



Texas Association of Literacy Educators

TALE

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Summer 2013

President's Message

As your president, I am thrilled to write a few words of introduction for our newsletter. As I reflected on my IRA membership history, I realized that the Reading Associations were my first professional organizations. Like many of you, I now belong to a host of societies that focus on literacy — some local, some state, some national, and some international.

Perhaps it was at these first meetings that my passion for literacy began to grow. It was there that I began to learn about the best in children's and young adult literature. It was at these meetings that I first considered my own writing and reading and the teaching of literacy. But most important, these meetings were and still are places where I marvel at beautiful and powerful language.



I hope you will join us for our 2nd annual conference, which will be held on October 12, 2013 at the Texas State University campus in Round Rock. Maureen McLaughlin, IRA president and esteemed reading comprehension scholar, will share ideas for increasing reading skills and will teach us how to increase a love of reading in our students. Benjamin Alire Sáenz, celebrated children's and young adult author from the University of Texas at El Paso, will join us in the afternoon. When you hear Ben speak of his poetry, along with his books for young children and his young adult books, your passion for sharing beautiful language will grow (again).

In a film I saw many years ago, a kindergarten girl was asked to comment on another child's journal. The child and his journal were seated in what we would now call an "author's chair". The tiny girl stood beside the young boy displaying his journal. Her wise teacher asked, "What do you notice about his work since the beginning of the year?" The little girl thought for a moment and said, "Picture after picture gets better after better." TALE is only in its third year as a new literacy organization, but already I see us getting "better after better." Please join us in October. I promise your passion for literacy will grow.

Dr. Sharon O'Neal
President, TALE
Associate Professor, Texas State University

Inside this issue:

<i>Digital Literacy Survey</i>	1
<i>TALE Election Results</i>	2-3
<i>Featured Technology Tool</i>	4
<i>Dyslexia Legislation</i>	5
<i>Building Momentum Conference</i>	6
<i>2013 Conferences in Texas</i>	7
<i>Upcoming Events and Editor's Note</i>	8

Special points of interest:

- Digital Literacy Survey
- Congratulations!
- Poll Everywhere
- Conference Information
- Dyslexia Legislation

Digital Literacy Survey

In the 21st century, the definition of literacy has increasingly reflected the ability to use technology for gathering and communicating information. Researchers use terms like information literacy, multiliteracies/multiple literacies, new literacy, digital literacy, and web literacy to describe similar skills necessary for 21st century learning. TALE members Jodi Pilgrim and Elda Martinez are conducting a survey to evaluate knowledge about literacy terms. Please access the link below to participate in this 10-15 minute survey!

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/21stLiteracy>

Welcome, New Board Members!



Roberta Raymond, Vice President

Regional Representatives:

Frances Gonzales-Garcia

Amy Cummings

Laurie McAdams

The Board would like to thank all of those who offered extra service by running for an elected position.

Meet Your New Vice President - Dr. Roberta Raymond



Dr. Roberta Raymond
Director, Center for Educational Programs University of Houston-Clear Lake

Roberta would like to work with literacy professionals in the Houston area and around the state to continue to promote the organization's vision and core values. In addition, she would like to increase awareness of the organization for the advancement of students and educators in the state of Texas.

Roberta has been a Texas educator for 18 years. During her tenure in the Houston Independent School District, she served as a classroom teacher, literacy coach, literacy specialist, teacher

development specialist, and Elementary Reading/Language Arts Curriculum Manager. Beginning August 1, 2013, she transitioned to the University of Houston-Clear Lake as the Director for the Center for Educational Programs.

Roberta completed her Bachelors in Curriculum and Instruction at Texas State University and her Masters in Reading at the University of Houston-Clear Lake. Additionally, she holds a Doctorate in Reading from Sam Houston State University. Her current research interests

are reading motivation, digital literacy, adolescent literacy, effective reading instruction, and pre-service teacher preparation.



The Vice President serves one term and then automatically succeeds to the office of President-elect for one year.

Meet Your New Board Members

Frances Gonzales-Garcia

Elementary ELA Curriculum Manager
Houston ISD



Frances is committed towards enhancing the organization's vision in connecting professional educators throughout the state by establishing a strong network of support and opportunities relevant to the field of literacy.

Francis is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Literacy from Texas A&M University Corpus Christi where she also earned two Master's degrees (i.e., Literacy and Educational Technology) and a Bachelor of Science degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. She is also working toward National Board Certification. Her professional interests include reading comprehension and strategies, multiple metacognitive approaches, new literacies, Response to Intervention (RTI), reading motivation, and teacher education.

Dr. Laurie McAdams

Assistant Professor
Tarleton State University



Laurie hopes to address any specific needs brought forth from members of TALE that specifically focus on the literacy development of children, youth, and adults. In a climate consisting of a multitude of challenges, she feels strong advocates for literacy are needed. Issues such as educational funding and implementation of standards require committed and dedicated individuals to serve and support the interests of literacy professionals whose goals are to foster literacy development in students.

Laurie earned her doctorate degree from Tarleton State University. She earned her Master of Education, Graduate Certificate of Teaching Writing Grades K-12, and Bachelor degrees from the University of Central Florida. Her literacy interests include 21st Century literacy skills, effective instructional design at both the K-12 and university levels, reading maturity among literacy educators, and development of effective writing.

Dr. Amy Cummings

Assistant Professor of English
University of Texas-Pan America
(Edinburg)



Amy will be filling a vacated position on the Board. She hopes to expand awareness of multicultural books for children and young adults, to encourage professional development for teachers, and to help teachers at all grade levels to learn from each other. She participated in TALE in 2012-13 through the book reviews for the TALE newsletter. Amy believes TALE must continue growth to voice the needs of students and teachers in Texas.

Amy works as an assistant professor of English at the University of Texas Pan American in the Rio Grande Valley. Her articles about young adult literature appeared recently in the journals *Children's Literature in Education*, *ALAN Review*, and *English in Texas*. Amy's literacy interests include border and Mexican American studies, Texas authors in schools, and teen choice in books.

Featured Technology Tool

Poll Everywhere – An Innovative Assessment Tool

Stephanie Grote-Garcia, Assistant Professor
The University of the Incarnate Word



Are you looking for an innovative assessment tool? How about one that allows students to text in their answers via their cell phones? Or even more exciting, how about an assessment tool that immediately tallies and displays students' responses in a bar graph? If you find yourself saying yes to any of these three questions, then you may be interested in using Poll Everywhere (www.polleverywhere.com).

What is Poll Everywhere? It is an online polling tool that is often used for instant audience feedback. In the classroom, instructors are able to create multiple choice or open-ended questions to assess various levels of knowledge. Students are able to immediately submit one answer through their cell phones via text messaging or other electronic devices such as laptops and iPads. Before using Poll Everywhere, educators must open a free account and create the polling questions. Respondents of the polls do not need to create an account.

Figure 1 displays a sample question that I have created for my pre-service teachers using Poll Everywhere. I usually ask students to read the question independently or within a group. They then text-message the keyword associated with their answer choice to the number 37607. In this example, the correct answer is represented by keyword 130911.

Poll Everywhere immediately tallies the students' responses, as seen in the far right column of Figure 1. In addition to tallying responses, Poll Everywhere will also graph responses. Since Poll Everywhere immediately tallies and graphs the responses, the instructor can instantly form the discussion or lesson around students' needs.

Are you interested in learning more? Visit the Poll Everywhere website at www.polleverywhere.com

Figure 1. An example of a question presented on Poll Everywhere

In relation to the developmental continuum of phonological awareness, read the three choices below and determine the choice that would be the most difficult.

To vote, text a **KEYWORD** to 37607

To vote via smartphone, enter a **KEYWORD** at PollEv.com

KEYWORD	Option	Responses
130911	The teacher says the word "map" and the students orally repeat the word. The teacher then asks students to say each sound they hear in the word "map".	1
130916	The teacher says the sentence, "The truck is green". The students orally repeat the sentence. The teacher then asks students to move a block for each word they hear in the sentence, "The truck is green."	0
130924	The teacher says the word "cup" and the students orally repeat the word. The teacher then asks students to identify the sound they hear at the beginning of "cup".	0

Do you have a technology tool that you would like to share with TALE members? Send your ideas to TALEmembership@gmail.com

Dyslexia Legislation

by Michele Cox, Ed.D.



Dr. Cox is a graduate of the UMHB LEAD program and is currently a third grade self contained educator for Copperas Cove ISD. She has 12 years experience in education as a dyslexia interventionist/assessor and an elementary educator with a GT endorsement.

The State Board for Educator Certification recently adopted Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 228.35, which states that "An education preparation program...must require, as part of the curriculum for a bachelor's degree that is a prerequisite for educator certification, that a candidate receive instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia" (SB, 2011). Approximately twenty percent of the US population display one or more symptoms of dyslexia (Washburn, Joshi, & Binks-Cantrell, 2011) and this law is a huge step toward preparing teachers to understand the characteristics and needs of students with dyslexia. Research suggests that teachers lack knowledge needed to teach struggling readers, particularly children with dyslexia (Washburn, Joshi & Binks-Cantrell, 2011). Many teachers continue to hold the common misconception that dyslexia is a visual processing deficit rather than phonological processing deficit. Literacy education for pre-service teachers must provide the knowledge teachers need about dyslexia and characteristics of dyslexia learners.

Considerable knowledge and skill is needed to teach reading effectively, especially in helping students experiencing difficulty. Unfortunately, professional development practices are insufficient for the preparation and support of teachers and specialists. Many reading and special education specialists often know more about research-based best practices than general education teachers (IDA, 2010). General education teachers are simply not prepared to recognize early signs of at-risk problems or how to address dyslexia and other related learning disabilities successfully. Further investigation into teacher preparation programs revealed an absence of substantive content and academic rigor to address this need. Few are aligned with current research on effective instruction for students at risk (IDA, 2010).

In order to address this need in teacher preparation programs and to best assist educators in effectively teach students in a preventive, intervention, and remedial setting, the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) developed standards for knowledge, practice, and ethical conduct (IDA, 2010). These research-based standards are assumptions about the nature, prevalence, manifestations, and treatments for dyslexia. The standards outline the following: 1) content knowledge necessary to teach reading and writing to students with dyslexia or related disorders or who are at risk for reading difficulty; 2) practices of effective instruction; and 3) ethical conduct expected of professional educators and clinicians (IDA, 2010). For more information, visit: <http://www.interdys.org/standards.htm>.

There are many methodologies, teaching approaches, and organizational purposes that support teachers or specialists in their preparation courses. In order to maximize the benefit to students, it is necessary to ensure there is a common set of professional standards. Compliance with these standards helps to ensure teachers or specialists are prepared to implement scientifically based research practices (IDA, 2010).

References

- International Dyslexia Association (2010). Knowledge and practice standards for teachers of reading. Retrieved from <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/KPS3-I-12.pdf>
- Texas Senate Bill 174, 81st Legislature. (2011).
- Washburn, E. K., Joshi, R. M., & Binks-Cantrell, E. S. (2011). Teacher knowledge of basic language concepts and dyslexia. *Dyslexia*, 17(2), 165-183.

Did you know?

Dyslexia represents the most common and prevalent of all known learning disabilities.

Dyslexia is the most researched of all learning disabilities.

Some forms of dyslexia are highly heritable.

Dyslexia is primarily due to linguistic deficits.

Dyslexia is not caused by a vision problem.

Dyslexic children do not see letters or words in reverse.

Children do not outgrow dyslexia.

Source: www.interdys.org

Is there a topic you want discussed in the Newsletter?

Let us know at

TALEmembership@gmail.com

"Difficulties mastered are opportunities won."

~Winston Churchill

Texas Association for
Literacy Education
(TALE)

Building Momentum

**October
12, 2013**

Maureen McLaughlin

**2013-2014
IRA President
and
author**



Join us for the 2013
Literacy Summit:
Building Momentum

**Receive CECs
and a one-year
membership for
attending!**



Benjamin Alire Sáenz

**Award-winning
author of poetry
and prose for
adults and teens**

Where:

Texas State University-
Round Rock

1555 University Blvd.
Round Rock, TX. 78665-

**Early
Registration:** **\$125**
(Before September 15,
2013)

Register online:
WWW.texasreaders.org

**TALE is Affiliated with
the International
Reading Association
(IRA)**

Building Momentum

While the Building Momentum flyer provides conference highlights and dates, TALE members share what they are most excited about learning at the TALE conference:

"I am really excited about our new organization, and I am looking forward to the October conference in Round Rock! It is a privilege to collaborate with educators who are building momentum for literacy in Texas."

~Dr. Judy Trotti,
The University of Mary Hardin
-Baylor

"It is really exciting to have the President of IRA, Maureen McLaughlin, here in Texas to bring information about national and international literacy issues. Meeting award-winning author, Benjamin Saenz, is another great plus. I hope many of my students can join other educators in taking advantage of this professional development opportunity."

~Dr. Judy Leavell
St. Edward's University
"The Building Momentum

conference has something for everyone. In addition to hearing from a national literacy rock star like Maureen McLaughlin, I always learn so much from sessions highlighting successful practices of classroom teachers and research findings from my colleagues."

~Dr. Sheri Vasinda
Oklahoma State University



TALE

A business meeting will be held at the 2013 Conference—*Building Momentum*.

Literacy Research Association (LRA) Meets in Texas

LRA sponsors a national conference each year during the first week in December. The conference program includes keynote addresses by invited

speakers, peer-reviewed symposia, paper sessions, study groups, and alternative format sessions. The conference offers reviews of current trends

and issues. This year's conference will be held December 4-7 in Dallas, Texas. Visit LRA's website for additional information:

www.literacyresearchorganization.org

"The Literacy Research Association (LRA) is a community of scholars dedicated to promoting research that enriches the knowledge, understanding, and development of lifespan literacies in a multicultural and multilingual world" (www.literacyresearchorganization.org).

Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers (ALER)

ALER also meets in Dallas this fall. The conference will take place October 31 through November 2. For additional information about events or registration, visit:
<http://aleronline.org/>



TALE is open to anyone interested in the development of literacy in children, youth and adults. This organization is a recognized affiliate of the International Reading Association (IRA). Contact us at TALEmembership@gmail.com



Remember TALE is on Facebook! Please follow this link to see what is happening with TALE members:
<https://www.facebook.com/texasreaders.org>

www.TexasReaders.org

Upcoming Plans and Events

See our website for additional information regarding the following TALE plans and events:

- Second Annual TALE Literacy Summit: Building Momentum in Round Rock, Texas, October 12, 2013
- Manuscripts now being accepted for the summer edition of *Texas Journal of Literacy Education*.
- Reviewer applications now being accepted for *Texas Journal of Literacy Education*.
- Memberships fees (\$5.00) now accepted online via credit card
- Please visit TALE's website for addition information.

If you have an event you would like to share with fellow TALE members, please contact:

TALEmembership@gmail.com

Editor's Note

I am excited about my new role as Newsletter Editor. As Leslie Haas transitions to a new role as one of TALE's Journal Editors, I will strive to fill her shoes. While working on this issue, I thought of the excitement of starting a new school year! Administrators and teachers are preparing schools and classrooms for a new year, and teacher educators are preparing syllabi for a new semester. This issue includes information about events and

conferences taking place this fall. I look forward to these exciting events. All literacy educators are a part of something important, and I appreciate events that provide opportunities for us to learn from each other in order to improve literacy education in Texas.

This issue also includes information about our newly elected officers and board members. Join me in congratulating these leaders.

Finally, this issue contains a column featuring a technology tool as well as a column highlighting important information about recent changes regarding legislation for dyslexic students. These articles are must-reads!

If you would like to write for TALE's newsletter, please submit your ideas/articles to me at jpilgrim@umhb.edu.



Jodi Pilgrim, Ph.D.
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University of Mary Hardin-Baylor