily researched and incorporated into modern programming.

Reviewing the current tenets of story hour with those of the last fifty years, it is easy to see that there are many more similarities than differences. From selecting stories to struggling with the role of parents in story hour, librarians of yesterday and today believe that no matter how often things change, whatever is deemed best for the children is what the library will do.¹⁸

Current Best Practices: Early Literacy Skills and Standards

Since the advent of the modern model of library storytimes in the late 1950s, librarians have been responsible for selecting materials using a set of criteria that fused personal preferences, professional advice, time-tested practices, and more recently, published research. Those in charge of library storytimes have always selected books, songs, finger plays, and activities that are developmentally appropriate and advantageous for the children being presented with them, such as materials emphasizing rhyme, active participation, rhythm, and repetition. Only recently has research been conducted that studies why these emphases are beneficial to young children and what can be done to further accentuate their benefit. One of the most direct and easiest ways to disseminate this information to children and their caregivers is through judicious use of this new research when planning storytimes at the library. Through some simple planning, it is possible to select materials for storytimes that are not only entertaining, but also developmentally suitable for the children in attendance.

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), using their own research and that of other organizations such as the National Reading Panel, has identified and named six early literacy skills that are paramount to the success of a child learning to read:

- **Print Motivation:** A child’s interest in and enjoyment of books
- **Phonological Awareness:** The ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words
- **Vocabulary:** Knowing the names of things
- **Narrative Skills:** The ability to describe things and events and to tell stories
- **Print Awareness:** Noticing print, knowing how to handle a book, and understanding how to follow the written words on a page
- **Letter Knowledge:** Knowing that letters are different from each other, that the same letter can look different, and that each letter has a name and is related to sounds¹⁹

Anyone familiar with the joint Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) and Public Library Association (PLA) initiative Every Child Ready to Read @ your library® will notice that these six skills sound familiar. Already, many librarians have promoted these six skills in workshops created for parents and caretakers of young children. Recently, those in charge of planning and implementing library programs have discovered that an additional way to teach these skills to caregivers and children is to incorporate the materials and activities into storytimes.

As noted, librarians have been implementing these skills since the advent of traditional library storytimes. The use of rhyme (phonological awareness), oversized books (print awareness), and dramatizations (narrative skills) has been noted in professional literature since the late 1940s.

Now, as the research into early literacy is growing daily, it becomes important for these skills to not only be brought to library storytimes, but for them to be presented to the caregivers as something important to know and use with young children on a daily basis.

This can be done in a variety of ways. Most simply, the person in charge of the storytime can talk about what skills are being used every time they read. This repetition will allow caregivers to see that incorporating early literacy skills at home does not need to be a labor-intensive endeavor. Visual aids are also useful; something as simple as a bulletin board with the different early literacy skills and definitions posted or as complex as displaying the skills with lists of books and activities to read and do at home. Librarians can also build storytimes around the different early literacy skills. There are a variety of books and websites available to help with this; the most comprehensive being *Early Literacy Storytimes @ your library*®, written by Saroj Nadkarni

Ghoting and Pamela Martin-Diaz, which includes sample storytimes incorporating these standards, as well as tips and tricks for creating individualized early literacy-based storytimes.

Another resource for early literacy skills and standards that can be included in storytimes is the state-based early learning standards. While they vary in name from state to state, most now have these standards. In many cases, they are intended to be used as precursors to the Academic Standards used for grades K–12. These early learning standards spell out what the state believes children entering kindergarten should know to have the necessary skills to begin school.

These are wonderful to use for planning storytimes because they often include suggestions of ways to implement the standards with young children, as well as book suggestions to emphasize what is being taught. In fact, librarians at the Dayton (Ohio) Metro Library are being encouraged to work together to develop storytime programming from the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards. The idea is to use different standard indicators to help select books, songs, and finger plays, and then provide caregivers and parents with ideas of what they can do at home to reinforce that indicator.

Dialogic Reading

Dialogic reading is one of the most important methods practiced in presenting the early literacy skills and standards to children in storytimes. It is also one of the few developmentally appropriate practices not seen in the story hours of the 1940s and 50s. While traditional storytimes were not entirely composed of children sitting still and being quiet while a librarian read them a few stories, there was less interaction between the child, the librarian, and the story compared with today.

Dialogic reading is a way of reading with a child that encourages conversation about the story; this is done with the story as the main talking point. On a basic level, dialogic reading can include an adult asking children what they see in a picture, or what they think the main character is going to do next. In more in-depth examples, the adult can help a child create a new story based on the characters in the book, or have children predict what is going to happen in the rest of a story based on just a few pages or pictures.

This form of active reading is incredibly important to the development of preliteracy and early literacy skills in children, and that is why it needs to be practiced at library storytimes. In fact, “research has shown that it is not enough to just read to a child. How adults read with children is as important as whether and how often adults read to them.”²⁰

The best part? Dialogic reading is not an inherent skill, but one that can be learned and honed with practice and repetition. As stated, the simplest form of dialogic reading is started by asking “What” questions, such as “What is that?” “A dog.” “Yes, a dog. A small, black, furry dog.” Encouraging this type of response and conversation is essential for bringing dialogic reading to story-

times and for promoting the idea that it is good for children to speak appropriately during the story.

Using dialogic reading in storytimes is only one important thing to do for children’s development. The other is to explain and demonstrate to caregivers what is being done, and how it can continue at home. While some parents have always read dialogically, many merely read straight through a story, or at best, ask questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no.” By showing caregivers how to incorporate dialogic reading, children’s early literacy skills will be reinforced on a regular basis.

Librarian as Teacher and Coach

The library has, for many years, held the same functions—to provide a variety of high-quality books, to perform reference assistance to connect child and book, and to teach and entertain the children once or twice a week at library storytimes and other programs. Only recently have librarians begun to realize, or at least vocalize, that they can be more influential in the life and development of a child if they focus less on trying to teach the child exclusively and more on teaching the parents how to foster early learning skills in their children. It is now becoming accepted that “the parent is the child’s first teacher. The librarian is the parent’s first literacy coach.”²¹

Weekly storytimes are the best way to practice this idea of literacy coaching. It is necessary to incorporate early literacy information and developmentally appropriate practices into a storytime not only to benefit the children, but also to encourage the caregiver to use these techniques outside of the library. As Ghoting and Martin-Diaz explain, librarians not only support children’s early literacy development by presenting storytimes that emphasize the skills and standards deemed necessary, but also by emphasizing the importance of the caregiver’s role in the development of these skills.²² Librarians should do this by explaining to caregivers the components of early literacy and by providing caregivers with activities that support these components.

This is not as daunting of a task as it may seem. Just making mention of what is happening during storytime is a simple way to enforce preliteracy and early literacy skills to caregivers. Once this becomes comfortable, the next step is to not only explain what is happening, but why. Children will not mind, or really even notice, the extra information being given.

Finally, librarians can go one step further and give suggestions, either verbal or written, on how caregivers can continue implementing the components of early literacy at home. These few extra steps can make a substantial difference; the child is now receiving early literacy education not just an hour a week at the library, but, hopefully, on a consistent basis at home.

Inclusiveness

With all the exciting ways to help children develop their early literacy skills, one aspect is often overlooked. It is impossible to

Study in Practice at ALA Annual Conference

Looking for more ways to take your storytimes to new heights? Join ALSC's Early Childhood Programs and Services Committee Saturday, July 11 from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago for "Beyond Storytimes: Standards-based Partnerships for Early Learning."

You are taking on new roles as educators who plan programs that address standards in literacy and language, math and science. This program will explore new methods of using fiction, nonfiction, and manipulatives in standards-based programs. Learn to use the same book over time in many ways, as well as learning creative and innovative ways to partner with the early childhood community.

model early literacy skills during traditional library storytimes to parents and children who are not able to attend. Since the inception of library-based storytime, most programs have been offered early on a weekday morning, many times to a registered number of children, and almost exclusively in English.

With the family climate changing drastically throughout the country, it is becoming more obvious that the traditional storytime model must also change or risk missing many children. The following are a few trends being seen. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, and it does not fully explore the range of issues (both positive and negative) that accompany these trends. It is meant only to be a starting point.

The first trend is a shift away from enforcing smaller numbers of children at weekly storytimes. While fewer children may be easier to handle and provide more one-on-one interaction, small storytimes may also exclude more children. As Amanda Williams emphasizes, "[i]f librarians can provide successful storytime programs for larger groups of children, there could be more opportunities for children in child care to attend a public library storytime."²³ By either not limiting the number of participants at storytime or offering an additional storytime specifically for large groups, it is possible to reach a much larger number of children and their caregivers.

Second, as more households consist of either a single working parent or have both parents working full time, traditional library storytimes held on weekday mornings are increasingly inaccessible. In fact, "59 percent of children under six have all available parents in the labor force."²⁴ What this means is that nearly two-thirds of the children that live in any given library service area cannot attend storytime held at a traditional time. This is why offering storytimes at common off-work hours, such as evenings and weekends, has become more and more popular.

This practice can be difficult for libraries experiencing limited evening and weekend hours or staff coverage; however, finding ways to offer storytimes at nontraditional hours can bring in

children and parents who truly need the teaching and coaching of the library. These can be billed as normal library storytimes or can be specialized as a "Family Storytime" or "Evening Story/Pajama Time." Adapting to the needs of the community can make a difference in the lives of patrons and bring in people who may otherwise never have thought of the library as an important place for themselves and their children.

Finally, as the communities around libraries change and diversify, offering storytimes only in the librarian's native language may not be enough to fill the needs of all children. No matter where a library is located, there will be people who do not speak English and therefore will probably not attend a storytime presented entirely in a language they do not understand. That is why there are a growing number of libraries across the country offering bilingual and even trilingual storytimes. While most incorporate English and Spanish, the idea is to offer programs in whatever language would be the most beneficial to the specific communities around the library.

Even if no library staff member speaks a language other than English, it is still possible to have a successful bilingual storytime. As the article "De Colores: The Universal Language of Bilingual Storytime" by Sara Howrey points out, all it takes are the right partnerships and the willingness to try things that may be initially uncomfortable.²⁵ Also, making it known that these storytimes are for children who speak any language will not only draw in larger crowds but also allow for the components of early literacy skills and standards to be shared with a more diverse part of the population.

Conclusion

Children's librarians of the past often intuitively promoted early literacy skills before such a concept or body of research existed. As a result, their work and ideas helped to form the basis for modern theories on early literacy, though not all of their concepts stood the test of time. From the reading readiness concept that began in the 1920s to the emergent literacy theories of the 1980s, early literacy has been a constant concept in public library services. Children's librarians today are able to use classic storytelling techniques from the past as well as draw on the latest emergent literacy research and provide justification for the services we offer. ☺

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How I Got My First Library Job

Tips from Library Directors

The following was taken from the ALSC Student Session on March 19, 2009.

Some say when it comes to getting a job, it’s not what you know, it’s who you know. Although that’s not exactly true, when it comes to being an ALSC member. We can help you in both respects by connecting you with fellow members and helpful information—and in this case, virtually!

Thirty-five people logged-in to OPAL (Online Programming for All Libraries) for the second ALSC Student Session, “How I Got My First Library Job: Tips from Library Directors,” with speakers Therese Bigelow, Chesapeake (Va.) Public Library Assistant Director, and Gene Nelson, Provo (Utah) City Library Director.

Both involved with hiring at their libraries, the duo shared a wealth of information with attendees, ranging from where to look for jobs and what to do in an interview, to tips on making a resume stand out, and some of the challenges new librarians face.

Beginning with the basics, Bigelow and Nelson talked about job interviews for children’s librarian positions. Surprisingly, both panelists said that they’ve recently noticed fewer applicants interested in children’s services than in adult services. For those who have a desire to work with children, the field is wide open, but applicants need to look for a community that will be a good match for both parties.

“In my 30 years, I’ve had the opportunity to interview literally hundreds of candidates, and I think the best

applicants are always the ones that are interviewing me as much and as closely as I’m interviewing them,” said Nelson.

“I’m looking for that perfect person—creative, high energy, child friendly, and approachable. I am also looking for someone who can relate to parents, as well as children. It takes a special personality, a well balanced person, to be a great children’s librarian.”

When it comes to creating a resume, both suggested that honesty is the best policy. It’s a great idea to list other experiences with children if you have any and to show stability in your work history. The interviewer wants to know that if he makes an investment in you, you’ll be there for more than a year.

Nelson also suggested keeping resumes professional and to the point—trying to be “cute” on a resume is never a good idea. As someone who had a gap in her work history when looking for a job as a librarian, Bigelow also suggested telling interviewers what you were doing during that time if it’s appropriate and not too personal.

ALSC Student Sessions are free, one-hour virtual workshops that give students the opportunity to learn about hot library topics, based on experiences of ALSC members around the country.

Although the sessions were designed with students in mind, anyone is welcome to participate. A schedule of upcoming ALSC Student Sessions will soon be available at www.tinyurl.com/alscstudents.

The Goblins Will Get You!

Horror in Children's Literature from the Nineteenth Century

Charmette Kendrick

An' little Orphant Annie says, when the blaze is blue,
An' the lampwick sputters, an' the wind goes woo-oo!
An' you hear the crickets quiet, an' the moon is gray,
You better mind yer parents, and yer teachers fond and dear,
An' churish them 'at loves you, an' dry the orphan's tear,
An' he'p the pore an' needy ones 'at clusters all about,
Er the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!



Charmette Kendrick is a Children's Librarian at the South Columbus Branch Library, a part of the Chattahoochee Valley Libraries in Columbus, Georgia. She was the winner of the 2007 Bechtel Fellowship and served on the 2008 Pura Belpré Committee.

James Whitcomb Riley first published "Little Orphant Annie" in 1885. The Indiana native's inspiration for the poem was a household servant from childhood. After she finished her work, little Allie (later changed to "Annie" due to a typesetting error) would delight young James by telling stories filled with goblins, witches, and other types of devilment. Riley's poem has endured through the years—a source of pride to Indiana natives, it remains a staple of little Hoosiers' Halloween festivities.¹

Throughout the ages, stories of ghosts and goblins, witches, and monsters have been handed down from one generation to the next. In her book *The Thing at the Foot of the Bed and Other Scary Tales*, Maria Leach writes, "For there is something in the human mind that loves to scare itself to death!"²

Although every land and people possess a folklore containing tales of the macabre, each culture has not taken an equal approach to sharing these stories with the young. English and American writers of the nineteenth century were especially concerned with protecting the innocent from exposure to harmful ideas.

"Children's literature emerged as a genre largely in reaction to the popularity of the adult gothic romance," according to the editors of *The Gothic in Children's Literature: Haunting the Borders*. "Children were expected to covet books with the tame delights that came from light whimsy rather than the more piquant pleasures of a good shiver."³

Consider this comment from the book *Traditions and Legends of the Elf, the Fairy and the Gnome*:

Conceiving that a well selected collection of the best specimens of the legendary writers of all countries would be an acceptable present to those who read for amusement, the following little compilation has been undertaken; at the same time it will be perceived that every thing of a pernicious tendency has been carefully expunged and every tale points forth the moral, that virtue has a sure, albeit a slow reward, and that vice as sure and as swift a punishment.⁴

Children of the nineteenth century were expected to use their time wisely and to limit their leisure hours to activities that would expand their minds and intellects. In *The Importance of Time*, the author writes,

There are very few children who have not heard silly stories of drarfs (sic), and giants, and giant-killers; as well as of dragons with forked tongues and tails, and monsters, sometimes with one head, and sometimes with two. But the time children spend in hearing, or in reading such silly stories, is not only thrown away, but misspent. It is thrown away, because no good is to be got from such silly stories; and it is misspent, because it increased a love of folly and falsehood, and lessens the desire for wisdom and truth.⁵

In nineteenth-century England and America, most scary stories written and published for the young had two purposes—to indoctrinate youngsters with the morals of the day and to expose superstition as a false belief system perpetuated by the foolish and the wicked.

In *Happy Hours at Hazel Nook; or, Cottage Stories*, English author Harriet Farley explains through her character's dialogue the prevailing viewpoint on horror stories during her time, the mid-1800s. The book is a series of stories told by each member of a family during the twelve nights following Christmas. Papa tells two scary stories on the tenth night. Before telling his first story, he explains to the children why they are often discouraged from listening to these types of stories:

There were many witch and ghost stories rife when I was a boy; and though many parents disapproved our listening to them it was because there was then a fear that our credulity might overcome reason. The witch stories were mostly too spiteful and gross to take pleasant hold upon the imagination . . . The ghost legends lay farther back upon the groundwork of the ideal, and were more creditable to the fancy and to the heart. The witch stories embodied some of the worst, the ghost legends some of the better elements in our nature . . . A witch story was usually a gross, unfeeling charge against some poor, helpless creature. . . . doubtless insanity was often mistaken for devilment and a wart or a mole a sure sign that the unfortunate possessor had cherished imps for nurslings.⁶

Although writers of the nineteenth century voiced reluctance to publishing horror stories for the young, most did slip one or two, albeit sanitized and mostly bloodless versions, into their story collections.

Most English ghost stories published during the nineteenth century conclude with the discovery that the “ghost” is in fact not a supernatural being after all. This is, in part, due to the Age of Enlightenment, which permeated the academic and literary worlds with its emphasis on reason and intellect and its disdain for superstition.

Ironically, devout believers in Christianity shared the intellectual world's dislike for “true” ghost stories but for a different reason—a fear they would lead the innocent down a trail to wickedness. In *Right Is Might and Other Sketches*, published in 1854, three young boys are looking for something to do. One of the boys suggests telling scary stories, but another replies,

A person who is superstitious—one who believes in ghosts and witches, and such things—is very likely to fancy that he sees them. Such a one is always meeting with wonders, particularly at night. A stump, a post, a bush to his eye has arms, legs, eyes, and ears. Nay, it generally moves about and often seems to do more than mortals are able to perform . . . I believe that all the ghost stories are either invention of wicked people or the delusions of indulged and ill directed imagination.⁷

Many ghost stories from this time period involve people mistaking animals, inanimate objects, or other people for ghosts. In “The Cemetery Ghost,” townspeople discover the “ghost” several have been spotting near a local cemetery is actually a cow disguised with a sheet by his owner in hopes of protecting the animal from poachers.⁸ In “The Nightshirt,” a farmer shoots holes in what he thinks is a ghost only to discover in the morning it was his own nightshirt hanging on the line. When his wife complains, he replies, “Lucky I wasn't in it.”⁹

Robert Bloomfield's ballad “The Fakenham Ghost: A True Tale,” published in 1806, employs a similar theme. In the poem, an old woman is crossing the moors at night. Hearing a noise, she hurries faster home:

Her footsteps knew no idea
But follow'd faster still;
And echo'd to the darksome Copse
That whisper'd on the Hill;¹⁰

A herd of deer run in front of her, startling her, as the sky grows darker. She hears strange sounds coming from behind:

Darker it grew; and darker fears
Came o'er her troubled mind;
When now, a sharp quick step she hears
Come patting close behind.
She turn'd; it stopt! . . . naught could she see

Upon the gloomy plain!

But, as she strove the sprite to flee,

She heard the same again.¹¹

Suddenly, she can make out a shadowy figure in the gloom:

Now terror seiz'd her quaking frame

For, where the path was bare,

The trotting Ghost kept up the same!

Yet once again, a midst her fright,

She tried what sight could do;

When through the cheating glooms of night,

A MONSTER stood in view.¹²

The old woman hurries faster toward the gate to her home:

Loud fell the gate against the post!

Her heart-strings like to crack:

For much she fear'd the grisly ghost

Would leap upon her back.

Still on, pat, pat, the Goblin went,

As it had done before . . .

Her strength and resolution spent,

She fainted at the door.¹³

Her husband and daughter, hearing strange noises, rush out of the house to find the old woman fainted dead away and the cause of all the commotion:

The Candle's gleam pierc'd through the night,

Some short space o'er the green;

And there the little trotting Sprite

Distinctly might be seen.

An ASS'S FOAL had lost its Dam

Within the spacious Park;

And simple as the playful lamb,

Had follow'd in the dark.

No Goblin he; no imp of sin:

No crimes had ever known.

They took the Shaggy stranger in,

And rear'd him as their own.

For many a laugh went through the Vale;

And from conviction too:—

Each thought some other Goblin tale,

Perhaps, was just as true.¹⁴

Unlike ghost stories, witch stories from the nineteenth century were of a more gruesome nature as they were used to warn children away from playing with demonic forces. *The Witches' Frolic*, published in 1888 in a large picture book format, depicts a cautionary tale told from father to son about a man named Rob Gilpin who, during King James' reign, encounters a trio of witches in a deserted house. During the story, Rob is seduced by one of the witches and nearly meets a bad end. The story concludes with this warning:

Now, my little boy Ned. Brush off to your bed,

Tie your night-cap on safe, or a napkin instead,

Or these terrible nights you'll catch cold in your head.

And remember my tale, and the moral it teaches,

Which you'll find much the same as what Solomon preaches,

Don't meddle with broomsticks—they're Beelzebub's
switches;

Of cellars keep clear,—they're the devil's own ditches;

And beware of balls, banqueting, brandy and witches!¹⁵

Many scary stories written by nineteenth-century American authors are influenced by the Puritan ideal of instilling morals through fear and are much more graphic than those published in England. One example is *The Children in the Wood* by Lawrence Lovechild, published in 1847.

Part of a series of books entitled, "Uncle William's Nursery Stories," the plot involves a nobleman, his wife, and their two children—a "gentle" girl and a "delightful" little boy who lived long ago in Cornwall, England. Sadly, both parents grow ill, and as they lay dying, the father begs his brother, the Baron, to take care of the children.

Soon after the parents' deaths, the Baron makes plans to have the children murdered so he can take control of their estate. He

hires two ruffians to do the deed, but instead they collect their reward and leave the children to fend for themselves in the woods. The children succumb to hunger and die in each other's arms and are buried under leaves by a flock of robins.

Upon receiving the estate, the Baron fritters and drinks himself into bankruptcy and finally perishes in the woods as a beggar, where he is devoured by wolves and vultures.

The book, filled with garishly colored etchings, includes a picture of the young victims dead in each others arms and another of the wolves and vultures devouring the Baron's corpse. Despite the subject matter and artwork, the book was lauded by critics of the day as being entirely suitable for the young. *The Boston Daily Advertiser* said that all stories in the series of Uncle William's Nursery Stories were "interspersed with such sound morality that they may be read without danger by the tenderest mind."¹⁶

Although many writers in the nineteenth century attempted to shield children from the perceived noxious influence of gothic literature, a few brave souls pushed past Victorian constraints. According to the editors of *The Gothic in Children's Literature*, "The nineteenth century saw the Gothic for young readers surface in books influenced by *Jane Eyre*. The most obvious example is Burnett's *The Secret Garden* with its haunted house and grounds."¹⁷

This was also the time period when Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was originally published, and although not a gothic text, *Alice* was a call to arms urging children and adults to turn the staid Victorian world of strict morals and manners on its head. Along with Carroll, there were other authors who understood the need for children to delight in pure imagination and to experience the thrill of a good ghost yarn told for no other reason than the sheer pleasure of it.

In the preface of *Is It True? Tales Curious and Wonderful*, the editor summarizes her philosophy in the preface:

"Is It True?"—a question children are sure to ask about any curious or wonderful story; and they may well ask it of some of these tales. I can only answer, that many people must have believed them to be true, since each is founded on a tradition, current in the place where it is supposed to have happened. Probably at the root of all lies a grain of truth, that in course of years has grown up and blossomed into these extraordinary fictions, which of course nobody can be expected to believe.

But they are generally amusing, and sometimes pathetic. Besides, there is a clear thread of right and wrong running through them, as it does through most legends which deal with the supernatural world. There (as here, soon or late) virtue is always rewarded and vice punished. . . . It is this spirit which consecrates the true untruth, the wise foolishness, of fairy tales and indeed of all imaginative literature. Nor, I think, will any sensible child mistake the vast difference between imagination and falsehood: between the weaving of a mere romance ("all pretence, all out of my own head, mamma," as

The Bechtel Experience

By Charmette Kendrick

I conducted research for the Bechtel Fellowship in February, 2008, at the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature at the George A. Smathers Libraries on the University of Florida campus in Gainesville. One of the highlights was accompanying curator Rita Smith on a behind-the-scenes tour of the closed-stacks collection.

Unlike most collectors, Ruth Baldwin, the eccentric woman who spent her life compiling the collection, was not interested in books in pristine condition; instead, she focused on those that children had actually handled and loved. One of the most amazing aspects of my research was handling the old books and viewing a bevy of diverse illustrations, including etchings and hand-painted chap books. Even the inscriptions on the inside covers of the books could be interesting. For example, inside a science book, I found an inscription that showed the book was a gift for a medical student at King's College, England, in 1865.

My research was like stepping back into history. The collection includes hundreds of Aesop's Fables collections published as far back as the 1600s; every mystery series for young people published in the 1940s and 50s; as well as one of the largest collections of Little Golden Books in the world. Other collectors laughed at Baldwin and called her books trash. But she had the last laugh when her collection was appraised to be worth more than a million dollars in the 1970s.

I focused on horror in the nineteenth century. As a child, I scoured the shelves of libraries for stories about witches, ghosts, and vampires. As an adult, I still have a passion for these stories, and that passion is shared by the children I work with, especially the boys, who are my most finicky readers.

I work in a multicultural urban branch, and I find that reading ghost stories to my after school kids as they make a craft is the surest way to keep them quiet and engaged. As I did my research, I kept my eyes open for stories that could be transformed into readers theater and puppet plays or were simply good for telling and reading aloud. I found many great stories from around the world.

I was thoroughly thrilled by all aspects of my experience, and I am extremely indebted to the Bechtel Committee for choosing me; the staff of the Smathers Libraries who assisted me; and to Baldwin herself for preserving a treasure of children's literature so that legions of children's librarians could gaze into the past as they inspire readers of the future.

a little girl sometimes says, who tells me the most astonishing stories, but who never told an untruth in her life), and that deliberate inventing or falsifying of facts which we stigmatise (sic) and abhor as lying.

Therefore, I do not think any child will be the worse for reading these tales. They have been collected out of the folk-lore of various countries, and written, at my suggestion, by various hands. I have written none myself, but I have revised the whole; and with as much pleasure as if I were again a child, and believed in fairies as earnestly as I once did, and as the little person before named does now. But it is only with her imagination: not to use her own phrase, “really and truly.” She quite understands the difference; and never expects to meet a fairy in every-day life; though I dare say she would like it very much—and so would many of my readers—and so should I.¹⁸

The author thanks the staff of the Special and Area Studies Collections Department of the George A. Smathers Libraries and most especially Rita Smith, curator of the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature, and John Cech, professor of Children's Literature, at the University of Florida, Gainesville, for their encouragement and assistance. ☺

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Growing Up Around the World: Books as Passports to Global Understanding for Children in the United States is a project undertaken by the ALSC International Relations Committee (IRC) in memory of Zena Sutherland. The project includes bibliographies representing five regions—Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand, and Europe. *Children and Libraries* published the Africa and Americas lists in the Spring 2006 issue.

Through these bibliographies, we hope to make books that accurately depict contemporary life in other countries more widely available to American children. Because the primary goal of the project is to identify fiction and nonfiction that will help young people in the United States understand the lives of children living in other countries today, the bibliographies virtually exclude genres such as fantasy and historical fiction. Rather than including the best books about other countries written by outsiders to those countries, the list seeks to identify children's books written or illustrated by people who have lived for at least two years within those cultures.

With very few exceptions, we limit the lists to books written in the last ten years and currently available in the United States. The updated bibliography, featuring books published through 2007, can be accessed online at www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/compubs/booklists/growingupwld/GrowingUpAroundWorld.cfm

To Bee or Not to Bee

An Apiary in the Library

Marilyn Sobotincic

The animated Barry B. Benson had his challenges in *Bee Movie*, but not quite like the bees that reside at the Medina County (Ohio) District Library.

In spring 2008, the newly built library installed an observation beehive in the children's department. On that spring day, approximately six thousand Italian worker bees and a single queen took up their new home in our new children's section. Since then, hardly a day goes by that there isn't something exciting happening with the bees. But before I go into the daily dramas of the queen and her court, let me explain how this all came about.

One Sweet Site

Medina, Ohio, is the honeybee capital and is also dubbed as the "sweetest" city in the United States. Amos Root started his famous beehive factory and company with only a few beehives and developed it into a major business in the nineteenth century. To this day, they still produce beeswax and decorative candles and ship them around the world.



Marilyn Sobotincic is Children's Department Supervisor at Medina County (Ohio) District Library.



A child is fascinated by the beehive at the Medina County District Library.

With the company located only a few blocks from our library, one can smell the essences of candle-making every day. Working in this library for almost twenty years, I have grown fond of the delicious fragrances that waft through the air when the candles are produced, one of the simple pleasures of living in this small town. One of the other wonderful things about Medina is the community's love for libraries. In 2004, Medina County voted for a \$42 million levy to build six new libraries. Like all librarians, I wanted our library to have something that was both visual as well as kid-friendly. I had seen an observatory beehive in county park buildings, and I thought, "If they can have one, why not in our library? After all, we live in the honeybee capital!"

Hence this was the beginning of a beautiful friendship with bees and a local beekeeper. Two lucky things happened. Although I didn't know it at the time, we had living in our midst Kim Flottum, beekeeper extraordinaire, who was invaluable for the idea to stay alive. Also, the Medina Rotary Club was interested in sponsoring the beehive, buying the exhibit, and purchasing dozens of bee-related books.

It took a time commitment and monetary donation from both interested parties for this idea to come to fruition. A few more hurdles had to be jumped before the idea could be put forward—for instance, getting the director's nod of approval and the manager's backing of the plan. And, of course, we also had to check liability issues with the insurance company.

Since the installation of the hive, it has been abuzz with non-stop activity with people coming to the library especially to see the bees. There have been questions, concerns, and enthusiasm. It has been both exciting and gratifying. It's exciting because there is so much to observe about the bees' intricate behavior—for example, observing the waggle dance, locating the queen (compared to this, finding Waldo is a piece of cake!), checking out the larvae, proboscis feeding, and all the other fascinating bee behaviors. There's "instant messaging" going on constantly in the hive as the bees communicate the health and well-being of the queen.

Because of the Colony Collapse Disorder troubling so many scientists and causing problems for beekeepers, many people are more interested in bees than ever. We have dozens of bee books on the nearby bookshelves for children and adults, and they are very popular. And it's gratifying to have the hive because of the enthusiastic response from young children, teens, adults, and even older adults who have embraced their presence.

For a few days, the hive was taken away for maintenance, and several concerned patrons demanded to know where it was and when it was coming back. We hadn't seen such outrage since Harry Potter was back-ordered and patrons had to wait a week!

Since beehives in a library are not an exact science and bees are delicate and precarious creatures, we have had a few bee dramas and consequently have gone through growing pains a little. For instance, when the hive exploded with new bees and the space inside was too small and they wanted to swarm, the weather did not cooperate (of course!).

It rained nonstop for days. Food ran low, and some of the bees died because they won't go out in inclement weather. The dead bees blocked the entrance and prevented the other bees from going out and getting the nectar and pollen they desperately needed. The rest of the bees very nearly starved because they almost ran out of honey in the hive.



The library's program was the cover story in the September 2008 issue of *Bee Culture* magazine.

Coming to work and seeing so few signs of life was devastating. At first, we thought that perhaps someone had maliciously sprayed pesticide in the hole to cause this, but when the beekeeper inspected the bees further, he saw that most were still alive, although barely. He nursed them back to health and brought back three frames of bees and gave them ample food. So now, we will also install a feeding box so the bees don't run out of food and they can survive over our cold winter season.

We have stepstools and magnifiers so the bees can be seen up close and personal by our many tiny patrons. Outside our building, we have a small grassy area where bee-friendly plants have been planted, and a water-filled birdbath is located near our beehive entrance.

Despite our location near a very busy state highway, the bees seem to be thriving and finding their way to the pollen and nectar they need to make honey and to do their most important work of pollination. Needless to say, this is a science project that is ever-evolving but nevertheless, it's one I would recommend to other libraries if it's a possibility.

The effect of these little creatures is very important as the world's food chain depends on their well-being. After all, these little insects are responsible—directly or indirectly—for much of what we consume every day. 🐝

Dispelling the Myths

Using Primary Sources in the K–12 Classroom

Ellen Ruffin and Laura Capell

Photos courtesy of de Grummond Children's Literature Collection, McCain Library and Archives at The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg

Fact or Myth?

1. Primary sources are irrelevant to children, who are not able to grasp the nature of the material.
2. A teacher cannot afford to veer off of a prescribed curriculum, and primary sources lend nothing to standardized tests.
3. Primary sources are inaccessible and hard to find.
4. Primary sources are *not* for the K–12 classroom.

Believe it or not, all of the above statements are myths. Primary sources are indeed easily accessible resources that enhance students' understanding of the past. They also fit into curriculum standards while helping prepare students for standardized tests. This article will show how primary sources are vital to the K–12 classroom, and how using these resources will allow children *and* teachers to enter the actual world and circumstances of the people, places, and events they are studying. In using primary sources, students learn to think and reason so that the lesson becomes something more than abstract facts—it becomes something that students can conceptualize through the experience of interacting with original materials.¹

Before launching into a discussion about using primary sources, perhaps it would be helpful to define exactly what the term means. According to the Library of Congress, "Primary sources are original items or records that have survived from the past. . . . They were part of a direct personal experience of a time or event."² Numerous materials can be considered primary sources, including letters, diaries, photographs, documents, and audio and video recordings, as well as clothing and

artifacts—even toys and games from the past.

Despite the rich variety of primary sources available for classroom use, it is important to remember that not all primary sources are created equal. Each primary source must be evaluated to determine the credibility of the source and the bias of the creator. With the proliferation of information on the Internet, the ability to determine the authenticity of the sources is especially important. This is an important critical thinking skill that students can develop by working with primary documents in the classroom.

Myth #1: Primary sources are irrelevant to children, who are not able to grasp the nature of the material. The unfortunate truth of many history classrooms is that children find the subject to be boring and irrelevant. All too often, students learn facts from textbooks, which have no connection to their lives, experiences, or interests. In the eyes of the students, the textbooks remain impersonal, distant, and cold despite their colorful appearances.

At first glance, primary sources themselves can seem dry and boring. A yellowed piece of paper filled with hard-to-read handwriting may not seem exciting. However, as students are guided through the process of exploring documents, their

Ellen Ruffin is Curator of the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection, McCain Library and Archives at The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. Laura Capell is the Digital Archivist, McCain Library and Archives at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

perceptions are enlivened. They are not just looking at the document; instead they are looking *into* it to see for themselves how people in the past lived. No longer are they learning about a distant past, but they are encountering a real person from a different time and place.³

MYTH #2: A teacher cannot afford to veer off of a prescribed curriculum, and primary sources lend nothing to standardized tests. Contrary to popular belief, primary sources are playing an increasingly important role in the development of curriculum standards. Inquiry-based learning, which encourages the use of primary sources, is becoming more prevalent in today's classrooms. Inquiry-based learning, according to Julia Hendry in *Primary Sources in K–12 Education: Opportunities for Archives*, teaches students to “actively discover and evaluate information rather than simply memorize and regurgitate facts, which helps to improve their critical thinking skills.”⁴

Incorporating primary sources into the classroom can also help prepare students for standardized testing, especially document-based questions that require students to evaluate and interpret various types of documents and illustrations. The skills students acquire from using primary sources help prepare them to successfully answer document-based questions, which are now commonly found on many standardized tests.⁵

Contemporary teachers are often perplexed as to how to weave in creative teaching methods while addressing the demands of test results and curriculum standards. As standards continue to evolve to include inquiry-based learning approaches, it has become easier for teachers to incorporate creative lesson plans based on primary sources. Research now clearly points to the successful outcome of using primary sources and inquiry-based learning techniques.⁶

MYTH #3: Primary sources are inaccessible and hard to find. Primary sources are unique documents, one-of-a-kind creations, generally housed in archival repositories, special collections libraries, and historical societies. Because of their uniqueness and rarity, finding and using primary sources is much different than finding and using circulating books in the library. Repositories often have strict rules in place to protect and preserve materials. For example, documents cannot be checked out and taken home; rather they must be viewed in a special reading room under staff supervision.

Due to the sheer number of archival documents in existence, it can be difficult to locate appropriate items for classroom use. Unlike books in a library catalog, archival documents are not cataloged at the item level. Instead, collections of documents are broadly described, and researchers must often search through multiple folders or boxes of materials. For these reasons, it is not unusual for teachers to have limited experience in working with archival materials. They may not even think to consider these types of resources, or they may be intimidated by them. Although the staff at archival repositories welcome opportunities to work with the K–12 audience and can easily identify appropriate documents for children, teachers are often hesitant to visit repositories.

Prior to the digital explosion, teachers had to schedule field trips to the archives or to invite an archivist to visit the school, or they had to use facsimiles of primary documents available in secondary sources, such as textbooks and nonfiction materials from the school media center. Now, however, the Internet makes primary sources much more accessible. Along with the Library of Congress and the National Archives, many university libraries and state historical societies have websites featuring primary sources.

In fact, teachers may be overwhelmed by the amount of sources available online, and they may not know how to select appropriate documents to use with students. To help address this issue, many repositories have developed websites specifically designed to help teachers integrate primary sources into the classroom. For example, the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian, and the National Archives have websites featuring documents relevant to specific curriculum needs, along with lesson plans and activities to use in the classroom.⁷

MYTH #4: Primary sources are *not* for the K–12 classroom. Based on the above discussion, it should be clear that primary sources are indeed a valuable tool for the K–12 classroom. These resources provide an enriching learning experience for students and help them to develop lifelong critical thinking skills.

If primary sources can play such an important role in the learning process, how can teachers bring them into the classroom? Though it does require some planning and creativity, teachers need not be intimidated by primary sources. With some forethought, they can easily incorporate primary sources into their lesson plans. Imagine this: A ten-year-old girl starts off on a cross-country journey in a covered wagon with her family. Her name is Amelia, and this is her story.

Amelia's Journey

Amelia documented her trip in her diary, and it is here that the inquiry-based learning begins. Although the diary was written more than one hundred years ago, students will be able to identify with it and draw comparisons between Amelia's journey and their own experiences. Read the following excerpt, the opening entry in Amelia's diary:

December 28, 1895 (Saturday) Started at 10 a.m. Dec 28th 1895 on our trip to Arkansas, it is noon now and the horses are eating their dinner, there are 6 of us—Mother, Father, Louise 18 years of age Eddie 15 years of age Sophie 13 years of age and me 10 years of age, we have 2 wagons with covers on and a buggy without a cover. Father didn't want to leave the buggy and it is such an old rattletrap that we couldn't sell it so mother told him to let old Fannie pull us down to Ark in it fannie has crooked front legs and can't travel very good and father says she'll die before long but he likes her and she wasn't good enough to sell either so we hitched her the buggy and brought her along. So and me drove her all morning, and we are going to try and drive her all the way down, we are going to rake leaves every night for her a soft bed so she will be rested again for the next day, besides fannie



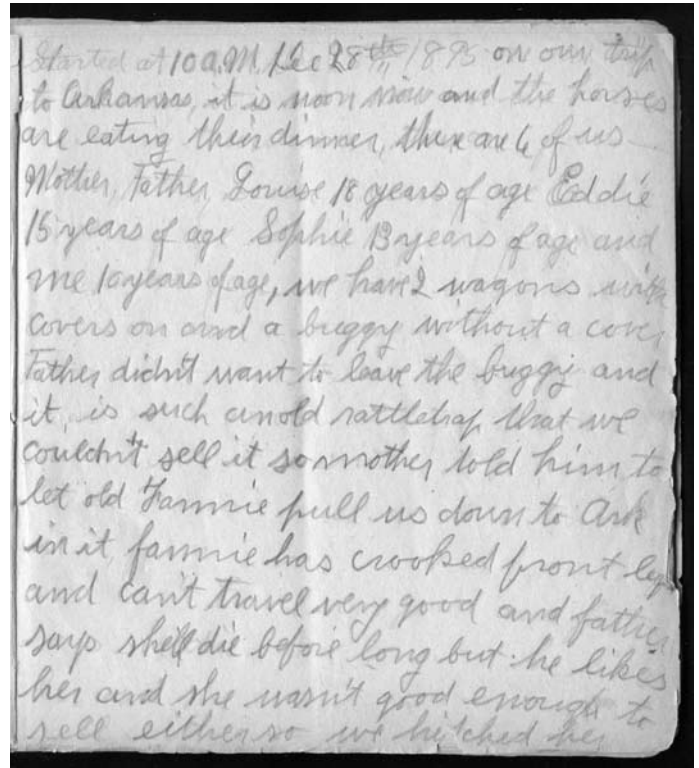
The cover of Amelia's diary.

we have 4 more horses, Grilly and Daisy, and Flora and Clyde, and then we brought Leo, Leo is the cutest one of the family he is so excited and runs around and barks.⁸

What information about Amelia is gleaned from this passage? Amelia introduces her family, which is about to embark upon an adventure. The journey begins on the cusp of a brand new year, December 28, 1895. Arkansas is the destination. Amelia is traveling with her parents and her three siblings in two covered wagons and one buggy. The family is accompanied by their animals (always of interest to children). Leo, the family pet, is riding in the uncovered wagon with Amelia and her sister Sophie. There are four horses, whose names are all listed, and one special horse, Fannie, is pulling the uncovered buggy.

By reading further in the diary, students will learn more about the family and why they have left their farm in Iowa to start a new life in Luthersville, Arkansas. They will also learn about the nature of travel in the 1890s as the family passes through cities and towns, fords rivers, climbs mountains, suffers through cold and rainy weather, and experiences several close calls along the way. Amelia provides detailed observations of travel conditions, and she often comments on interesting scenes they encounter, such as towns with electric lights, cemeteries, farms, schools, and pretty natural scenery. Her descriptions provide insight into the challenges of long-distance travel in the 1890s. Consider the following passage:

Father is 57 years old today. we have no wood for a fire outdoors tonight so we had one in our little camp stove here in the wagon, we are eating popcorn and Louise is knitting a scarf. Edd and Father are out feeding the horses, they sleep in the other wagon, So is writing in her diary she's too lazy to keep her's up and she copies from mine every chance she gets.⁹

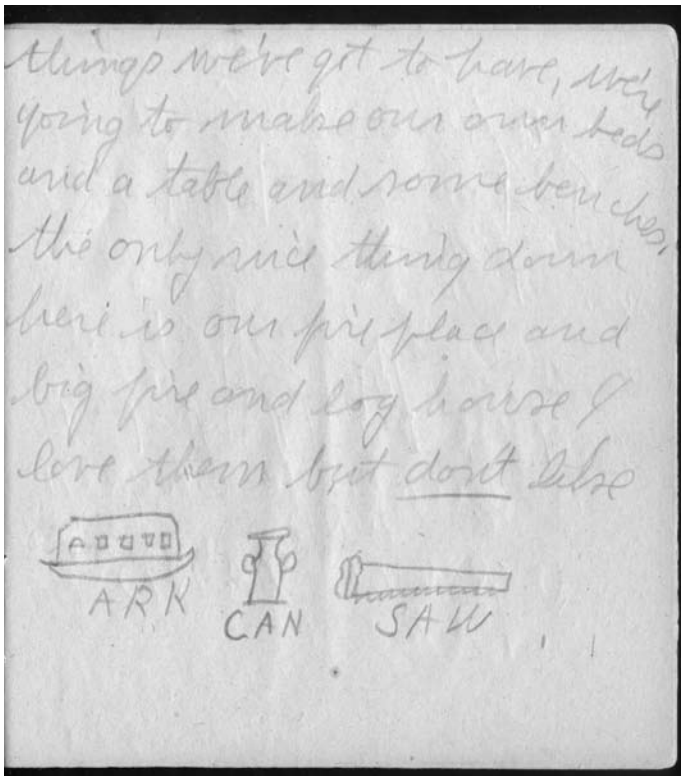


Page 1 of the diary, Amelia's first day of travel.

At night, the family pulls the wagons off of the road and camps for the night. Amelia faithfully describes the nightly routines while illustrating her relationship with family members. Children will identify with the sibling interactions between Sophie and Amelia. This passage is significant in that it illustrates the fact that people are people, and the sibling relationships in 1896 do not drastically differ from those today. The animals factor prominently in Amelia's writings. She devotes as much attention and concern to them as she does to people. Even though the horses pull the wagons for the family's journey, Amelia considers them more than just a means of transportation. To learn more about travel conditions and how the family members interacted with one another on the journey, read the following passage:

Feb 5th Started on pretty good roads came through Wheeler, bought some hay from a farmer for 35 cts a bale, found it all rotten inside, passed a farmhouse and Edd went in to ask the name of a town we saw in the distance, nobody was home, but they had a lot of sausage hanging in the porch, Edd took one and came to ride with us girls, we didn't know what to tell Mother about it, the wagons were quite ways ahead, we kept it and at noon we had to tell about Edd stealing it and Mother felt awful bad and made Edd eat every bit of it himself, it had green sage leaves in it and he didn't like it but ate it anyhow.¹⁰

Contemporary children may wonder at Amelia's detailed observations of the roads and weather conditions, but these issues played a major role in the progress the family made each day in reaching their destination. Wagon travel was slow and uncomfortable. Getting stuck in the mud or stopping to repair a broken wagon wheel could cause a serious delay. Furthermore, not every water crossing had a bridge, so on several occasions,



The rebus created by Amelia (Ark-can-saw).

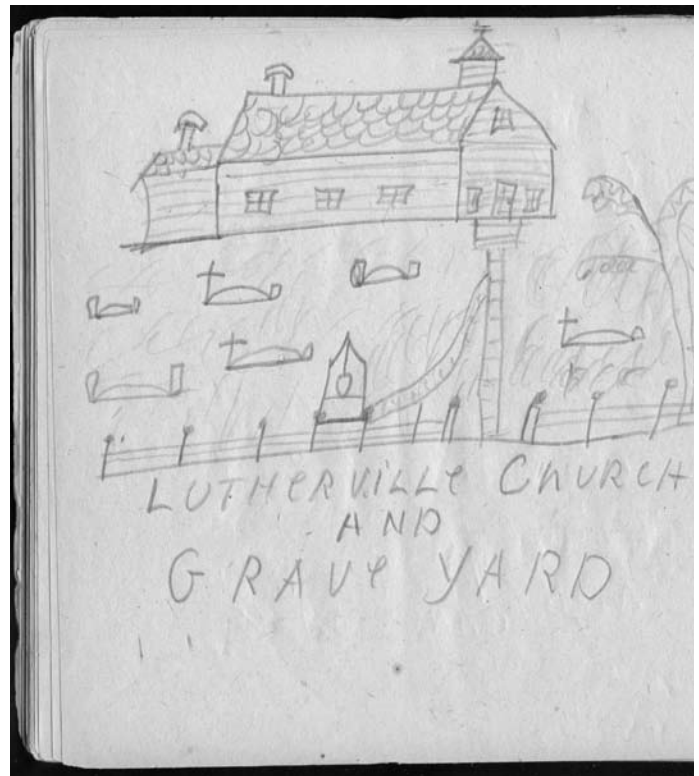
the family had to ford streams at the risk of being swept downstream. The urgency was not about the family's excitement about moving to a new place they had never seen before, but instead, they faced pressure to get settled in their new home in time to plant the crops in the spring.

The description of Edd's stealing the sausage and his subsequent punishment will probably seem amusing to many students. They will instantly recognize a familiar scene: misbehaving, getting caught, and being punished. Students will also identify with the moral dilemma Amelia and her sister face as they struggle with whether to tell their mother of Edd's misdeeds. Instances such as these help students relate to Amelia, allowing them to learn about life in a different time through the story of a child who was similar to them in many ways.

Amelia in the Classroom

Amelia's diary is part of the Emilie and Marie Stapp Papers in the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection in the McCain Library and Archives at the University of Southern Mississippi. The diary was digitized by library staff to make it more accessible to a wide audience, including educators and students. The complete diary is available in the USM Digital Collections, along with an abbreviated version that contains passages selected especially for use in the K–12 classroom. Users are able to view digital images of the diary and can also view transcripts of the pages, which can be helpful because Amelia's handwriting can be difficult to read.¹¹

Both the diary and the transcript contain Amelia's own spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Teachers can incorporate this



Amelia's rendering of the Lutherville, Arkansas, graveyard and church.

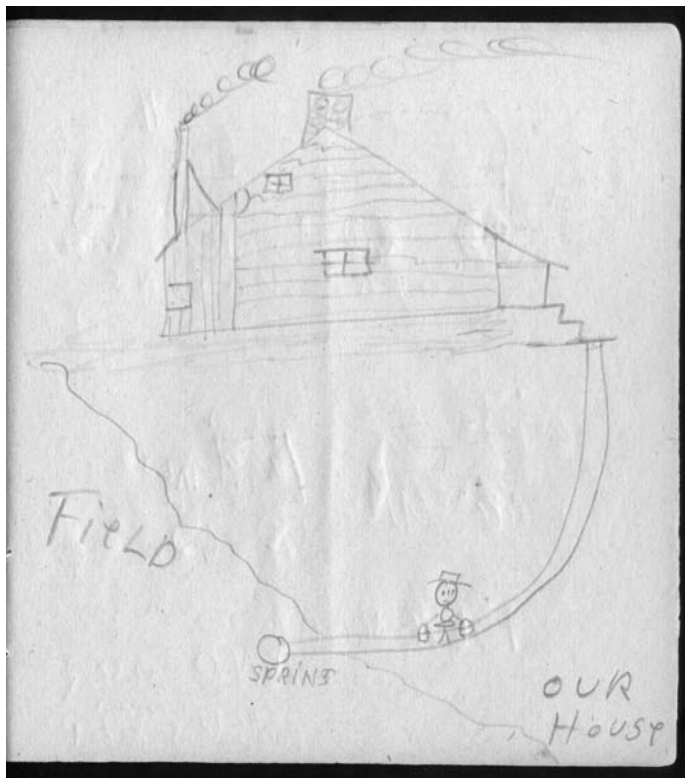
into their own lesson plans as they choose. For example, teachers can have students point out inaccuracies, suggest correct spellings or punctuation. Teachers can use Amelia's diary as an object lesson as to why standard spellings, punctuation, and capitalization is important. Students will notice that Amelia's diary is difficult to decipher without standard usages.

Educators can easily address framework standards by using Amelia's diary in the classroom. Using primary sources online addresses technology standards focusing on creativity and innovation, communication and collaboration, and research and information fluency. Other framework standards including life skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, and reasoning are also taught when working with the diary.¹²

The diary also helps students develop skills concerning historical understanding. Through the diary, contemporary students can begin to understand historical perspective. They learn to draw comparisons between today's culture and that of the past, discovering both differences and commonalities between the two eras. Placing historical information into context is a by-product of the entire learning experience. Students also learn about primary sources, bias, and authenticity.¹³ The diary does not have to be limited to use in history classes, though. It can also be used in teaching other subjects such as geography and writing.

Analyzing the Source

When working with the diary in a classroom, teachers may find it helpful to have students analyze the primary source as they



Amelia's house.

are working with it. The following questions can help guide this discussion:

1. Who created the diary and why?
2. Did the author write the diary while the events were taking place or after the fact?
3. Was the author's perspective without opinion, or did the author's opinions influence the writing?
4. Was the author writing for personal reasons, or was it for a public audience?
5. Did the author have a reason to be honest or dishonest?
6. The diary describes a journey. Why was the journey necessary?

Historical Period

Amelia's diary is an excellent way to introduce United States history during the 1890s. Students can learn about politics, culture, transportation, and technology by finding background information through research. The following questions can be used to invite students to engage in a discussion about life in the United States.

1. How did people live in rural areas? What were their houses like, what did they eat, what did they do for fun, and what kind of technology did they have?

2. How might life in Arkansas be different from life in Iowa in the 1890s?
3. What types of occupations did people in rural areas of the United States have?
4. What were the modes of transportation in the 1890s?
5. Who was president of the United States, and what major national events happened during 1895–96?
6. What new technologies were invented in the 1890s?

Suggested Activities for the Classroom

Educators recognize the importance of experiential learning. In conjunction with the above discussions, these activities reinforce important concepts and appeal to a variety of learning styles. Amelia's diary provides teachers the opportunity for a variety of tactile learning activities. The following are merely suggestions. Teachers can be as inventive and innovative as they choose in developing activities to incorporate Amelia's diary into the classroom.

1. Have students create a paper diary much like the one Amelia created.
 - a. If possible, students could bind the edges with thread.
 - b. Students could write in their own diaries for a two-week period, or longer.
2. Have students trace Amelia's journey.
 - a. Find Iowa on a map. Find Luthersville, Arkansas.
 - b. Have students research the geographies of the two places. Ask students how the cultures seem to differ.
 - c. Explore the actual route Amelia's family took.
 - d. Have students research the types of terrain that the family encountered.
3. Re-enact the time period.
 - a. If possible, arrange a wagon ride and an outdoor cook-out with foods mentioned in the diary.
 - b. If a field trip is not possible, have the students create the environment in the classroom. Include the following:
 - i. Clothing common to the period
 - ii. Food mentioned in the diary (sausage with sage leaves)
 - iii. Activities and games children played in the 1890s

Dispelling the Myth

This article began by dispelling the myths that often surround the use of primary sources in the K–12 classroom. Primary sources are not inaccessible to teachers and students, and they are not incompatible with curriculum frameworks. With the availability of documents like Amelia's diary, teachers no longer need to be reticent in utilizing primary sources.

Learning about a child's firsthand experiences while traveling with her family in a covered wagon more than one hundred years ago makes the past more accessible to today's students. Modern travel is different, technologies are different and more advanced, but through the diary children begin to learn that people who lived in the past share many of the same characteristics as people who live today. The drawings at the end of Amelia's diary illustrate this point.

Children today enjoy drawing images that are relevant to their lives. They may draw images of cars, airplanes, houses, pets, and family members. Amelia enjoyed the same activity—drawing things that were relevant to her world. Instead of airplanes or cars, she drew wagons. Just as Amelia drew a rebus depicting Arkansas, modern children still have fun using drawings to depict words.

It is hoped that this article will encourage teachers to use Amelia's diary or similar sources in their teaching. As the ultimate goal of education is to produce an informed citizenry, this type of activity is critical. Primary sources such as Amelia's diary allow students to step back into the past and explore it from a perspective that is far more meaningful than mere words and images in a textbook.

Exploring Amelia's diary can enhance the textbook lessons and images, thereby giving students a deeper understanding of historical concepts while developing lifelong critical reasoning skills. Students can gain a true appreciation for the past through an inside examination of a girl's life in the 1890s. They learn to draw important conclusions between the past and the present, thereby preparing them for an enlightened future. ☺

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Call for Referees

To make *Children and Libraries* a truly interactive publication, we're looking for ALSC members to serve as volunteer referees for journal articles. Unsolicited articles and those of a scholarly nature must be submitted to at least two referees to judge the submissions on accuracy, style, impact, importance, and interest. Specialists in particular genres (such as technology, literature, intellectual freedom, programming, and so on) are especially needed.

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Common Ground

Riverway Festival Celebrates Stories and Libraries

Mary Fellows

I believe in the power of words, so I majored in English. I believe in the power of books in the hands of people, which is why I'm a librarian. I believe in the power of hearing and telling stories. That's why I produce Riverway Storytelling Festival.

Riverway Storytelling Festival is a seven-day, public library-centered festival held in the Capital Region of New York. Its home is Upper Hudson Library System (UHLS), a regional system of twenty-nine independent public libraries in Albany and Rensselaer Counties. Our main claim to fame, in the eyes of our members, is our administration of the online catalog system. We all agree that a fast, effective catalog system is essential to our libraries' service. But how does storytelling fit into the public library mission?

Storytelling and public libraries are about community, words, and ideas. We are hearing more about the library as a community center these days. In our world of technology that both links and isolates us, people are seeking what they miss—connection, forged face to face. Storytelling events at the public library are a natural response to this desire for community.

Public libraries have always been a fertile source of stories to read. In the beginning, these stories were meant for adult eyes only. Happily, since the early twentieth century and the work of Anne Carroll Moore, libraries have embraced the role of intro-

Mary Fellows is Manager of Youth and Family Services and Producer of the Riverway Storytelling Festival for the Upper Hudson (N.Y.) Library System and member of the ALSC board of directors.

ducing children to literature. In addition to stories to borrow in written or audio form, nearly all public libraries offer a form of storytime at least occasionally. Some combination of stories read and told, songs, puppetry, and crafts fill out a program designed to welcome children into the world of reading.

Recent research has validated the essential nature of these early literacy ventures. A variety of literacy-related tasks have been found to correlate to a child's development into a successful reader and learner.

One of these key early literacy activities is storytelling. Educators clarify the link between hearing stories and reading in this way:

Listeners encounter both familiar and new language patterns through story. They learn new words or new contexts for already familiar words. Those who regularly hear stories subconsciously acquire familiarity with narrative patterns and begin to predict upcoming events. Both beginning and experienced readers call on their understanding of patterns as they tackle unfamiliar texts.¹

Training librarians as storytellers and fostering the use of more storytelling in their work improves the quality of libraries' early literacy work. But storytelling isn't all about children, nor is it just for storytimes. Libraries can bring storytelling to adults, too. Many teachers, ministers, and businesspeople use storytelling in their work and welcome an opportunity to build their skills.

There are many ways libraries can incorporate storytelling into their services. One of our member libraries held a class on

storytelling for adults; another held a similar class especially for elder adults. Libraries can hire professional storytellers as special presenters or even as staff members as Broward County Library System in Florida does. Or you could do what we did—create a library-centered storytelling festival.

Riverway Storytelling Festival

From its first glimmer, Riverway was envisioned as a festival centered on the public libraries that voluntarily belong to UHLS in Albany, New York. In 2001, I was new to UHLS and to the region. I was impressed with the wide variety of arts offerings in the region, but I noted the lack of a communitywide storytelling festival. I thought it might be an opportunity, and filed away the idea for later consideration.

“Later” turned out to be in November 2001, when Betsy Soares, then development officer of Albany Public Library (the UHLS central library), suggested we meet to discuss potential collaborations. I floated the storytelling festival idea; she liked it. We clarified our roles. Since I had experience founding storytelling guilds, producing storytelling events, and telling stories, I would handle the details of the festival. Betsy would use her expertise to find and manage the funders. We crafted a vision, sold the idea to our bosses, and got to work.

Our next step was to identify stakeholders and invite them to an initial meeting. On our guest list were librarians from school, public, and academic arenas; storytellers; newspaper and media staff; visitor bureau representatives; and school system officials. Our invitation included the vision of what we hoped to create, including a timeline, proposed format, which stakeholders we had identified, and funding prospects.

On January 8, 2002, twelve mostly unacquainted people showed up to discuss the viability of a Capital Region storytelling festival. Hours later, we ended the meeting as the first incarnation of the planning committee of what would become Riverway Storytelling Festival. We had a clear mandate to proceed, along with a festival focus, goals and objectives, structure and character, and components. Betsy and I were delighted. We were underway! There was energy, excitement, commitment, and none of the pain that often accompanies a birth.

What makes Riverway Storytelling Festival successful, at its heart, are a compelling vision, determined leadership, a strong storytelling community, stellar volunteers, useful partners, and a happy home.

The crowd was entranced by storyteller Eshu Bumpus.



That came four weeks later, when Betsy was hired for a job in another field. Suddenly, I had entire responsibility for a project that had energy, momentum, and a need for far more money than I—who had only ever asked businesses for summer reading program prizes—knew how to raise.

We could have scrapped the project. We could have scaled it back from a three-day festival to a one-day event or even an afternoon of stories. But I had a strong personal connection to realizing our vision. And, having gained such buy-in from the stakeholders, I really wanted to harness this energy and see what we might create. So I opted to believe that we could figure it all out, and we proceeded.

At our second meeting, we chose our name and officially created the planning committee. Then we shifted from the visionary to the practical. We realized that we needed a full year to prepare, so we chose April 2003 as the time for our first festival.

Creating the first Riverway was exhilarating and scary. The Planning Committee was a dream team—creative, positive, practical, dependable, and humorous. At every meeting, we reviewed our vision and reminded one another of what type of festival we wanted to be. We generated ideas and addressed problems. We agreed on what level of tellers to hire—national, regional, and local.

We determined how to involve member library staff and their customers. We identified locations. We created a schedule of events. We created a marketing plan.

Show Me the Money

Meanwhile, I was trying to learn how to raise large amounts of money, having nightmares about failure, and checking my own bank account for spare cash. One day, I came across information on a group called Women in Development. There is a local chapter, so I e-mailed the representative. I explained my situation and asked if she would consider meeting with me to do a little mentoring. I was afraid I might be asking something totally inappropriate, if she saw me as a competitor for scarce money.

Luckily, she agreed to help. We met once, and she provided what essentially was a Development 101 class. At the end of our two hours, I felt both relieved and empowered—I had vastly more understanding of how to approach bigger funders and how to sell ideas to them. I even had a little insider information about who liked to fund what. Although our relationship didn't continue, my mentor made a significant difference in Riverway's viability.

The money came in slowly—very slowly. But just as in Pavlov's experiments with intermittent reinforcement, it was enough to keep us moving forward and me sleeping more peacefully. Tellers were contracted, venues arranged, and publicity sent out as we neared our target dates. We were committed.

Showtime

The first Riverway, held April 3–5, 2003, was bumpy. The biggest bumps were the chunks of ice that fell in the most severe three-day ice storm the Capital Region had seen in years. The storm began at 5 p.m. during our first event and ended the day of our last event.

While we were challenged and dismayed by the cancellations—both of artists who could not get here and events we had to cancel for reasons of safety—we had a lot of good moments. Student storytellers who knew one another only by e-mail met and bonded during storytelling workshops. People came to one event and enjoyed it so much that they brought their families to the next event. Stories that made us laugh and one that elicited some tears bonded us all.

And we learned how to produce a storytelling festival. Ultimately, the ice storm proved a boon to us—had we not cancelled events and used fewer artists, we would have lost a lot of money. The ice storm provided the safety net that allowed us to try, fail, and learn without huge negative consequences. These conse-



Left to right, teacher Marilyn Michaels, storyteller Norah Dooley, and librarian Darlene Miller.



Left to right, storytellers Katherine Webb, Lorraine Hartin-Gelardi, and Joe Doolittle ham it up with a nursing home resident.

quences could have meant that the first Riverway was also the last.

In the final tally, our cash and in-kind revenue for the inaugural Riverway exceeded \$17,000. Sources for cash were a local convenience store chain, a bank, the CPA firm used by UHLS, and sales of tickets, program ads, and T-shirts. A major ally was the *Times Union*, our local newspaper. In addition to the \$5,000 in advertising, the newspaper gave us \$3,100 in print services and a cash donation. We also had \$1,500 from a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant that involved students and storytelling, which did double duty and helped the festival.

Payment of insurance for a venue (\$300) and American Sign Language interpretation (\$300) were the only cash contributions of UHLS. In the end, we lost \$356, an expense that was absorbable by UHLS and explained by the show-stopping weather.

Manageable Growth

Since that first Festival, Riverway has grown to a week-long festival with, in 2008, thirty-one events. With one of our guiding principles being manageable growth, our evolution has been a reasonably smooth process. We expanded from three days to six days to seven days over several years. From the beginning, we offered our member libraries the chance to host a free family storytelling performance in their library; two years ago, we gave them the option of a family performance or an outreach performance at a senior center. This year, we also offered several libraries outreach performances at their local public schools.

Student storytellers have always been an important part of Riverway. For the first year, we had an LSTA grant that brought professional storytellers into the schools to train students to tell. We then invited those students to perform at Riverway and attend Saturday workshops. The next year, we relied on the generosity of local tellers with residencies who brought their residency students to Riverway to tell. In 2005, we formalized our commitment to student storytelling by budgeting for a supplement that pays one teller who already has a residency to prepare and bring those students to perform at Riverway.

These student tellers add greatly to another event that began in 2005. Story Walk! is a Riverway event done in partnership with the New York State Museum in Albany. Schools apply for acceptance, and on Thursday morning of Riverway week, 180 third graders are bused to the museum, where they hear stories among the exhibits. The student storytellers are one station on their tour. Some classes stay after lunch for a tour of the museum. This has become a very popular event with the schools, and we always have more schools apply than we can accommodate. Story Walk! is a complex organizational challenge, exhausting, and lots of fun! Story Walk! also brings in some revenue to the festival.

Another way Riverway involves student tellers is by inviting the New York State finalists of the National Youth Storytelling Showcase (www.nationalyouthstorytellingshowcase.org) to open our weekend concerts. Several young tellers have traveled across the state to participate.

We honor the value of the other end of the age spectrum as well by involving elder tellers. Three years ago, two local tellers ran



Storyteller Leeny Del Seamonds, left, works with a participant in a workshop.

a storytelling class for elders through one of our libraries, and we used those tellers in the festival for the next several years. We have not since found a way to institutionalize elder telling, but it's still a goal.

Ins and Outs of Budgeting

For our first few festivals, we charged admission for some of the bigger performances. As I got better at raising money and cultivated two great volunteers to help, we expanded our schedule and gradually made every event except workshops a free event. This simplifies the box office function considerably, and aligns with my vision of what a library-centered, community storytelling festival should be.

Riverway's budget for 2008 was \$66,000. Of that total, \$22,000 was cash and \$44,000 was in-kind contributions. We have made a goal of not paying for any service or product that we can get donated. Every year, we work at cultivating more sponsors and reducing the outlay of cash.

Even if we are totally successful in getting all services or products donated, we will always have a need for a good chunk of cash to pay our artists and reimburse their travel expenses. In 2008, Riverway hired three national-level tellers, two regional-level tellers, and six local tellers. Our teller budget line was \$17,000, not including food or \$2,000 worth of hotel accommodations donated to us.

Riverway's cash sponsors include several who have been with us from the beginning, as well as a food co-op, more banks, and various local corporations. We have developed a strong stable of sponsors in the Friends of the Library groups in the larger

libraries where we hold the weekend flagship performances. Some of our money this year and last year came from an arts grant. Additionally, the UHLS budget now includes \$6,000 for Riverway.

Marketing

Marketing the festival is time intensive and requires sustained effort. We have a logo and a tagline that we love, gained through a cold call to a local advertising firm resulting in a windfall of pro bono services. We have an attractive and functional website (www.riverwaystorytellingfestival.org), developed by the same advertising firm at a good discount.

We market the festival through ads with our print media sponsor, the *Times Union* newspaper, and our media sponsor, Capital News 9 TV. Our festival brochures go to our libraries and every other relevant place that will accept them. We also send them to the members of a mailing list maintained by a local storytelling guild and to past attendees. We send targeted flyers to each library hosting events for staff to post, hand out, or deliver around town. Reminder postcards go out to our mailing list members. We send e-mail notices through the teacher's center, arts center, and storytelling electronic discussion list. When time allows, we contact local talk shows to request appearances.

This marketing structure developed over the six festivals, and there is always more we could do. A volunteer handles much of our marketing. Yet marketing efforts, particularly media contacts, sometimes require more commitment of time than volunteers are able to make. UHLS does not have marketing staff that can help; I fill in where I can.

Measuring Success

We measure success in several ways. A big measure, of course, is attendance. Our first year's attendance was 594, with seventeen events held. In 2008, our thirty-one events netted us attendance of 2,236.

Feedback from attendees also helps us measure our achievement. Several years ago, we began putting out comment sheets after each event. On the form, we ask permission to use the comments in advertising or with sponsors. In closing announcements, we tell the audience that their feedback helps us persuade sponsors to support Riverway and keep performances free. The response is terrific! We have many testimonials to use in funding requests and on our website.

Structure

We could not produce Riverway without significant volunteer help. Our planning committee comprises volunteers (mainly professional storytellers) and staff from member libraries. We meet monthly for two hours, and in the meantime work through subcommittees such as programs, Story Walk!, schools, and logistics. Our total volunteer force is around thirty each year. UHLS staff support includes the time I spend, help from our financial staff, and record keeping, graphic design, and food setup help from my assistant.

Learning

We thoroughly evaluate every Riverway Storytelling Festival, a process that takes four to five hours of discussion. Based on

what we learn, we change our schedule each year, add new venues, or seek to attract a new audience.

Every year, there is something that's a challenge—sometimes a teller who falls ill and can't perform, sometimes a miscommunication about the schedule with a host,

sometimes an ice storm. As producer, I make a determined effort to appear calm and unflustered, and this keeps everyone else happy and showing the festival's best face to our audiences.

In addition to expecting bumps as the natural order, I have also come to realize that funding Riverway will always be hard. It has gotten slightly easier as I improve my skills and use volunteers to make cold calls. But it hasn't gotten a lot easier because we keep growing and improving Riverway, and such improvements usually cost money. I've made the choice to let Riverway evolve in certain ways and work ever harder to fund it. Still, our evolution discussions always include cost versus benefit, and we have so far struck the balance well enough that since the first Riverway we have never lost money.

What makes Riverway Storytelling Festival successful, at its heart, are a compelling vision, determined leadership, a strong storytelling community, stellar volunteers, useful partners, and a happy home. The most fragile piece, and therefore the most appreciated, is the willing commitment of the members of the planning committee. Riverway would be a pale shadow of itself, if it existed in any form, without the people who sit around the table and create, hone, and re-create the festival. Their energy and enthusiasm seems boundless. What's more, they work like Trojans. The vision, dedication, and humor that this group of acquaintances-become-friends brings make this work an enduring joy for me.



Storyteller Baba Jamal Koram and librarian Jemma Ray-Gayle.

Advice and Rewards

Storytelling events are natural projects for libraries. Stories did our work before libraries were on the scene to collect and share knowledge. Riverway Storytelling Festival started out ambitiously and has become a major undertaking, but only by choice. My affinity for storytelling and experience in producing events made me comfortable with dreaming big. The first Riverway was a stretch, but a manageable stretch. Trying something that seems like a manageable stretch—an evening of storytelling for adults, a day of workshops followed by performance, a storytelling class for middle school students—is well worth the effort.

As a project of UHLS, one of the festival's key goals is to link the value of storytelling to the value of libraries. We do this by holding most performances in our libraries, both large and small. Storytelling events bring people into libraries, generating new customers who associate their positive experience with the library. Surrounding people with stories in written format as they hear stories creates the connection in their minds between the world as explored in the oral language of stories and the world as explored through the gateway of the library. We also want to give the library an event that will draw more of the community into the library. The benefits of taking storytelling out

into the small or branch libraries rather than holding everything in a central library will outweigh the organizational complexities.

Positive publicity for libraries is a strong by-product of the festival and is a compelling reason for other libraries or systems to undertake a similar project. The ever-broadening publicity for our festival gets both the concept of libraries and specific library names out through newspapers, radio, websites, and television. Partnerships with media sponsors and funders have paid major dividends in paving the way for collaboration on UHLS library projects. As we've all learned, it's all about relationships. Once you know someone at the local television station, it's easier to call him and float your next partnership idea.

A storytelling festival or event also benefits library staff. The workshops and performances are unique opportunities for library staff to learn techniques that will enrich their work and make them more effective both at sharing stories and at group management. Watching how a storyteller brings a group of energetic eighth graders to mesmerized silence can be more instructive than reading about group management techniques.

There are intangible benefits of hosting storytelling events. Stories create good listening skills, promote understanding and tolerance of other cultures, foster community, and value wisdom in elders—all of which improve the society in which we live.

We need to read stories, hear stories, and tell our own stories. Creating an opportunity for those connections to happen is a mission the public library can own. An event or a festival like the Riverway Storytelling Festival is about stories *and* about libraries. It is about bringing stories into libraries and creating stories about libraries. It is about remembering why we have stories and why we have libraries. And it is about ensuring that our libraries live, in the familiar old words, "happily ever after." ☞

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What I Wasn't Taught in Library School . . .

"What do I do now?" We've all been there, wondering what to do and how we got here in the first place. A new series can now be found on the ALSC blog, "What I Wasn't Taught in Library School . . ." Intended to give ALSC student members a behind-the-scenes look at some of the challenges facing new librarians, these stories and tips are helpful and entertaining for those at any point in their careers.

Here's a sample submission, from Cecilia P. McGowan, coordinator of children's services for the King County (Wash.) Library System:

When I took my first job in 1984, I was fresh out of library school. One day, three young teenage girls came into the small branch I was working in, which was located in a strip mall. The girls were giggling and finally one of them said, "We need information about sex." I immediately became the efficient, nonjudgmental, helpful librarian. I showed them all the materials in the teen section and then everything in the adult section.

At the end of this, the three were dissolving into fits of laughter; in fact, they were laughing so hard they had to hold each other up. The bravest of the three then spluttered out that they really wanted books about insects, not sex. Well, I was a bit embarrassed but proceeded to show them the insect books. But wait—the story isn't over yet. Two weeks later, one of the girls came in by herself and asked me if I remembered her. When I told her I did she said, "So can you show me the books again that you showed us at first?"

So what did I learn?

- Listen carefully and restate the question.
- Never take yourself seriously, but do take questions seriously.
- Some of the questions we answer have unexpected consequences.

Every day as a youth services librarian brings something wonderful and unexpected!

To read more entries, or to enter one, visit the ALSC Blog at www.alsc.ala.org/blog.



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- **Plus downloadable activities and puzzles with library themes!**

Our Day with Coleen Salley

A Tribute to a Special Lady

Jane Claes and Janet Hilbun

Photos courtesy of Harcourt



In this tribute to Coleen Salley—author, storyteller, and highly esteemed professor of children’s literature—the authors describe their day spent interviewing and visiting with Coleen Salley. The interview took place shortly before Salley’s final illness. The authors recall, with fondness and humor, Salley’s willingness to help two strangers by sharing her time and her stories as well as her famous wit, wisdom, and hospitality.

The children’s literature community has lost one of its shining stars. Coleen Salley’s sparkle and roguish wit seasoned with charm and southern hospitality are gone, yet her legacy shines on through the many lives she touched. Born August 7, 1929, Salley died September 16, 2008.

The irrepressible Coleen Salley wore many hats—including the famous yellow one with the rose from her *Epossumondas* books. As a renowned storyteller, she enthralled countless listeners through television in a 1991 Visa commercial, at the New Orleans Jazz Festival, in the classroom, on audio, and in her lovely New Orleans French Quarter home.

As a distinguished professor of children’s literature at the University of New Orleans, as a visiting professor at five universities, as a popular presenter at library and reading conferences, she has ushered new practitioners into the world of

children’s literature. As an author, she has entertained a host of young readers and won numerous state book awards.

Six authors and illustrators have dedicated books to her, and too many authors and illustrators to count have signed their names and left their artwork on the doorframe in her house. As “Queen Coleen,” she joined Mardi Gras parades in her decorated grocery cart, becoming a New Orleans tradition and colorful character. And speaking of colorful characters, we still have *Epossumondas*, that sweet little patootie working his rascally wiles on Mama, lovingly illustrated by Janet Stevens. Salley claimed she did not know she was to be Mama until the dummy for the first book arrived. She said she was totally surprised. “That Janet really put one over on this old lady,” Salley would exclaim.

A widow at the age of 31, Salley was a mother, grandmother, author, storyteller, teacher, friend, and mentor to many. And her legacy may be best described in the story of what may have been her last interview.

This well-known and beloved figure within the children’s literature community could have rested on her laurels, and yet when two unknown librarians-turned-college-professors timidly reached out for an interview, she grabbed hold of our hands and took us for one delightful ride.



Jane Claes (left) is Assistant Professor in the School Library and Information Science program at the University of Houston (Texas) Clear Lake. Janet Hilbun (right) is Assistant Professor at the School of Library and Information Studies at Texas Woman’s University in Denton.

Down Nawlins Way

We wanted to interview Salley for a book we are writing about state book awards. The Epossumondas books have garnered several of the awards, and we were interested in what the awards meant to her as an author and teacher of children's literature.

We were fortunate enough to spot her roaming the exhibit aisles at the 2007 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia, so we introduced ourselves and explained what we wanted. "You must come to New Orleans, come to the house, we'll spend the day and talk, darling! Call me soon!" she replied handing us her card.

Even the planning of the interview had Salley's stamp firmly affixed. During our initial phone conversation, we called her Ms. Salley. "Y'all call me Coleen—none of that Ms. Salley nonsense. You make me feel like an old lady!" she admonished.

She made arrangements for us to stay at a hotel just down the street from her French Quarter home. She apologized profusely for not putting us up at her home. "There's just no space," she said. We were astounded at her generosity but quickly came to realize that Coleen Salley truly never met a stranger.

The week before we were to go to New Orleans, we called to confirm the interview. Message after message went unanswered; worry and concern set in. Should we go? Should we cancel? We decided to go to New Orleans.

On Monday morning, Salley finally answered the phone. When we said who we were and why we had come, there was a long pause and then, "Why, it's right here on my calendar! Jane and Janet, big as life! Well, I feel like two cents forgetting you girls, but that's what I did, I forgot! Can you forgive me? I feel like a doddering old fool!" With relief, we assured her of forgiveness, and she invited us right over to her house. We could talk, then get a bite of lunch, and visit some more.

We arrived on her doorstep, suitcases in hand, and were welcomed like old friends. Getting acquainted, pleasantries were exchanged, and we enjoyed iced tea on the back porch. We adjourned to the living room because construction noise made conversation difficult outside. Salley was an interviewer's dream—no yes/no answers. Actually, when we asked a question we were treated to lengthy and humorous discourse on the subject. We also got the full story about a "terlet" that wasn't working and was disrupting her greatly, especially since it had flooded a large portion of the house.

When asked about Hurricane Katrina, she responded, "Oh honey, I don't want to talk about that. That hurricane has been talked to death!" as she slumped dramatically on the couch. Then she proceeded to regale us with her hurricane adventures and articulate the problems with the government, Louisiana politics, and how recovery efforts had failed miserably. She also

expressed deep regret over what Katrina had done to the city she so loved. Forty-five minutes later she said, "Well, girls, I guess that's enough not-talking-about-Katrina!"

Katrina conversation made us all hungry, so we retrieved Salley's motorized scooter chair from the porch so she could lead the way to the restaurant. She took off at breakneck speed, leaving us to follow along as best we could. She dodged people, cars, and potholes with agility, and we arrived at the restaurant with Salley fresh as a daisy and the two of us bedraggled and breathless—and about two minutes behind her.

During lunch, we continued our interview about state book awards while enjoying shrimp and corn *maque choux* and gourmet pizzas. Lunch lasted two hours, during which Salley entertained us with stories and opinions about children's literature and its creators, all the time asking, "Is this what you needed? Am I giving you what you came for?"

Back at her house, Salley gave us a tour and shared her treasures with us, including the wonderful signed illustrations from numerous picture books. Her kitchen wall and the door frame showcased a virtual "who's who" of authors and illustrators who have left their drawings and autographs. Salley also posed for pictures, insisting on wearing Mama's trademark yellow hat and having Epossumondas on her shoulder. She autographed the books we brought and posed for pictures with us as well. All too soon, it was time to go, so Salley summoned us a cab. The adventure was over. Salley was tired; we were exhilarated and had a plane to catch.

Salley gave us the material needed for our book, but when we left we had something even more important. That Monday in May came on the heels of Salley's return from the International Reading Association Meeting in Atlanta, Ga. Just a couple of weeks later, she fell ill with Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease and the complications that ultimately claimed her jaunty spirit.

Looking back, perhaps there were signs she was not well. She had forgotten the appointment even though she showed us we were on her calendar, and she had neglected to listen to her answering machine messages for several days after her return from Atlanta. Salley said she was tired, but when we tried to cut the afternoon short, she protested that she was having too much fun to stop.

Salley shared her wit, her wisdom, her love of children's literature, and her time as graciously as if we were old and dear friends. She welcomed two strangers warmly into her home and, for a brief time, her life. She allowed us to laugh with her and for the day, bask in her exuberance.

This was Coleen Salley's nature, to encourage those in the field, to be a gracious hostess, and to share her wonderful stories. For Salley, it was just another day, but for us it was a unique afternoon full of charm and adventure, an unforgettable and special time with one of the greats. Thank you, Coleen Salley. 🐾

Out West!

ALA Midwinter Conference in Denver, Colorado, Jan. 2009

All photos by Sharon Verbeten



Vicky Smith of *Kirkus Reviews*, left, and Sharon Grover of Janesville, Wisconsin, smile for the camera at the Division Leadership Meeting.



ALSC board member Penny Markey of Los Angeles, California, addresses a priority group.



ALSC President Pat Scales told ALSC leadership, "I love connections; that's what we're all about."



Sue McCleaf-Nespeca and Kevin Delecki, both of Ohio, take the bull by the horns outside the Division Leadership Meeting.



Playful sculptures of children were visible at Writer's Square in Denver (along with the omnipresent Starbucks Coffee!).

Marantz Picturebook Collection Opens at Kent State University

A collection of more than 21,000 picturebooks from the past five decades now has a permanent, newly designed 1,800-square-foot home in the School of Library and Information Science at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. The Marantz Picturebook Collection in the Reinberger Children's Library Center is a result of Kenneth and Sylvia Marantz's lifelong pursuit of the study, use, and artistic merit of children's picturebooks and their significance in literature and art.

Dr. Kenneth Marantz, an emeritus professor of art education from the Ohio State University, and his wife, Sylvia, a retired school librarian, have been reviewing and collecting picturebooks for more than fifty years and are published authors of several resource books on picturebooks, children's literature, and art.

The space housing the Marantz Collection was partially funded by a \$249,000 grant from the Reinberger Foundation of Cleveland, Ohio, and features compact shelving, display areas for rare books and collections, distance learning classroom, storytime area, and private study locations. Original artwork, publishers' promotional posters, and character toys are also included in the collection.

Dr. Carolyn S. Brodie, professor and recipient of this year's Scholastic Library Publishing Award from ALA, and Dr. Greg



Collection benefactors Dr. Kenneth Marantz and Sylvia Marantz and author David Macaulay are pictured at the opening of the Marantz Picturebook Collection in the Reinberger Children's Library Center at Kent State University. *Photo courtesy Kent State University.*

Byerly, associate professor, were the catalysts behind the acquisition of the collection and the design plan of the new space.

Brodie and Byerly were also creators of the Reinberger Children's Library Center, a unique state of the art center dedicated to courses in children's, young adult, and school librarianship that houses a collection of more than eight thousand children's and young adult literature resources, artwork, and materials. The facility was opened in 2003.

"The Marantz Picturebook Collection is a perfect partner with the Reinberger Center," said Brodie. "The design connects both areas and allows easy access to the separate collections, yet each room can be used simultaneously for classes, study, and seminars." Brodie emphasized the school's commitment to encouraging a broad use of the Marantz Picturebook Collection through research and teaching. Jacqueline Albers, a school alumna, has established an endowment for a Guest Scholar in Children's Literature through a generous donation.

"Available space is always a problem, but the University Library and Dean Mark Weber donated adjacent space to the Reinberger Children's Library Center in order for the Marantz Picturebook Collection to be a part of the center," said Byerly. "As we worked on the design, it became very apparent that this space was exactly the area needed, and we are very grateful."



A view of the Reinberger Children's Library Center at the School of Library and Information Science at Kent State University. *Photo courtesy Kent State University.*

Betwixt and Between Tweens in the Library

Crystal Faris

At a recent author appearance at the library, two young girls stood in a long line to get their books autographed. Clutching copies of Kate DiCamillo's *The Tale of Despereaux* and squealing with excitement, these two nine-year-olds sported glittery pink shoelaces and black nail polish.

Showing off the polish, one girl explained, "We're experimenting with Goth because, like, we'll be in junior high soon and we need to know, like, what our fashion statement will be."

Just who are these girls? According to some definitions, they fall into that unclear category of *tweens*. This fairly new word implies the time between childhood and adolescence—when one is not quite a child, yet not quite a teenager. Merriam-Webster Online includes two definitions for the word with the first usage as a shortcut for the word "between." The second definition is a blend of the words "between" and "teenager."¹

Defining the age range for a tween becomes even trickier. Each piece of information explored for this article specified the particular age range being discussed, but each range was different than the defined scope in another book or article or webpage. Age ranges varied from 10 to 14, 8 to 12, 8 to 14, 6 to 10, 9 to 13, 10 to 13, to grades 4 to 8. For all the variety, any consistency among marketers seems to be 8 to 14.

*Crystal Faris is Director of Teen Services at the Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library; she is a chair of the **ALSC Research and Development Committee**, which also includes Marianne Baker, Gaye Hinchliff, Mona Kerby, Ya-Ling Lu, Alice Neve, and Suzanne Stauffer.*

Advertising to Tweens

When attempting to define and explore the word "tweens," marketers become amazingly important. The growing usage and acceptance of the word in casual conversation appear to have begun with marketers. Professionals marketing, selling, and branding products to and for this age group needed a word that was different from "child" or "teen" to describe this growing target audience.

And selling to this age group has become vital in the last few years. A 2001 Roper Youth Report survey estimates the tween population (that they defined as ages 8 to 12) at 30 million individuals, who make direct purchases of \$10 billion annually and influence an additional \$74 billion in family purchases.² Marketers also associate this group with the social phenomenon they call KAGOY (kids are getting older younger) because tweens rapidly want to be seen as older, to be as cool as the teens they admire.³

Obviously marketers spend much time studying their target audience, and those targeting tweens are no different. Demographic studies of those in the age group from 8 to 14 appear to have a main focus on attracting the attention of tweens in order to sell them a product or gain a positive feeling that will influence a future purchase.

In a study conducted by the Geppetto Group, the focus was understanding tweens' reactions to advertising. Tweens (defined as ages 10 to 13) enjoyed being "in the know," that is, feeling that they were a part of an in-group that understood what was happening in an advertisement. Ads targeting tweens needed to be sophisticated enough to attract attention but not

so sophisticated they made the tweens feel stupid.

Tweens enjoyed silly but not too sarcastic themes. They enjoyed the appearance of romance but not necessarily the appearance of sex. According to author John Fetto, "If a message causes tweens undue frustration in their attempt to understand it, they are likely to project blame on the brand for delivering a perplexing message."⁴

Julie Halpin, CEO of the Geppetto Group, sums it up like this, "When a child reaches their tweens, they come to realize that they are essentially at the bottom of the social food chain. In order to move up the chain, they are under constant pressure to understand what's going on in the world. The last thing tweens want is to feel dumb—a reminder of their transitional status."⁵

One trend that looks to be emerging from marketing research of tweens is a particular attention to girls. Girls Intelligence Agency (GIA) is a market research firm dedicated to studying tween girls. GIA cultivates nearly forty thousand tween girls who are influencers of their peers—those girls who set the standard for what to wear and what to do. For example, these influencers, acting as GIA "secret agents," host slumber parties at which GIA sends goodie boxes of strategically enclosed items to gain feedback on what will sell to this audience.⁶

Publishing for Tweens

Publishers strive to offer older children and early adolescents books that meet their interests and needs. A 2002 article in *Publishers Weekly* featured interviews where several publishing executives expressed concern about using the word "tween."

Most preferred the phrase "middle grade readers," and their age grouping varied from 8–12 to 10–14. An editorial director at The Pleasant Company expressed her frustration with the word when she stated, "From the letters we receive and the time we spend with girls, it's our view that girls aren't ever 'between' girlhood and adolescence. They're in one or

the other depending on the day (or the hour!)."⁷

Since 2002, the word "tween" appears to have increased in common use, and one wonders if publishers would respond differently today. Certainly they are publishing for this market in great numbers. Teri Lesesne's book *Naked Reading* provides recommendations for great books for this audience as she centers on a theme of developing passion for reading in tweens.⁸

One thing adults know for sure about tweens comes from what adults have always known for sure about teens—adults must work at knowing what is popular and interesting for them. Knowing what is cool or in right now is not a natural skill for adults. One possible option for staying current may be regular visits to the Tweens Channel section of the website YPulse (www.ypulse.com).

Libraries and Tweens

Libraries could learn from the demographic and marketing studies of tweens. Clearly what libraries offer this age group needs to be less childish than something availed to preschoolers or elementary school age children. At this same time, what libraries offer should not be so sophisticated as to make tweens feel uncomfortable and frustrated.

Two library service ideas for tweens have been highlighted in past issues of *Children and Libraries*. One focused on fantasy literature. As the author stated, "At this stage of development, children enjoy these stories for their magical elements, sense of justice, triumphs of good over evil, and themes relatable to their own experiences."⁹ The second presented a breakfast book chat initiative including tweens and their caregivers.¹⁰

To know what tweens want from libraries, we too may need to do our research. Asking questions of tweens, observing their use of the library, and participating in formal research studies all have importance in understanding the population and providing excellent library service. One recent study highlights a

study design using methods to "target the developmental attributes and needs of early adolescents (physical, social, and cognitive)."¹¹

A search of library literature brought up little else on the topic of serving tweens in libraries. Although this is a fairly new term, it is a popular one which signifies a large population in our communities. Clearly we have a void in library literature about tweens.

More best practices may need to be shared, and additional study may need to take place, to foster a better understanding of library service to young people in that all-too-confusing age between their childhood and teen years. ☺

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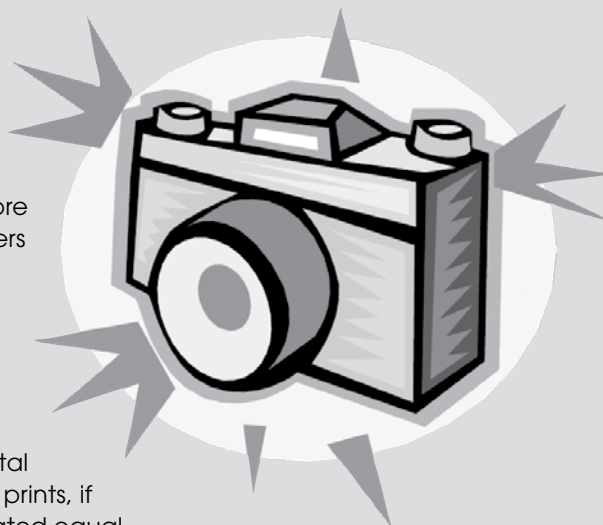
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Taking Great Photos And Getting Them in Print

Everyone can benefit from free publicity, right? And *Children and Libraries (CAL)* is pleased to serve as a venue to promote your libraries’ programs and practices. In fact, we’d like to run more photos of library events in *CAL*, but we need the help of our readers to provide us with good, usable photos.

To that end, we’ve prepared this guide for taking photos at your library—photos that will not only serve your library and local media but can readily be used in *CAL* as well.



- 1. The camera counts.** Almost everyone now uses a digital camera (if you don’t, that’s fine; we can still use good old prints, if they are nice and clear). But all digital cameras are not created equal. Generally, those with a higher megapixel count will provide the clearest images with best resolution. A digital camera of seven megapixels or more should be able to take a photo with high enough resolution for print reproduction.
- 2. What’s DPI?** For photos to be reproduced in journals such as *CAL*, we require digital images of three hundred DPI (dots per inch) or higher. It may be hard to tell on your camera what the end resolution will be, but here’s a handy rule of thumb: just set your camera to take photos on its highest resolution setting. That’s usually the setting that will take the FEWEST photos. That’s one common mistake most libraries make; they set the camera to take the MOST photos, but those are generally too small to use in print.
- 3. Print vs. Internet.** There are different requirements for photos used in print publications versus on the Web. We cannot download photos from a library website unless they are already high enough resolution.
- 4. Composition matters.** When you’re taking pictures at an event (such as storytime, book signings, etc.), keep an eye out for what would make a nice photo. Don’t just snap away. Consider that a photo with two or three smiling children will make a much better photo than a group of forty kids. While it’s important to take photos of the entire group to document the success of the program, snap a few close-ups of kids’ faces; these will often make the biggest impact, especially in a journal layout. Candid shots are especially good, too, such as catching the little child paging through a board book or building a block house.
- 5. Seek out photographers.** If you’re too busy the day of a library event to act as photographer, seek out someone who can and will document the event. This might be a willing parent, a library volunteer or even a local high school or college student looking to get some photography clips for their portfolio. They will likely capture things you might miss or overlook during the event.
- 6. Get permissions.** In this day and age, getting permissions to take and use photographs of children is essential—both for libraries and for publications. *CAL* cannot run any photos of children without having a signed permission/release form from the child’s parent or guardian. Most libraries now regularly have such release forms available during their events; if your library doesn’t, you may want to consider this. It’s easier to get the permissions during the event than tracking the parents down later. The release forms need not be full of legalese, just short forms noting that the parent/guardian gives permission for the child’s photo to be used in any publication/publicity connected to the library and its programs.



A Map, a Life Vest, and a Navigator Required Supplies for Youth Services Training

Meg Smith and Sarah English

[Harriet] never minded admitting she didn't know something. So what, she thought, I could always learn.¹

As the inquisitive protagonist in Louise Fitzhugh's *Harriet the Spy* asserts, educational opportunities are readily available, as long as the individual is willing and able to learn. For library managers serving youth, this learning must extend beyond our young patrons to our own departmental members.

Continuing professional development is a necessary practice in our evolving field. In *Outstanding Library Service to Children: Putting the Core Competencies to Work*, the authors assert that the training of library staffers should include a "written plan, allow flexibility and experimentation (since we often learn the most from mistakes), and pass on not only specific methodologies but also the joy of working with children and a serious commitment to personally directed professional growth."²

Upon understanding these principles, we can compare our staffers' training to sailing through uncharted territory; we need a map, a life vest, and a navigator.

As managers, the development of a written plan serves as our guide map as we ascertain library staffers' training. The manager's plan enhances the communication between the supervisor and his or her staffers, leads the employee to specific and attainable goals, and provides all workers with necessary support. An employee's training plan should include continuing education experiences, whether through library-sponsored staff development days or online courses, to develop the skills necessary to serve diverse populations.

Library programs across the country provide continuing education participants with a rich array of professional and practical experiences. University online courses, which emphasize

everything from Web design to recent trends in young adult literature, will appeal to library employees who can juggle the required coursework while maintaining departmental demands and responsibilities.

Though these online courses are often affordable and convenient for general employee growth, managers are also encouraged to develop individual training plans to best serve their staffers. The electronic version of our ALSC Competencies expounds on the significance of these skills when implementing training standards for staff. "The following competencies assert that the children's librarian must do more than simply provide age-appropriate service . . . they must also demonstrate the full range of professional and managerial skills demanded of any other librarians."³ When staffers adhere to a written plan including these core competencies, our patrons will not only be better served, but our staffers will be confident and encouraged by their service and commitment to their youth populations.

A written plan offers necessary structure, but flexibility allows for the employee to tailor training needs to his or her personal behavior and preferred learning style. As a life vest provides critical support when charting unsafe territory, a manager's willingness for flexibility ensures this same lifeline. The strength

Meg Smith is Youth Services Manager at the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center in Fayetteville, N.C. **Sarah English** is Youth Services Coordinator at the Omaha (Neb.) Public Library. They are members of the **ALSC Managing Children's Services Committee**, which also includes chair Susan Pannebaker, Kristine Casper, Ginny Gustin, Cary Meltzer, Bianca Roberts, Deanna Romriell, Jennifer Schultz, and Anitra Steele.

of youth librarians often lies in the ability to predict the unusual and to modify services to the demands of diverse populations. This flexible attitude should persist when working with employees.

Presenting library trainings and continuing education courses in a variety of formats allows for greater retention of new material. Cerny, Markey, and Williams encourage the value of cross-training staff and rotating job assignments when working with library departments.⁴ Youth services managers must convey this flexible mindset by maintaining open communication and encouraging regular opportunities for dialogue between the supervisor and her or his staffers. With these guidelines, employees are encouraged to become more responsible for their own learning, to maintain higher morale within their department, and to speak with their supervisor regarding policy changes.

A map and a life vest are necessary supplies for the individual traveler, but a personal guide provides crucial support. Library supervisors should serve as this guide by mentoring both novice and seasoned staffers. Encourage all library employees to observe youth services professionals in their most comfortable surroundings, whether it is presenting

a toddler program or answering a challenging question at the reference desk. Actively promote the value of children's literature to all library employees and the general community.

Jane Gardner Connor asserts that "enthusiasm for children's books can inspire other staff to start reading them, and, in any case, it will help them do a better job in serving children."⁵ Through leadership by example, our youth services staffers succeed in fostering necessary respect and greater understanding among library departments, ensuring that all employees will be equipped to serve our community's youngest patrons.

Continuous professional development opportunities are required for youth services departments' healthy growth. Through the implementation of a written plan, the ability for flexibility, and systemwide mentoring, employees are given the necessary training tools to navigate their own professional development. Educational opportunities are always readily available, and youth services managers should adopt Harriet's adventuresome spirit. We must not wait to begin these trainings for our employees and ourselves, but we should prioritize these continuous experiences as an integral benefit to our employees. Library

service for youth is not an isolated field; it takes training and continuing education of all library staffers to promote the library services youth deserve. ☺

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Noted Children's Authors to Highlight IBBY Regional Conference



Naomi Shihab Nye

Children's Books: Where Worlds Meet, the 8th International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) Regional Conference will be held October 2-4 at the Q Center in St. Charles, Illinois. International authors and illustrators, including Shaun Tan from Australia, Yohannes Gebregeorgis from Ethiopia, and Katherine Paterson and Naomi Shihab Nye from the United States, will present at the conference. Carmen Diana Dearden, editor and publisher of *Ediciones Ekaré* in Venezuela, will deliver the Dorothy Briley Lecture.

Stimulating and thought-provoking book discussions and small group sessions provide opportunities to network with concerned professionals and to think about issues related to the use of international literature to build intercultural understanding. Traveling exhibits from the International Youth Library (IYL), including the 2008 IBBY Honor Books and the IYL's Imaginary Library Original Art Exhibition, will be displayed.

For more information on the conference, visit www.usbby.org.

Going for Games

What Libraries, and Kids, Can Learn about Gaming

ALSC Children and Technology Committee

The second annual *Gaming, Learning, and Libraries Symposium* was held November 2–4, 2008, in the Chicago area. ALA TechSource sponsored the program in collaboration with ALSC and the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services (ALCTS), and the Library and Information Technology Association (LITA). This article briefly highlights a few of the presentations. A complete list of sessions and presenters is available at the ALA TechSource *Gaming, Learning, and Libraries Symposium* wiki, http://gaming.techsource.ala.org/index.php/Main_Page.

Play Is a Magic Circle

None of the things they are to learn, should ever be made a burthen to them, or impos'd on them as a task. Whatever is so propos'd, presently becomes irksome; the mind takes an aversion to it, though before it were a thing of delight or indifference. Let a child but be order'd to whip his top at a certain time every day, whether he has or has not a mind to it; let this be but requir'd of him as a duty, wherein he must spend so many hours morning and afternoon, and see whether he will not soon be weary of any play at this rate.¹

In the closing keynote of the second annual ALA TechSource *Gaming, Learning, and Libraries Symposium*, Jon-Paul Dyson quoted seventeenth-century British philosopher John Locke's belief that required play is no longer play.

The **ALSC Children and Technology Committee** includes chair Christopher Borawski, Lauren Anduri, Natalie Arthur, Amber Creger, Bradley Debrick, Madeline Walton-Hadlock, Kimberly Hurson, Allison Kaplan, Patty Saidenberg, and Teresa Walls.

Dyson is vice president for exhibit research and development and associate curator of electronic games at the Strong National Museum of Play in Rochester, New York. He discussed the power of play today and defined play as “fun, voluntary, its own reward, and taking place in a magic circle.” A “magic circle” separates the play world from the real world. Dyson listed the benefits of play as refreshing us, relaxing us, increasing our flexibility to life's challenges, promoting learning, sharpening us mentally and physically, as well as making us happier.

Games Produce Learning Engagement

While few would argue that play is important for young children, there often is a perceived disconnect between learning and the majority's view of game play in our lives. Marc Prensky, author of *Don't Bother Me Mom—I'm Learning*², stressed during the symposium's opening keynote, “People play games not because they are games but because they're the most engaging intellectual thing we have.” With digital games, many adults have a knee-jerk reaction, determining that a game is a waste of time, money, and brain cells without ever engaging with the game or seeking to have an open dialogue about gaming.

Prensky remarked, “If there's a concern about a book, we read it and talk about it. Movie? See it and talk about it. A game?” He implored librarians to gauge their own reactions, to remain open-minded, to discuss game play. Prensky encouraged librarians who are not game players to have gamers write synopses and reviews of games, to ask questions such as “Why do you like it?” and “Is there reason for concern about the content?”

Prensky recommended *Got Game: How the Gamer Generation Is Reshaping Business Forever* by John C. Beck and Mitchell Wade³, stating “Lots of people in their 20s and 30s attribute success

directly to game play.” He shared that Stephen Gillett, CIO of Starbucks and former senior director of engineering operations with Yahoo! Inc., attributes his success directly to his managing a three-hundred-person guild in an online world.

Premsky noted that “complex games produce learning engagement.” He defined complex games as being not trivial and lasting between eight to one hundred hours. He stressed that multiplayer role playing games, such as *World of Warcraft*, allow players to cooperate, collaborate, and work in teams, and that such game play promotes effective decision-making under stress. He emphasized that these complex games offer players the opportunity to make ethical and moral decisions, to apply new skills and information, to persist and solve problems, to think laterally and strategically, and to adapt to foreign environments. Games can be a bridge to solving real-life problems.

Three Presenters Look at the Younger Gamer

Amanda Lenhart is the lead author of the PEW/Internet Study of Teens, Video Games, and Civics. A link to the PDF file of this study is available at the Pew Research Center website, www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/263/report_display.asp. One aspect of the study showed that 54 percent of twelve to fourteen year-old respondents play digital games daily, and this group is most likely to use portable game devices. Lenhart noted that massively multiplayer online games (MMOGs) involve a quest and a goal, while virtual worlds are typically areas of free play. Two virtual worlds, Whyville (www.whyville.net) and Disney’s Club Penguin (www.clubpenguin.com), were mentioned by 13 percent of the twelve to fourteen year-olds interviewed for the study.

In his *Pokemon* Primer session, Eli Neiburger of the Ann Arbor (Mich.) District Library made the case for *Pokemon*, stating, “It is a complex system of knowledge to learn for fun.” He added that achieving level 100 repre-

sents “hours of toil.” He remarked that *Pokemon* is a positive moral example of being kind to the environment and to others as one improves oneself, one’s *Pokemon*, and the world. Each player has to organize and tag *Pokemon* to be adequately prepared when challenged to a game.

Keynote speaker Andrew S. Bub is a gamer and parent who reviews for the parent audience under the name “GamerDad.” The reviews are appropriate for librarians as well and are archived at the What They Play website (www.whattheyplay.com). Bub said that in most games “rash actions usually fail, so games can help some kids slow down and think.” He shared that a love of a game can also be a child’s motivator for reading. Growing tired of reading the text of one of his daughter’s games, he explained, “I told her, ‘I’m not going to read that to you anymore. If you want to play that game, you need to learn to read.’”

Standards for Learning and Gaming

Learning to read is among the most complex endeavors any of us has undertaken. It is the path we were expected and demanded to travel. Some children learn to read by what seems like osmosis. In other words, they are keen observers of their environments and by the age of two, three, or four have become fluent readers.

Others come from print-rich environments and understand that the squiggles and lines go together somehow, making meaning. Still, there are many children who need the building blocks of the process of learning to read set before them. That is where games really come into play. And play they are. As we all know, children’s play is children’s work. These beginning games include memory games, matching games, sequencing card games, bingo games, board games, phonetic awareness games, which can be in a visual or in an electronic format, and more.

In Patty Saidenberg’s presentation, “Hey! Wii Want to Do That Too: Gaming and the Elementary Learner,” she matched learning standards with games for the

Nintendo Wii system. Games based in literacy align with the International Reading Association’s (IRA) literacy standards, with state standards, and with the American Association of School Librarians’ (AASL) *Standards for the 21st Century Learner* (ALA, 2007). The IRA’s literacy standards can be accessed at the Read-Write-Think website (www.read-writethink.org/standards).

Some of the newest games are being developed for and played on the Wii system, which can support up to four players and offers the opportunity to move in all three dimensions. The Wii offers positive gaming experiences for various types of learners. (Note: Other platforms are Sony Playstation, Microsoft Xbox, other Nintendo platforms, PCs, and more.) Younger children can play early literacy games where pattern, shape, and sequencing are key elements. The children learn in a group while laughing together to a game that highlights core preliteracy skills.

As an example of a game for older learners, Saidenberg shared Nintendo’s *Endless Ocean*, a tool/game that aligns with AASL’s *Standards for the 21st Century Learner* in all four areas. An alignment with such standards demonstrates to parents the reasons to incorporate game playing in school curricula. Addressing state standards will go far in convincing local stakeholders.

Matching learning objectives of games to state learning standards makes the foundation for gaming in libraries even stronger. For example, *Endless Ocean* meets the New York State (NYS) learning standards in the divisions of math, science, and technology, and social studies. The New York State Standard 4 in science states, “Students will understand and apply scientific concepts, principles, and theories pertaining to the physical setting and living environment and recognize the historical development of ideas in science.”⁴ *Endless Ocean* also meets NYS Social Studies Standard 3, geography: “Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world in which we live—local, national, and global—including the distribution of people, places, and

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environment over the Earth's surface."⁵ The New York State Learning Standards are available at the New York State Education Department's website (www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/cores.htm).

Libraries: Get in the Game

In a time when information reaches us quickly and is offered to us in an assortment of electronic formats, those who are defined as Gen X, Gen Y, and soon to be Gen Z, view information in the same regard whether it is on paper or in an electronic/virtual format. To them, text is text. This fusion of literacy technologies is just one building block in the foundation of a thriving twenty-first-century learner.

In a world where technology is advancing at record-breaking speeds, we must learn from others in a social environment. The perfect social environment is the library. Games are entryways that introduce us to new technologies, incorporate various learning styles, and simultaneously increase intellectual curiosity and growth. "Games are the most engaging intellectual thing we have," Prensky pithily remarked in the symposium's keynote.

Games are fun to play, and we learn in the process. Card games, board games, string games, electronic games, virtual games—there are a variety of formats and game durations, and there is a game for anyone and everyone. To reap the rewards of games, games must be played, and the earlier the better. A child's brain development is assisted by play including games. First introduced in 1956 and well known among educators, Bloom's taxonomy effectively states the six stages of intellectual development and advancement as knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.⁶ Games often require one to use many areas of the cognitive domain.

Our society wants and demands greater thinkers, and the twenty-first-century learner must have a set of skills that gives the opportunity for success at every turn. How do we get there from here? The most basic and simple answering: games.

Games are central to learning, and we can easily put them in our libraries. Our libraries are the most social and intellectual edifices in our society. As we all know, library use goes up during tough economic times. This is our opportunity, our call to arms to develop a national gaming program for libraries.

We must get games into libraries and invite our patrons to play them. The Gaming, Learning, and Libraries Symposium demonstrated the importance of that in each of its sessions. Take the opportunity to bring games into your library, play them and judge for yourself the success. ☺

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Foote Resigns

After three years of dedicated service to ALSC, Diane Foote resigned from her position as Executive Director as of April 1. During her time with ALSC, Foote worked on budget, policy, and board issues, and managed the overall administration of the association with the intent to streamline ALSC operations and support the ALSC board in advancing the strategic plan. Through her leadership, ALSC was able to strengthen its responsiveness to member needs and desires and build on the resources it provides to the field of library service to children.

Foote guided and oversaw positive growth in major initiatives, including El día de los niños/El día de los libros (Children's Day/Book Day), and the Kids! @ your library® Campaign. During her tenure, ALSC grew by nearly 6 percent, from 4,013 members to 4,247. ALSC member communications improved with the launch of the ALSC Blog and Wiki, the use of other 2.0 tools, the launch of Web-based continuing education, and the hiring of a membership specialist. Other achievements included the first Odyssey Awards, administered jointly with YALSA; the presentation of the Belpré Awards, administered jointly with REFORMA, annually rather than every other year; and the new Candlewick Light the Way grant for exemplary library service to underserved populations.

Foote strove to forge positive relationships with her colleagues within ALA, and with many collaborative partners

including REFORMA, the Children's Book Council, and the Association of American Publishers. She fostered a collegial, communicative, and dynamic atmosphere in the ALSC office. We wish her great success in all her future endeavors.

Board Major Actions

Electronic Actions

The following actions were voted on by the ALSC board on the ALSCBOARD electronic discussion list.

VOTED, to approve a new Policy for Service on the Odyssey Award Committee, drafted jointly by ALSC and YALSA. (The YALSA Board has also approved this policy.) (November 2008)

VOTED, to include on the spring 2009 ballot a bylaw change to limit frequency of service on the Newbery, Caldecott, Sibert, and Notable Books Committees to not more than once in four years; not to apply to chair positions. (February 2009)

VOTED, to approve the Presidential nomination of Starr LaTronica to assume the remainder of the Board term vacated by Thom Barthelmess's election as ALSC vice-president. (February 2009)

VOTED, to co-sponsor in name only the Library Leadership and Management Association's (LLAMA) 2009 Annual Conference program, "Partnering with Service Organizations," Saturday, July 11, 3:30–5:30 p.m. (February 2009)

VOTED, that the membership statement for the Oral History Committee be amended to read: "Chair, plus 8, two of whom may function virtually and are not required to attend conferences." (March 2009)

Midwinter Meeting 2009 Actions

VOTED, to sunset the International Relations Committee, Research and Development Committee, and Publications Committee.

VOTED, to assign the duties of the Bechtel Committee to the National Planning of Special Collections Committee and to sunset the Bechtel Fellowship Committee.

VOTED, to combine the ALSC/BWI, Hayes, and Penguin Young Readers Group Award Committees into one virtual committee, and to add the Bookapalooza Award to their award selection duties.

VOTED, to combine the Carnegie Award Selection and Notable Children's Videos Committees.

VOTED, to accept the Carole D. Fiore ALSC Leadership Fund Endowment agreement presented by Carole D. Fiore, as amended.

VOTED, to approve a revision of the Notable Children's Books Committee's function statement, to read: "To select, annotate and present for annual publication a list of notable children's books published during the preceding year within the terms, definitions, and criteria governing the list."

VOTED, to provide a letter from ALSC in support of an IMLS grant proposal, "Project VIEWS: Valuable Initiatives in Early Learning that Work Successfully" per the request of Dr. Eliza Dresang.

VOTED, to endorse an ALA Council resolution in support of reauthorization of LSTA.

VOTED, to accept updates to the Notable Children's Books Committee Manual that were recommended by the Task Force to Revise the Notable Children's Books Manual.

VOTED, to: deny request for cosponsorship in name only of the ASCLA program, "Multiple Intelligences @ your library"; cosponsor in name only, the LHRT program, "Research Forum 2009: Library Materials and Services for Children and Young Adults"; and cosponsor in name only the PLA program, "Where You Can Go with Every Child Ready to Read."

VOTED, to direct the Organization and Bylaws Committee to craft a proposed bylaw change to state that no individual may serve on the Caldecott Award Selection, Newbery Award Selection, Sibert Award Selection, and Notable Children's Books Committees more often than once every four years.

VOTED, to accept the consent agenda.

VOTED, to accept the FY 2010 proposed budget as presented by the Budget Committee.

Barthelmess Elected VP

Thom Barthelmess, lecturer and curator of the new Butler Children's Literature Center at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Dominican University, River Forest, Ill., has been elected vice-president/president-elect of ALSC. The vice presidency became vacant in late January with the sudden death of Kate McClelland, who had been elected to the position last spring. ALSC bylaws call for a vacancy in the office of vice-president to be filled by a vote of the board of directors, electing from their membership someone in his second or third year of service. Barthelmess assumes the

office of vice-president/president-elect immediately and will assume the ALSC presidency at the close of ALA's Annual Conference in July 2009 in Chicago.

Barthelmess is in his third year of ALSC board service and has also served on the ALSC Membership Committee, the Newbery Award Selection Committee, and the Notable Children's Recordings Committee (including a term as chair), among other ALA activities. He will be only the third male to serve as ALSC president, following Spencer Shaw in 1975-76 and Steven Herb in 1996-97.

Barthelmess earned his M.L.S. from the University of Pittsburgh and his B.A. from Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa. He has previously served as youth services manager, Austin (Tex.) Public Library, and youth services coordinator and youth services supervisor at Spokane (Wash.) County Library District.

Summer Online Courses

School isn't out for summer this year! Participate in an ALSC online education course beginning July 20. Courses offered include "Reading Instruction and Children's Books," "The Newbery Medal: Past, Present, and Future," and "Sharing Poetry with Children."

Courses will be taught asynchronously using Moodle, an online learning community. Discounted rates are available for ALSC and ALA members. Course descriptions and more information are at www.ala.org/alscevents. For more information, contact Aimee Strittmatter: astrittmatter@ala.org.

Gaiman, Krommes Win Newbery, Caldecott

Neil Gaiman, author of *The Graveyard Book* (HarperCollins), and Beth Krommes, illustrator of *The House in the Night* (Houghton Mifflin), are the 2009 winners of the John Newbery and Randolph Caldecott Medals, respectively.

In *The Graveyard Book*—a delicious mix of murder, fantasy, humor, and human

Institute Thank-Yous

The 2008 ALSC National Institute in Salt Lake City, Utah, was a great success. We extend our sincere thanks to the Planning Task Force for making everyone's time in Salt Lake enjoyable and beneficial. Task force members were Chair Gene Nelson, director, Provo City (Utah) Library; Carla Morris, children's services manager, Provo City (Utah) Library; Nancy L. Peterson, associate professor, Utah Valley University; Deanna Romriell, assistant manager, Children's Department, Salt Lake City Public Library; and Susan Spicer, youth services librarian, Kearns Branch, Salt Lake County Library System.

ALSC also offers grateful thanks to the following organizations and institutions for their support of the institute:

Arbonne International
 Capstone Publishing and Stone Arch Books
 Children's Plus
 Dowdle Folkart Puzzles
 EBSCO
 First Second
 Emotes Publishing
 Friends of ALSC
 Guildcraft Arts & Crafts
 Hobble Creek Candles
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longing—the tale of Nobody Owens is told in magical, haunting prose. A child marked for death by an ancient league of assassins escapes into an abandoned graveyard, where he is reared and protected by its spirit denizens.

In *The House in the Night*, written by Susan Marie Swanson, richly detailed black-and-white scratchboard illustrations expand the timeless bedtime verse, offering reassurance to young children that there is always light in the darkness. Krommes' elegant line, illuminated with touches of golden watercolor, evoke the warmth and comfort of home and family, as well as the joys of exploring the wider world.

Four Newbery Honor Books were named: *The Underneath* (Atheneum) by Kathi Appelt, illustrated by David Small; *The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom* (Holt) by Margarita Engle; *Savvy* (Dial) by Ingrid Law; and *After Tupac & D Foster* (Putnam) by Jacqueline Woodson.

Three Caldecott Honor Books were named: *A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever* (Harcourt), written and illustrated by Marla Frazee; *How I Learned Geography* (Farrar), written and illustrated by Uri Shulevitz; and *A River of Words: The Story of William Carlos Williams* (Eerdmans), illustrated by Melissa Sweet, written by Jen Bryant.

Members of the 2009 Newbery Medal Selection Committee are chair Rose V. Treviño, Houston Public Library; Rose Brock, Coppell (Tex.) Middle School West; Floyd C. Dickman, Ostrander, Ohio; Caitlin Dixon, Ketchikan (Alaska) School District; Nick Glass, TeachingBooks.net, Madison, Wis.; Eric Gómez, Broward County Library, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; Beth Jackson, Westside School Library, Athens, Tenn.; Betsy Bryan Miguez, University of Louisiana, Lafayette, La.; Ellen Hunter Ruffin, de Grummond Children's Literature Collection, Hattiesburg, Miss.; Jennifer S. Smith, Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights; Amanda Moss Struckmeyer, Middleton (Wis.) Public Library; Julie Tomlianovich, South Central Kansas Library System, South Hutchinson; Michael O. Tunnell, Brigham Young

Batchelder Goes to Arthur A. Levine

Arthur A. Levine Books, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., is the winner of the 2009 Mildred L. Batchelder Award for the most outstanding children's book originally published in a language other than English in a country other than the United States, and subsequently translated into English for publication in the United States for *Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit*.

Originally published in Japanese in 1996 as *Seirei no Moribito*, the book was written by Nahoko Uehashi and translated by Cathy Hirano. The book tells the story of Balsa, a skilled female warrior, who accepts the task of protecting a young prince from otherworldly demons and his father's assassins. Prince Chagum is the Moribito, the guardian of the sacred spirit. If Balsa is unsuccessful in protecting the prince, the country will suffer years of devastating drought so together they must find in each other the source of strength they need to prevail. This sophisticated and complex Japanese epic is filled with political intrigue, mystery, and danger.

Two Batchelder Honor Books also were selected: *Garmann's Summer* (Eerdmans Books for Young Readers), written and illustrated by Stian Hole, originally published in Norwegian as *Garmanns sommer*, and translated by Don Bartlett; and *Tiger Moon* (Amulet Books, an imprint of Harry N. Abrams, Inc.), written by Antonia Michaelis, originally published in German as *Tiger Mund*, and translated by Anthea Bell.

Members of the 2009 Batchelder Award Committee are: Chair Sandra Imdieke, Northern Michigan University, Marquette, Mich.; Peg Cizek, Northbrook (Ill.) Public Library; Andrea Erickson, Prince George's County Memorial Library System, Laurel, Md.; Elizabeth Ahern Sahagian, Fairfield (Conn.) Public Library; and Sue Sherif, Alaska State Library, Anchorage.

University, Provo, Utah; Linda Ward-Callaghan, Joliet (Ill.) Public Library; and Kathryn Whitacre, Free Library of Philadelphia.

Members of the 2009 Caldecott Medal Selection Committee are chair Nell Colburn, Multnomah County Library, Portland, Ore.; Lynn Piper Carpenter, Birmingham (Ala.) Public Library; Rosanne Cerny, Queens Library, Jamaica, N.Y.; Georgene DeFilippo, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh; Jennifer Duffy, Kingsgate Library, Kirkland, Wash.; Susan Erickson, San Bernardino (Calif.) County Library; Suzanne Gibbs, Lexington Park (Md.) Library; B. Allison Gray, Goleta (Calif.) Branch Library; Jan Johnson, Princeton (N.J.) Public Library; Naomi Morse, Silver Spring, Md.; Jamie Campbell Naidoo, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa; Richie Partington, San Jose State University, Sebastopol, Calif.; Rachel Payne, Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library; Ed Spicer, Michigan Reading

Journal, Allegan; and Terrence Young, West Jefferson High School, Harvey, La.

Morales, Engle Win Belpré

Yuyi Morales, illustrator of *Just in Case*, (Neal Porter) and Margarita Engle, author of *The Surrender Tree*, (Holt) are the 2009 winners of the Pura Belpré Illustrator Award and Author Award, respectively.

In *Just in Case*, Morales' vibrant, shimmering jewel-tone colors masterfully capture the exuberant and playful story of Señor Calavera's quest to find the perfect birthday gift for Grandma Beetle. Part ghost story, part trickster tale, the book features motifs from Mexican culture that represent each letter of the Spanish alphabet. Morales infuses humor with a bold and rich palette of color in this delightful, imaginative story to whimsically bring this intergenerational story to life.

In *The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom*, Engle's hauntingly beautiful free verse prose breathes life into this finely crafted story that illuminates Cuba's fight for independence from Spain in the 1800's. Engle intricately weaves a harrowing, heart-wrenching story of enslavement, survival, determination, and heroism.

Three Honor Books for illustration were named: *Papá and Me* (Rayo), illustrated by Rudy Gutierrez, written by Arthur Dorros; *The Storyteller's Candle/La velita de los cuentos* (Children's Book Press), illustrated by Lulu Delacre and written by Lucía González; and *What Can You Do With a Rebozo?* (Tricycle Press) illustrated by Amy Córdova and written by Carmen Tafolla.

Three Honor Books for narration were named: *Just in Case*, by Yuyi Morales and published by Neal Porter/Roaring Brook Press; *Reaching Out*, by Francisco Jiménez and published by Houghton Mifflin; and *The Storyteller's Candle/La velita de los cuentos*, written by Lucía González.

Members of the 2009 Belpré Committee are chair Claudette McLinn, Los Angeles Unified School District; Loretta Dowell, San Francisco Public Library; Elva Garza, Austin (Tex.) Public Library; Oralía Garza de Cortes, Latino children's literature consultant, Pasadena, Calif.; Debra Gold, Cuyahoga County Public Library, Parma Heights, Ohio; Charmette Kuhn-Kendrick, Chattahoochee Valley Regional Library System, Columbus, Ga.; and Yolanda Valentin, Birmingham (Ala.) Public Library.

Carnegie Honors "March On"

Paul R. Gagne and Melissa Reilly of Weston Woods Studios, producers of *March On! The Day My Brother Martin Changed the World*, are the 2009 recipients of the Andrew Carnegie Medal for excellence in children's video.

Dr. Christine King Farris describes her brother Martin's preparation for and delivery of the monumental "I Have a Dream" speech in the greater context of the historic August 23, 1963 March on

Washington. Through the intertwining of archival photographs, music, and sound with London Ladd's art from the book, viewers become a part of the important event. Farris' words are beautifully interpreted in Lynn Whitfield's powerful narration. Michael Bacon's score dramatically weaves together original music with the freedom songs heard that day.

Members of the 2009 Carnegie Medal Committee are chair Margaret Tice, New York Public Library; Nancy Baumann, Indian Paintbrush Elementary School, Laramie, Wyo.; Catherine Beyers, Southern Bluffs Elementary School, LaCrosse, Wis.; Sherry Eskin, Honan-Allston Branch of the Boston Public Library; Carol Goldman, Queens Library, Jamaica, N.Y.; Maeve Visser Knoth, San Mateo County Library, San Mateo, Calif.; Charlene McKenzie, Rondo Community Outreach Library—St. Paul Public Library; Saint Paul, Minn.; Linda T. Parsons, Ohio

State University, Marion, Ohio; and Bina Williams, Bridgeport (Conn.) Public Library.

Geisel Goes to Willems

Author and illustrator Mo Willems is the 2009 recipient of the Theodor Seuss Geisel Award for *Are You Ready to Play Outside?* (Hyperion).

Willems has created a masterpiece for beginning readers that is simply told through the use of dialogue, which melds perfectly with uncluttered pink and grey cartoon-style illustrations. Aside from the friendship theme that appears throughout Willems' work, he continues to create astonishing emotional depth using the simplest of facial expressions on his characters. *Are You Ready to Play Outside?* tracks Piggie's changing feelings about rainy weather and Gerald's heroic

Recorded Books Wins Odyssey

Recorded Books, producer of the audiobook, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, has won the second annual Odyssey Award for excellence in audiobook production.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, was written and narrated by Sherman Alexie. With equal doses of humor and pathos, Alexie's lilting narration places listeners squarely in fourteen year-old Spokane Indian Arnold Spirit's shoes as he expands his world beyond the reservation to attend a predominantly white high school. Alexie's pitch-perfect voicing and dead-on pacing capture Arnold's struggles.

Five Odyssey Award Honor titles were selected: *Curse of the Blue Tattoo: Being an Account of the Misadventures of Jacky Faber*, *Midshipman and Fine Lady*, written by L. A. Meyer, narrated by Katherine Kellgren, and produced by Listen & Live Audio; *Elijah of Buxton*, written by Christopher Paul Curtis, narrated by Mirron Willis, and produced by Listening Library/Random House Audio; *I'm Dirty!* written by Kate and Jim McMullan, narrated by Steve Buscemi, and produced by Weston Woods Studios/Scholastic; *Martina the Beautiful Cockroach: A Cuban Folktale*, written and narrated by Carmen Agra Deedy and produced by Peachtree Publishers; and *Nation*, written by Terry Pratchett, narrated by Stephen Briggs, and produced by Harper Children's Audio/HarperCollins.

Members of the 2009 Award Committee are Chair Pam Spencer Holley, Hallwood, Va.; Ellen Fader, Multnomah County Library, Portland, Ore.; Juanita Foster, Hennepin County Library, Crystal, Minn.; Joan Schroeder Kindig, James Madison University, Charlottesville, Va.; Jennifer Michelle Lawson, San Diego County Library; Angela Leeper, Wake Forest, N.C.; Jamie Mayo, Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library; Louise Sherman, Leonia, N.J.; Cheryl Karp Ward, Broad Brook, Conn.; and *Booklist* consultant Sue Ellen Beauregard, Chicago.

efforts to help her grapple with her disappointments in a satisfying story arc.

Four Geisel Honor Books were named: *Chicken said, "Cluck!"* (HarperCollins) by Judyann Ackerman Grant, illustrated by Sue Truesdell; *One Boy* (Neal Porter), written and illustrated by Laura Vaccaro Seeger; *Stinky* (Raw Junior) written and illustrated by Eleanor Davis; and *Wolfsnail: A Backyard Predator* (Boyd Mills) by Sarah C. Campbell, photographs by Sarah C. Campbell and Richard P. Campbell.

The members of the 2009 Geisel Award Committee are chair Joan Atkinson, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa; Krista Britton, Old Bridge Elementary School, Woodbridge, Va.; Heather Daugherty, Long Beach (Calif.) Public Library; Ada Kent, Ohio School for the Deaf, Columbus; Megan Lambert, The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, Amherst, Mass.; Susan Dove Lempke, Niles (Ill.) Public Library District; and Maryann Owen, Racine (Wis.) Public Library.

Nelson Selected for Sibert

Kadir Nelson, author and illustrator of *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*, (Disney–Jump at the Sun) was named the winner of the 2009 Robert F. Sibert Medal for the most distinguished informational book for children published in 2008.

Nelson scores a homerun with this fascinating and well-documented history of Negro League Baseball told in the voice of an Everyman-type narrator. Dignified, riveting full-page illustrations capture the spirit of these larger-than-life men who loved the game despite the prejudice they faced. Nelson's stunning oil paintings, based on archival photographs, illustrate grace, pride, and discipline far beyond what words alone might convey.

Two Sibert Honor Books were named: *Bodies from the Ice: Melting Glaciers and the Recovery of the Past* (Houghton Mifflin), written by James M. Deem; and *What to Do about Alice?: How Alice Roosevelt Broke the Rules, Charmed the World, and Drove Her Father Teddy*

Crazy! (Scholastic Press), written by Barbara Kerley, illustrated by Edwin Fotheringham.

Members of the 2009 Sibert Medal Committee are chair Carol K. Phillips, East Brunswick (N.J.) Public Library; Julie Bartel, Salt Lake City, Utah; Catharine Bomhold, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg; Linda M. Pavonetti, Oakland University, Rochester, Mich.; Vicki Stanfield, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, N.C.; John Warren Stewig, Carthage College, Kenosha, Wis.; Sylvia Vardell, Texas Woman's University, Denton; and Jamie Watson, Harford County Public Library, Belcamp, Md.

Horning Named 2010 Arbuthnot Lecturer

Kathleen T. Horning, director of the University of Wisconsin–Madison's Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC), will deliver the 2010 May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture.

Three threads clearly run through Horning's long and distinguished career: freedom to read and open access to information for young people; the continued struggle to produce a body of authentically multicultural literature for young people in the United States; and the need to provide clear practical training for both new and experienced librarians, especially with regard to evaluating (and setting high standards for) literature for young people.

As director of the CCBC, Horning coordinates a noncirculating examination, study, and research library for books, ideas, and expertise in the field of children's and young adult literature. In addition to her work with CCBC, Horning is a reviewer, lecturer, and author of books on evaluating and understanding youth literature. She is the author of *From Cover to Cover: Evaluating and Reviewing Children's Books*, which *School Library Journal* called "an excellent guide to analyzing books."

Members of the 2010 Arbuthnot Honor Lecture Committee are chair Kristi

Jemtegaard, Arlington (Va.) Public Library; Marian Creamer, Children's Literature Alive, Portland, Ore.; Peter Howard, Louisville (Ky.) Free Public Library; Joyce Laiosa, Voorheesville (N.Y.) Public Library; and Lauren Liang, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

Botham Honored with DSA

Jane Botham is the 2009 recipient of the Distinguished Service Award (DSA). This prestigious award honors an individual who has made significant contributions to library service to children and ALSC.

Botham began her library career when she received her master's in library science from the University of Pittsburgh's School of Library and Information Science. She then went on to work at the New York Public Library, the San Francisco Public Library, the New York State Library, and the Milwaukee Public Library, which was the last library position she held before retiring in 1998.

Besides her work in libraries, Botham also spent five years as the marketing director at Bradbury Press, where she frequently defended authors Judy Blume and Paula Fox for their controversial works, *Forever* and *The Slave Dancer*. Her fight against censorship of these works cleared the way for them to become national bestsellers and milestones in children's literature. After having worked in publishing, Botham was able to share with library colleagues a valuable understanding of the publishing industry and its relationship to children's librarianship.

An ALSC member since 1957, Botham has served on numerous ALSC and ALA committees. She served as the ALSC president during a time of transition and helped to strengthen the organization with her strong leadership skills. In her retirement, Botham continues to act as a mentor and friend to younger librarians.

The 2009 DSA Committee includes: Tish Wilson, chair, Dayton (Ohio) Metro Library; Diana M. Berry, Briarlake Elementary School, Decatur, Ga.; Corinne Camarata, Port Washington (N.Y.) Public Library; Dorothy J. Evans, Chicago; Angus

Killick, Kingfisher Publishing, New York, New York.

Madison, Ohio PL Wins BWI

ALSC awarded Madison (Ohio) Public Library with the 2009 ALSC/BWI Summer Reading Program Grant. The \$3,000 grant, donated by Book Wholesalers, Inc. (BWI), provides financial assistance to a public library for developing outstanding summer reading programs for children.

Madison Public Library's 2009 summer reading program theme, "Be Creative @ your library," introduces preschool children to music and motion activities while the school-aged children concentrate on art. During each week of this six-week program, children focus on a different artistic form, such as patterns and percussion for the preschoolers and textiles and sculpture for the school-aged children.

"This summer's theme is all about stretching children's imaginations. This is a program of participation, not observation," said Melanie Lyttle, Madison librarian. "By supplying children with gobs of glue and plenty of things that make loud noises, we are letting each child express himself his own way. The summer's creativity will last beyond the library time."

Members of the 2009 ALSC/BWI Grant Committee include Marilyn Zielinski, chair, Toledo-Lucas (Ohio) Public Library; Tony Carmack, Ashburn Library, Loudoun County (Va.) Public Library; Holly Jin, Skokie (Ill.) Public Library; Laura Lutz, Queens (N.Y.) Library; April Mazza, Wayland (Mass.) Public Library; Linda Pavonetti, Oakland University, Dept. of Reading and Language Arts, Lake Orion, Mich.; Victor Schill, Harris County (Tex.) Public Library; Margie Stern, Delaware County (Pa.) Library System; and Ruth Toor, The School Librarian's Workshop, Basking Ridge, N.J.

Bechtel Winner Named

ALSC awarded the 2009 Louise Seaman Bechtel Fellowship to library media specialist Linda Martin, Sugar Hill

Elementary School, Gainesville, Ga. The fellowship, which provides a \$4,000 stipend, is designed to allow a qualified children's librarian to spend a month or more reading and studying at the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature, part of the George A. Smathers Libraries at the University of Florida, Gainesville.

While at the Baldwin Library, Martin will pursue her study, "Storytelling in the Content Areas." Her ultimate goal is to use story as a framework for learning in all subjects by finding stories from the past that can be adapted for the modern day classroom. Upon returning to her school, Martin plans to teach storytelling to her students and to teachers in her school district so that they can learn techniques of sharing stories orally too.

Members of the 2009 Bechtel Fellowship Committee include Nancy Johnson, chair, Western Washington University,

Bellingham, Wash.; Candace Deisley, Children's Literature Connection, Albany, N.Y.; Carol A. Doll, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Va.; Mary Pruitt, Lewisville, Tex.; and Grace Ruth, San Francisco.

Bookapalooza Benefits Three Libraries

Fletcher (Okla.) Public School Library, Laguna (N.M.) Public Library, and Henry Whittemore Elementary School Library in Waltham, Mass., were selected to receive a collection of children's materials. The Bookapalooza collections consist of books, videos, audiobooks, and recordings produced in 2008 and submitted by children's trade publishers to the 2009 ALSC award and media evaluation committees for consideration.

The Fletcher Public School library council, consisting of students in the seventh

Bryan Named Wilder Winner

Ashley Bryan is the winner of the 2009 Laura Ingalls Wilder Award honoring an author or illustrator, published in the United States, whose books have made a substantial and lasting contribution to literature for children.

For forty years and nearly as many books, Ashley Bryan has filled children's literature with the beats of story, the echoes of poetry, the transcendence of African-American spirituals, the beauty of art, and the satisfaction of a tale well-told. Generations of readers have seen themselves in the pages of Bryan's books. He has inspired today's children's book writers and illustrators to tell, paint, sing, and weave their own stories for generations to come.

Born in 1923 in New York City, Bryan has been painting since childhood. His education, interrupted by Army service in World War II, includes a degree from Columbia University. A painter, reteller, illustrator of children's books, and Professor Emeritus at Dartmouth College, Bryan lives and works on Little Cranberry Island in Maine. His numerous works include *Dancing Granny*, *Beat the Story-Drum*, *Pum-Pum*, and *Beautiful Blackbird*.

Dynamic use of line marks Bryan's varied art forms, which include chalk sketches, full-color paintings, stylized drawings, and cut-paper collages. Grounded in the stories, poetry, and songs of the common man—past and present—Bryan's work celebrates the individual life, rejoices in cultural specificity, and embraces a shared humanity.

Members of the 2009 Wilder Award Committee are chair Cathryn Mercier, Simmons College, Boston; Barbara Elleman, South Hadley, Mass.; Therese Bigelow, Chesapeake (Va.) Public Library; Carla Kozak, San Francisco Public Library; and Amanda Williams, Austin (Tex.) Public Library.

through eleventh grades, will use part of the collection to conduct a family night introducing the collection to parents as well as for booktalks and during reading buddy times. The collection also will be used to increase and enhance the existing collection in the soon-to-be-constructed central library.

Laguna Public Library is one of eighteen Native American tribal libraries in New Mexico. Library director Janice Kowemy said, "Programs created from the acquired collection will provide children with activities to engage in when school is out for yearly breaks. The library should be a place for positive social culture, a place of ideals for youth and the marvel of self-identity. It is important to have a place where youth are able to learn about the wonders of the outside world, obtain information, and learn where they come from."

"Bookapalooza materials will allow the Whittemore School Library to launch a new program called Read Out Loud! Pass It On! to draw parents and their children—together—into the school library so that they can choose books to read aloud at home. By involving parents in the program, we are hopeful of raising the reading skills and reading enjoyment of students as well as their parents," stated Mary Kenslea, Whittemore Elementary library teacher.

Information on how to apply for the 2010 Bookapalooza program is available at www.ala.org/alscawards—click on "Professional Awards."

Redwood Library Wins Hayes

ALSC awarded the 2009 Maureen Hayes Award to the Fair Oaks Branch of the Redwood City (Calif.) Library, partnered with Garfield Elementary Charter School. The award, sponsored by Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing, is designed to provide up to \$4,000 to an ALSC member library to fund a visit from an author/illustrator who will speak to children who have not had the opportunity to hear a nationally known author/illustrator.

The Redwood City Library, partnered with Garfield Elementary, will host a

visit from award-winning author Pam Muñoz Ryan, whose books include: *One Hundred Is Family*, *Mice and Beans*, *Riding Freedom*, and *Esperanza Rising*. The student body at Garfield School is 94 percent Latino, and, in 2007, 78 percent of the students were classified as English language learners. Ryan's books portray and honor the Latino cultural experience, as well as being bilingual; the students of Garfield Elementary relate to Ryan's work.

The primary goal at Garfield School this year is to improve the reading and language arts scores of students, especially those who are English language learners. To help them achieve their goals, the Fair Oaks Branch Library supports the community by providing literacy tutoring for at-risk students and their parents. A visit from Ryan supports the literacy work that both the school and the library have done by showing children a specific reason to read, having them think about what they're reading, getting them creatively involved in literature, and engaging their families throughout the literacy process.

Members of the 2009 Hayes Award Committee include Linda Ernst, chair, King County (Wash.) Library System; Stacy Dillon, LREI, New York; Richard M. Kerper, Millersville (Pa.) University; Kate Houston Mitchoff, Multnomah County (Ore.) Library; Mary Pruitt, Denton (Tex.) Independent School District; and Michelle Fadlalla, Simon and Schuster, N.Y.

Four Penguin Winners Named

ALSC has awarded four children's librarians with the 2009 Penguin Young Readers Group (PYRG) Award, which consists of a \$600 grant, sponsored by PYRG, for winners to attend their first ALA Annual Conference.

Cheryl Lee from the Palo Alto (Calif.) City Library; Katherine T. McCabe from the Briarcliff Middle School in Briarcliff Manor, N.Y.; Heather Karrick Perkinson from Falmouth (Maine) Public Schools; and Sarah Polace from the Cuyahoga (Ohio) County Public Library, Parma-South Branch, are the four winning librarians.

Members of the 2009 Penguin Award Committee include Beth Blankley, chair, Alvin Sherman Library, Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; Lynn Piper Carpenter, Birmingham (Ala.) Public Library; Peter Howard, Louisville (Ky.) Free Public Library; and Tracy-Lyn Van Dyne, Connetquot Public Library, Bohemia, N.Y.

Notable Children's Books

Younger Readers

Becker, Bonny. *A Visitor for Bear*. Illus. by Kady MacDonald Denton. Candlewick.

Bee, William. *Beware of the Frog*. Illus. by the author. Candlewick.

Campbell, Sarah C. *Wolfsnail: A Backyard Predator*. Photos by Sarah C. and Richard P. Campbell. Boyds Mills.

Davis, Eleanor. *Stinky*. Illus. by the author. RAW Junior/TOON.

Dorros, Arthur. *Papá and Me*. Illus. by Rudy Gutierrez. Rayo.

Fleming, Denise. *Buster Goes to Cowboy Camp*. Illus. by the author. Holt.

Frazer, Marla. *A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever*. Illus. by the author. Harcourt.

George, Jean Craighead. *Goose and Duck*. Illus. by Priscilla Lamont. HarperCollins/Laura Geringer.

Graham, Bob. *How to Heal a Broken Wing*. Illus. by the author. Candlewick.

Grant, Judyann Ackerman. *Chicken Said, "Cluck!"* Illus. by Sue Truesdell. HarperCollins.

Harris, Robie H. *Maybe a Bear Ate It!* Illus. by Michael Emberley. Orchard Books.

Henkes, Kevin. *Old Bear*. Illus. by the author. HarperCollins/Greenwillow.

Hills, Tad. *What's Up, Duck? A Book of Opposites*. Illus. by the author. Random House/Schwartz & Wade.

Hole, Stian. *Garmann's Summer*. Illus.

by the author. Tr. by Don Bartlett. Eerdmans.

Kohara, Kazuno. *Ghosts in the House!* Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook.

McDonald, Megan. *The Hinky Pink*. Illus. by Brian Floca. Atheneum/Richard Jackson.

Morales, Yuyi. *Just in Case: A Trickster Tale and Spanish Alphabet Book*. Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter.

Seeger, Laura Vaccaro. *One Boy*. Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter.

Swanson, Susan Marie. *The House in the Night*. Illus. by Beth Krommes. Houghton Mifflin.

Tafolla, Carmen. *What Can You Do with a Rebozo?* Illus. by Amy Córdova. Tricycle Press/Ten Speed Press.

Weatherford, Carole Boston. *Before John Was a Jazz Giant: A Song of John Coltrane*. Illus. by Sean Qualls. Holt.

Willems, Mo. *Are You Ready to Play Outside?* Illus. by the author. Hyperion.

Middle Readers

Appelt, Kathi. *The Underneath*. Illus. by David Small. Atheneum.

Bishop, Nic. *Frogs*. Photos by the author. Scholastic Nonfiction.

Broach, Elise. *Masterpiece*. Illus. by Kelly Murphy. Holt/Christy Ottaviano.

Brown, Don. *All Stations! Distress! April 15, 1912, the Day the Titanic Sank*. Illus. by the author. FlashPoint/Roaring Brook.

Bryant, Jen. *A River of Words: The Story of William Carlos Williams*. Illus. by Melissa Sweet. Eerdmans.

Dowd, Siobhan. *The London Eye Mystery*. Random House/David Fickling.

Elliott, Zetta. *Bird*. Illus. by Shadra Strickland. Lee & Low.

Erdrich, Louise. *The Porcupine Year*. HarperCollins.

2009 Notable Children's Recordings

The 39 Clues: The Maze of Bones. Scholastic AudioBooks.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian. Recorded Books.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. Listening Library.

Beethoven's Wig 4: Dance Along Symphonies. Rounder Records.

Brooklyn Bridge. Macmillan Audio.

Celia Cruz: Queen of Salsa. Live Oak.

Clementine's Letter. Recorded Books.

Curse of the Blue Tattoo: Being an Account of the Misadventures of Jacky Faber, Midshipman and Fine Lady. Listen & Live Audio.

The Dead and the Gone. Listening Library.

Elijah of Buxton. Listening Library.

Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a Medieval Village. Recorded Books.

Grandfather's Journey. Weston Woods Studios.

The Graveyard Book. Recorded Books.

Gregor and the Code of Claw. Listening Library.

Hawaiian Playground. Putumayo Kids.

I'm Dirty! Weston Woods Studios.

Martina the Beautiful Cockroach: A Cuban Folktale. Peachtree Publishers.

Miss Spitfire. Recorded Books.

The Possibilities of Sainthood. Brilliance Audio.

Red Moon at Sharpsburg. Recorded Books.

Shooting the Moon. Recorded Books.

Skybreaker. Full Cast Audio.

The True Story of the Three Little Pigs. Weston Woods Studios.

For an annotated list of the above recordings, including recommended grade levels, visit the ALSC website (www.ala.org/alsc) click on "Awards & Grants" and "Children's Notable Lists."

Members of the 2009 Notable Children's Recordings Committee are: Jane Claes, chair, University of Houston Clear Lake, Houston, Tex.; Colette Drouillard, College of Information, Florida State University, Tallahassee; Kathy Kirchoefer, Prince George's County Memorial Library System, New Carrollton, Md.; Karen M. Perry, Wiley Middle School, Winston-Salem, N.C.; Linda L. Plevak, Northeast Lake View College, Universal City, Tex. Mary Puleo, Everett (Mass.) Libraries; Linda Zeilstra Sawyer, Skokie (Ill.) Public Library; Kathryn Shepler, Aurora School, Oakland, Calif.; and Janet Weber, Tigard (Ore.) Public Library.

Fern, Tracey E. *Buffalo Music*. Illus. by Lauren Castillo. Clarion.

Gaiman, Neil. *The Graveyard Book*. Illus. by Dave McKean. HarperCollins.

González, Lucía. *The Storyteller's Candle/ La velita de los cuentos*. Illus. by Lulu Delacre. Children's Book Press.

Greenberg, Jan and Sandra Jordan. *Christo and Jeanne-Claude: Through the Gates and Beyond*. Illus. with photographs. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter.

Hale, Shannon and Dean Hale. *Rapunzel's Revenge*. Illus. by Nathan Hale. Bloomsbury.

Hopkinson, Deborah. *Abe Lincoln Crosses a Creek: A Tall, Thin Tale (Introducing His Forgotten Frontier Friend)*. Illus. by John Hendrix. Random House/Schwartz & Wade.

Kerley, Barbara. *What To Do about Alice? How Alice Roosevelt Broke the Rules, Charmed the World, and Drove Her Father Teddy Crazy!* Illus. by Edwin Fotheringham. Scholastic Press.

Law, Ingrid. *Savvy*. Dial/Walden Media.

Lewin, Ted and Betsy. *Horse Song: The Naadam of Mongolia*. Illus. by the authors. Lee & Low.

McGill, Alice. *Way Up and Over Everything*. Illus. by Jude Daly. Houghton Mifflin.

Nicholls, Sally. *Ways to Live Forever*. Arthur A. Levine.

Nivola, Claire A. *Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai*. Illus. by the author. Farrar/Frances Foster.

Nobleman, Marc Tyler. *Boys of Steel: The Creators of Superman*. Illus. by Ross MacDonald. Knopf.

Parker, Robert Andrew. *Piano Starts Here: The Young Art Tatum*. Illus. by the author. Random House/Schwartz & Wade.

Patent, Dorothy Hinshaw. *When the Wolves Returned: Restoring Nature's*

Balance in Yellowstone. Photographs by Dan Hartman and Cassie Hartman. Walker.

Preller, James. *Six Innings: A Game in the Life*. Feiwel & Friends.

Ray, Deborah Kogan. *Wanda Gág: The Girl Who Lived to Draw*. Illus. by the author. Viking/Penguin.

Rumford, James. *Silent Music: A Story of Baghdad*. Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter.

Scieszka, Jon. *Knucklehead: Tall Tales & Mostly True Stories about Growing Up Scieszka*. Illus. by the author. Viking/Penguin.

Schulman, Janet. *Pale Male: Citizen Hawk of New York City*. Illus. by Meilo So. Knopf.

Shulevitz, Uri. *How I Learned Geography*. Illus. by the author. Farrar.

Stone, Tanya Lee. *Elizabeth Leads the Way: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Right to Vote*. Illus. by Rebecca Gibbon. Holt.

Thomas, Joyce Carol. *The Blacker the Berry*. Illus. by Floyd Cooper. HarperCollins/Amistad.

Uehashi, Nahoko. *Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit*. Illus. by Yuko Shimizu. Tr. by Cathy Hirano. Arthur A. Levine.

Older Readers

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Chains*. Simon & Schuster.

Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. Scholastic Press.

Connor, Leslie. *Waiting for Normal*. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen.

Deem, James M. *Bodies from the Ice: Melting Glaciers and the Recovery of the Past*. Illus. Houghton Mifflin.

Engle, Margarita. *The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom*. Holt.

Fleischman, Sid. *The Trouble Begins at*

8: A Life of Mark Twain in the Wild, Wild West. Illus. HarperCollins/Greenwillow.

Fleming, Candace. *The Lincolns: A Scrapbook Look at Abraham and Mary*. Illus. Random House/Schwartz & Wade.

Freedman, Russell. *Washington at Valley Forge*. Illus. Holiday House.

Jiménez, Francisco. *Reaching Out*. Houghton Mifflin.

Macaulay, David with Richard Walker. *The Way We Work: Getting to Know the Amazing Human Body*. Illus. by the author. Houghton Mifflin/Walter Lorraine.

Michaelis, Antonia. *Tiger Moon*. Tr. by Anthea Bell. Amulet.

Nelson, Kadir. *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*. Illus. by the author. Disney-Jump at the Sun.

Nelson, Scott Reynolds with Marc Aronson. *Ain't Nothing But a Man: My Quest to Find the Real John Henry*. Illus. National Geographic.

O'Brien, Tony and Mike Sullivan. *Afghan Dreams: Young Voices of Afghanistan*. Photos by Tony O'Brien. Bloomsbury.

Pratchett, Terry. *Nation*. HarperCollins.

Reeve, Philip. *Here Lies Arthur*. Scholastic Press.

Smith, Hope Anita. *Keeping the Night Watch*. Illus. by E. B. Lewis. Holt.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *After Tupac & D Foster*. Putnam/Penguin.

All Ages

Arnosky, Jim. *Wild Tracks!: A Guide to Nature's Footprints*. Illus. by the author. Sterling.

Johnson, Stephen T. *A Is for Art: An Abstract Alphabet*. Illus. by the author. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman.

National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance. *Our White House: Looking In, Looking Out*. Candlewick.

For the annotated 2009 list and past Notable Children's Books lists, please visit the ALSC website (www.ala.org/alsc), click on "Awards & Grants" and "Children's Notable Lists."

Members of the 2009 Notable Children's Books Committee are Caroline Ward, chair, The Ferguson Library, Stamford, Conn.; Betty Carter, Coppell, Tex.; Elise DeGuseppi, Pierce County Library System, Tacoma, Wash.; Eliza T. Dresang, University of Washington, Seattle; Roxanne Hsu Feldman, The Dalton School, New York, N.Y.; Darwin L. Henderson, College of Education, University of Cincinnati, Ohio; Barbara Immroth, School of Information, University of Texas, Austin, Tex.; Kathleen Isaacs, Pasadena, Md.; Marie Orlando, Suffolk Cooperative Library System, Bellport, N.Y.; Sally Anne Thompson, Paradise Valley, Ariz.; and Martha M. Walke, Children's Literature New England, South Strafford, Vt. ☺

2009 Notable Children's Videos

Art, Weston Woods Studios.

Bats at the Beach. Nutmeg Media.

A Box Full of Kittens. Nutmeg Media.

The Boy Who Cried Wolf. Weston Woods Studios.

Bugs! Bugs! Bugs! Weston Woods Studios.

Come Again in Spring. National Film Board of Canada.

Diary of a Fly. Weston Woods Studios.

Do Unto Otters: A Book about Manners. Weston Woods Studios.

Getting to Know the World's Greatest Artists: Mary Cassatt. Getting to Know, Inc.

Grandfather's Journey, Weston Woods Studios.

Hannah's Story, National Film Board of Canada.

I'm Dirty! Weston Woods Studios.

Mack Made Movies. Live Oak Media.

Madam President. Weston Woods Studios.

A Mama for Owen. Nutmeg Media.

March On!: The Day My Brother Martin Changed the World. Weston Woods Studios.

Pharm Parties: A Lethal Mix. Human Relations Media.

The True Story of the Three Little Pigs. Weston Woods Studios.

Understanding Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Human Relations Media.

What Do You Do with a Tail Like This? Weston Woods Studios.

You're All My Favorites. Candlewick Press.

For the annotated list of the above videos, including recommended age levels, visit the ALSC website (www.ala.org/alsc), click on "Awards & Grants" and "Children's Notable Lists."

Members of the 2009 Notable Children's Videos Committee are Kathy Krasniewicz, chair, Perrot Memorial Library, Old Greenwich, Conn.; Edie Ching, St. Alban's School, Washington, D.C.; Pat Clingman, Kettering-Moraine Library Branch, Kettering, Ohio; Molly M. Collins, Malden (Mass.) Public Library; Cora Phelps Dunkley, School of Library and Information Science, University of South Florida, Tampa; Deborah B. Ford, Instructional Media Center, San Diego, Calif.; Christy Schink, Scenic Regional Library, Union, Mo.; Grace Shanahan, Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library; Lisa Marie Smith, Vernon Area Public Library, Lincolnshire, Ill.; Linda Teel, Joyner Library, East Carolina University, Greenville, N.C.; and Bina Williams, Bridgeport (Conn.) Public Library.

2009 ALSC Annual Conference

(as of April 17, 2009)

See www.ala.org/alscevents for the complete list, including room locations and speakers.

*Denotes a closed meeting.

Thursday, July 9

2-4 p.m.

Executive Committee

4:30-6 p.m.

AASL/ALSC/YALSA Jt. Executive Committee

Friday, July 10

8 a.m.-5 p.m.

ALSC Preconference: Meeting the Challenge: Practical Tips and Inspiring Tales on Intellectual Freedom. A newspaper article about controversial children's books prompts a parent to say "I certainly hope our library doesn't have any of these." Are you ready to respond? The 2009 ALSC preconference will emphasize the right to read as an essential foundation of library service to youth. Strategies for addressing complaints and stories to strengthen resolve are the focus of the day, which will offer pragmatic advice and passionate perspectives on intellectual freedom. You will hear from author Judy Blume, whose books are perennially challenged; librarians and intellectual freedom advocates including Carolyn Caywood, Carrie Gardner, and James LaRue; and John Horany, lead attorney in the Wichita Falls, Tex., book removal case, recipient of a 2001 Freedom to Read Foundation Roll of Honor Award; and now a FTRF board of trustees member. Continental breakfast and lunch included. This event requires preregistration (event code SC1). Tickets are \$240, ALA member; \$190, ALSC Division/RT member; \$285, nonmember; \$180, student. Onsite: \$300.

3:30-5:30 p.m.

AASL/ALSC/YALSA Jt. Legislation

4-6 p.m.

ALSC 101: Making Connections. If you're new to ALSC or if this is your first conference as a children's librarian, then this program is for you! We'll provide you with information about the perks

of ALSC membership, tips on how to get involved in the organization, and tricks of the trade for navigating Annual Conference. Meet other new members and ALSC leaders during this informal session.

5-6:30 p.m.

2010 Award and Notable Chair Orientation

Saturday, July 11

8-9:30 a.m.

Priority Group Consultants

8-10 a.m.

2010 Batchelder*; 2010 Belpré*; 2010 Geisel*

Beyond Storytimes: Standards-Based Partnerships for Early Learning. The public library is a natural community learning center. Children's librarians are assuming new roles as educators who plan programming that addresses literacy and language, math, and science education standards. In this stimulating, hands-on workshop, you will explore using the same book many times in many ways, learn how to incorporate math and science activities into any storyhour, and focus on outcome-based early literacy programs and community outreach. Enrich your practice by joining us for this exciting learning experience.

8 a.m.-Noon

2010 Caldecott* (open meeting from 8-9 a.m., closed from 9-noon)

9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Division Leadership

10:30 a.m.-Noon

2010 Sibert*; 2011 Wilder*

Cuentos de Las Américas: Celebrating Latino Cultures and Día with Recent Outstanding Latino Children's Books: A program of El día de los niños/El día de los libros. Do you serve Latino youth in your school or library? Do you know where to find the *best* children's and young adult books about Latinos? Have you ever planned a Día program? This session offers suggestions on how to locate and select high quality Latino youth literature, and discusses library programs that celebrate this diverse population. Examples of recent outstanding Latino youth literature will be

highlighted as well as ways to celebrate Día in your library program. This program is sponsored by both ALSC and REFORMA.

LEAP Into Science @ your library. Combining literacy and everyday science into fun library programs for elementary school kids and families is the goal of "LEAP into Science," a five-year National Science Foundation grant. The Franklin Institute, a renowned family science museum, and the Free Library of Philadelphia are partnering in this new endeavor. Come and enjoy an interactive science program, and see how your library can participate. Attendees will receive free curricula.

1:30-3 p.m.

Past as Prologue: Building on ALSC's Successes. Learn from former ALSC Division staff and recent ALSC Presidents as they discuss the foundations of the Division, the changes that have occurred, and how ALSC builds on that foundation to provide cutting edge library service to children and tweens, their parents, and caregivers.

Serving Families of Today in Libraries of Yesterday. Find out what tools you need to assess your current layout and analyze your community needs, while discovering sources of creative ideas for easy space changes.

1:30-4:30 p.m.

2010 Carnegie*; Notable Children's Books

1:30-5 p.m.

Notable Children's Recordings

1:30-5:30 p.m.

2010 Newbery*; Notable Children's Videos; 2010 Odyssey*

2-5:30 p.m.

Board of Directors I

3:30-5:30 p.m.

2010 Arbuthnot*; 2010 Geisel*; 2010 Sibert*; Jt. Intellectual Freedom; Organization and Bylaws

8-10 p.m.

Stories for a Saturday Evening. Three to five outstanding storytellers, including Tim Tingle and Dovie Thomason, will demonstrate the best in storytelling. This inclusive, inspirational, and educational

program is for all conference attendees interested in professional and library storytelling.

Sunday, July 12

8–10 a.m.

2011 Arbuthnot*; 2010 Distinguished Service*; 2010 Geisel*; 2010 Nominating*

8–11 a.m.

Every Child Ready to Read Evaluation Task Force

8 a.m.–Noon

All Committee I & II; 2010 Belpré*; 2010 Caldecott*; 2010 Newbery*; 2010 Odyssey*; 2010 Sibert*

10:30 a.m.–Noon

Budget I

Inspiring Young Citizens: The Library as a Forum for Engagement. How do we excite young readers with possibilities for remaking their world without burdening them with responsibility beyond their years? This panel of authors and a middle school librarian, moderated by a children's book advocate, will share books, strategies, and book-specific educational curriculum for engaging young people in age-appropriate social issues and actions. Applications will focus on historical figures and movements that inspire contemporary youth.

Evaluating Audiobooks: Selecting the Best for Children and Teens. As spoken word audio becomes increasingly available in a variety of twenty-first century formats, interest in audiobooks is high. Presenters will discuss their process in developing expertise in evaluating the audiobook medium for young readers, as well as guidelines for reviewing, purchasing, and collection development of audio materials. The audience will also have opportunities to listen to audiobook excerpts, analyzing quality using set criteria.

1:30–3 p.m.

All Discussion Group

A.R.T. and Your Library: How You Can Bring Them Together! Learn what is included in the expanded Kids! @ your library® Campaign Toolkit, now including ideas and activities for grades K–8. Find out how to use these materials to

make your library the place to be! A.R.T. (Author's Reader's Theater with Avi, Brian Selznick, Pam Muñoz Ryan, and Sarah Weeks) will be performing their reader's theater magic as an example of how reader's theater can be presented in your library.

1:30–4 p.m.

Great Interactive Software for Kids

The Pura Belpré Celebración. Join ALSC and REFORMA in a joyous Celebración to honor the 2009 Pura Belpré Medal winners and honorees as they receive their awards and deliver their acceptance speeches. There will be a musical performance by local children, book signing by the winning authors and illustrators, refreshments, and more.

1:30–4:30 p.m.

Notable Children's Books

1:30–5 p.m.

Notable Children's Recordings

3:30–5:30 p.m.

2010 Arbuthnot*; 2010 Geisel*

Using Historic Children's Literature to Motivate Children to Read: Highlights from 15 Years of the Louise Seaman Bechtel Fellowship Award. We will present a moderated panel of past Bechtel Fellows. The moderator will first explain the fellowship program and application requirements to the audience and encourage audience members to consider applying. Next, a series of three past Bechtel Fellows will describe their experiences as and present the results of their research projects. The presenters will emphasize the value of their findings to library service with children and provide related programming suggestions for motivating children to read.

The Five Principles of Good Design: Promote and Present with Style. Want to become a branding and marketing design expert in two hours or less? Want to reach your community with promotional pieces that raise eyebrows and create buzz? Say Yes! to more design savvy flyers. Help end snooze-worthy PowerPoint presentations. Together we'll explore five design principles to help your youth service program promotions and presentations pop! You'll leave this session ready to be more design-smart

and more effective in reaching multiple audiences.

6–11 p.m.

2009 Newbery/Caldecott/Wilder Banquet

Monday, July 13

8–9:30 a.m.

ALSC Charlemae Rollins President's Program featuring Melba Pattillo Beals—Auditorium Speaker Series. Join us for an inspiring address by Melba Pattillo Beals, who walked her way into the history books in 1957 as one of the courageous students who faced down furious segregationists, the Arkansas National Guard, and the Governor of Arkansas in order to integrate Little Rock Central High School. Beals is the author of *Warriors Don't Cry: A Searing Memoir of the Battle to Integrate Little Rock Central High School* and *White Is a State of Mind . . . Freedom Is Yours to Choose*. A Chicago children's choir will perform songs from the civil rights movement to start the program.

8–10 a.m.

Youth Council Caucus

10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Awards Presentation and Membership Meeting. Join your colleagues for the annual presentation of the Batchelder, Carnegie, Geisel, and Sibert Awards. The ALSC Membership Meeting will immediately follow, where Pat Scales, ALSC president, will recognize the 2009 professional award winners and share ALSC's past year's accomplishments and new initiatives.

1:30–3 p.m.

2011 Arbuthnot*; 2010 Nominating*

And the Good News for Kids is . . . : Preliminary Report on the NLG Research Study. This IMLS-NLG funded research study based at Dominican University is investigating how public library summer reading programs affect student achievement; it focuses on students who were in third grade at the end of the 2007–08 school year. Project principals will report on the method, the partnerships between the public libraries and school systems involved, and the preliminary results from this multiyear project. Representatives from one of the research sites will also participate. Q&A will follow.

State Academic Standards + Library Programs = Educationally Enhanced Children's Programs. Academic standards are the current education buzz words. Learn from your colleagues how you can match standards to what you are already doing, contribute to preschoolers' school readiness, and provide accountability for what you do as a children's librarian. For the elementary students you serve, learn how to develop creative and innovative programs for the school aged that support language, math, or science standards, and learn how to purposefully and intentionally enhance your programs with materials and activities that are tied directly to one or more academic standards.

1:30-4:30 p.m.

Great Interactive Software for Kids; Notable Children's Books

3:30-5:30 p.m.

Budget II

Odyssey Award Presentation & Program.

Celebrate the 2009 Odyssey Awards, featuring the 2009 Odyssey winner, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, written and narrated by Sherman Alexie and produced by Recorded Books. Five honor titles will also be recognized. A reception sponsored by the Audio Publishers Association with light refreshments will follow the award presentations and a program featuring audiobook performers.

Growing Readers Together: Public Libraries and Schools Thrive in Partnership. What makes partnerships successful? Learn how to choose among organizations that want to collaborate with you, and learn about Multnomah County Library's successful outreach partnerships with schools. These include work with parents to prepare kids starting school and with teen parenting programs, the Every Family Reads one-author program, all-district summer reading signups and library card campaigns, and school-based services such as School Corps and booktalking services. Explore how to adapt ideas from large and small libraries.

Multiple Literacies in the Library. A panel presentation and discussion about Multiple Literacies and how the varied forms of literacy affect how librarians and media professionals work. Speakers, including library and educational specialists and children's book creators, will focus on three types of literacy including visual, audio, and digital. The panel will discuss how these types of literacy relate to traditional literacy education, collection development, and other issues related to youth services. Cosponsored with The Children's Book Council, Inc.

5:30-7:30 p.m.

6th Annual Poetry Blast. This unique program celebrates the wonder and excitement of contemporary North American poetry for children. Ten to twelve poets,

some new, some well-established, will read from their works. Information about current and forthcoming books of poetry will be available.

Tuesday, July 14

10:30 a.m.-Noon

Board Orientation

2-5:30 p.m.

Board of Directors II

ALSC also is cosponsoring in name only the following programs:

Where You Can Go with Every Child Ready to Read! (PLA, Saturday, July 11, 1:30-3 p.m.)

Partnering with Service Organizations. (LLAMA-PRMS, Saturday, July 11, 3:30-5:30 p.m.)

USBBY Mixing It Up: The Process of Bringing International Children's Books to the United States (USBBY, Saturday, July 11, 3:30-5:30 p.m.)

Library History Round Table Research Forum 2009: Library Materials and Services for Children and Young Adults. (LHRT, Sunday, July 12, 3:30-5:30 p.m.)

What Makes Tango So Frightening? Serving Your Whole Library Population: Intellectual Freedom, and Censorship of LGBT Children's Books. (GLBTRT, Sunday, July 12, 1:30-4:30 p.m.)

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THE LAST WORD

Baseball and Biographies

Lisa M. Shaia

A boy named Cody balanced a stack of about ten books in his hands and approached the desk. He plunked the pile down in front of me and asked, "Is there a limit?"

I glanced at the pile. They all had the same call number: J 796.357. He twisted his Boston Red Sox cap slightly to the right. I hesitated. He was about ten years old, and I noticed his library attendance had deteriorated over the past few months. I didn't want to discourage him, but I knew the circulation desk would never override all of them.

"You can check out only three books with the same call number," I said as I pointed to the spine labels.

"They're *not* the same," he said, reading them aloud to me.

He did have a point; the authors weren't the same. He winced when I explained that the numbers have to match, not the letters. "Well, you didn't say *that*," he said.

"Why don't you pick your favorite three and then I'll show you where to find some books on Papi and Lowell," I said, referring to Boston's most popular hitter, David "Papi" Ortiz and 2007 World Series MVP Mike Lowell. I purposely avoided using the word "biography." His class visited a few weeks ago doing a biography project. The way the class was moping around, you would have thought they had to read about Osama Bin Laden. And it was all because of the dreaded word "biography."

"How do I know which ones are my favorite?" he questioned. "I haven't *read* any of them yet!"

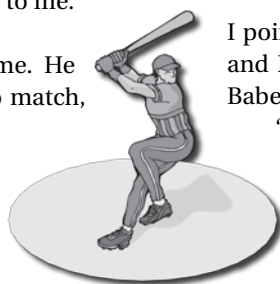
I stifled a laugh. I could have taken the opportunity to teach him about the selection process of choosing a book. "Well, first open the book to the copyright page and search for the copyright date," I imagined myself saying.

I then imagined him throwing his library card at me saying, "I denounce the library for *life*!"

Instead, I picked through the pile and chose the three that I thought he would like best—using all of those aforementioned important criteria, of course.

"These look like really good ones," I said as I handed him the books. I led him to the biography section as we talked about the 2008 play-offs. Luckily, this was the only sport and team I kept up to date on. The Red Sox were a few runs away from getting into the World Series again, but ultimately lost to the Tampa Bay Rays.

"At least the Red Sox beat the Yankees!" he said. Living in Connecticut, you were either a Red Sox fan or a Yankees fan. There was no in between.



I pointed out where the books on David "Big Papi" Ortiz and Mike Lowell were. Then I pulled out biographies of Babe Ruth, Ted Williams, Pedro Martinez, and Johnny "Red Sox-turned-Yankee" Damon.

"I don't want to read about anybody who played for the Yankees!" he said as he put the Johnny Damon book on the top shelf. He was going to be mad when he found out about the "Curse of the Bambino" that Babe Ruth put on the team after being sold from the Red Sox to the Yankees. But we had come so far! I thought he should find out about that in the privacy of his own home.

I chuckled and then wrote down "Matt Christopher" and "Chris Crutcher" on a piece of paper. "After you read all of the Red Sox books we own, you may want to try these authors," I said. He grunted. For a boy that age, I took that as a thanks.

I smiled to myself as I walked back to my desk. I wondered how this conversation would have gone if Cody had been a football fan, or even worse—a Yankees fan!

Lisa M. Shaia is the Children's Librarian at Oliver Wolcott Library in Litchfield, Connecticut.

Got a great, lighthearted essay? A funny story about children and libraries? Books and babies? Pets and picture books?
A not-so-serious look at the world of children's librarianship? Send your Last Word to Sharon Verbeten at CALeditor@yahoo.com.