Message from the President

Dear CARA Colleagues,

Spring will arrive eventually, and CARA is busy preparing for our all-day institute featuring Stephanie Harvey! We are partnering with Lake Area Reading Council, Illinois Title 1 Association, and Illinois Council for Affective Reading Education to offer you one of the most renowned “teacher of teachers.” Author of *The Comprehension Toolkit, Strategies that Work, Comprehension and Collaboration*, and *From Striving to Thriving*, Steph will inspire you with not only best practice pedagogy, but her belief that “reading is thinking.” She will focus on comprehension and strategy instruction, nonfiction literacy, inquiry-based learning, collaboration, and so much more. Steph has a special talent for transforming theory into classroom practice. Make your plans now for Thursday, May 16. We will meet at Roosevelt University in Schaumburg where there is great parking and shopping!

A huge thank you to our Winter Conference speaker, Dr. Alfred Tatum, author of *Fearless Voices: Engaging a New Generation of African American Adolescent Male Writers*. His lifetime work, knowledge, and passion have made a difference in so many lives. He serves as an inspiration to our profession.

A special thanks to Patricia Tylka, our almost-spring presenter, for her workshop, *Playing with Words: Building Vocabulary is All Fun and Games*. Patti shared some fun, engaging ways to support our students’ vocabulary learning. Patti’s fast-paced, interactive workshop was the perfect blend of professional learning and fun!

If you missed *Read Across America*, there are still valuable resources on their website and don’t forget to check out the incredible Illinois Reading Council website. They both offer booklists, event planning, reading tips, etc.

Finally, thank you again to our volunteer board for all that they do to make CARA an invaluable resource for Chicago area teachers.

Barbara Kent

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Upcoming Events

**March 16**
*Illinois Reads Book Festival, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, Waukegan High School Brookside Campus*

**March 19**
*CARA Board of Directors Meeting via Zoom*

**March 15-31**
*CARA Elections*

**April 3**
*IRC’s Wired Wednesday Webinar: CAFÉ Instruction Model: Assessment through Instruction, with Gail Boushey and Allison Behne*

**April 6**
*IRC Board of Directors meeting in Normal, IL*

**April 23**
*CARA Board of Directors Meeting, 6:00 pm at Burley School*

**May 16**
*From Striving to Thriving, a full-day professional learning Institute with Stephanie Harvey, 8:30 am – 3:30 pm at Roosevelt University, Schaumburg Campus*
Upcoming Event!

Engagement → Equity → Excellence

From Striving to Thriving
with Stephanie Harvey

A Full Day of Professional Learning with Stephanie Harvey!
Thursday, May 16  8:30 am – 3:30 pm
Roosevelt University Schaumburg Campus
1400 North Roosevelt Boulevard, Schaumburg, IL

Light breakfast and lunch included with registration    Earn 6 clock hours!

Early bird registration ends May 1!

Register Now

From Striving to Thriving: How to Grow Confident, Capable Readers
We need an intervention on interventions in education. We seem to be addicted to interventions. Every time a child reads even slightly below benchmark, we call for yet another intervention. The research is clear- the best intervention is a good book a child can and wants to read! Nothing correlates higher to reading achievement than reading volume. Access plus time plus choice equals volume. We need to curate our classroom libraries to ensure that all kids have access to a wide range of compelling texts. We need to book match relentlessly. We need to provide expert research-based literacy instruction and build in plenty of time for kids to just plain read.

– Stephanie Harvey

Sponsors

Grace Educational Resources and Crossland Literacy will have books by Stephanie Harvey available for purchase and signing.
Recent Events

Dr. Alfred Tatum’s presentation, Fearless Voices, February 23!

Patricia Tylka’s Workshop, Playing with Words, March 7
Teacher Talk from Joyce Jennings

The RAFT Writing Strategy

My students loved the RAFT writing strategy! RAFT is an acronym for Role/Audience/Format/Topic. In this strategy, students assume a perspective to write with a specified audience in mind. The teacher supplies a specific format and topic. My students and I especially liked to use this strategy in our study of history. For example, if the topic is issues surrounding currency in colonial America, you can assign different roles, audiences and formats so that students consider the issue from different perspectives.

Role = Concerned citizen of Massachusetts Colony
Audience = Readers of Newspaper
Format = Editorial
Topic = Need for colonists to have their own money

Role = Son or daughter of silversmith who made first coins in Massachusetts
Audience = Grandparents in England
Format = Letter
Topic = Concern for father’s safety

Role = King George
Audience = British citizens in Massachusetts Colony
Format = Royal edict
Topic = Colonists making their own money

Role = Merchant in Massachusetts Colony
Audience = Customers
Format = Posted sign
Topic = Concerns about accepting Colony-made money

I usually distributed slips of paper in an envelope to groups of students so that all the students in the group were addressing the same topic from the same perspective, in the same format to the same audience. After time for writing, we regrouped so that students were in groups of different roles, audiences, formats, and topics to share.


*If you would like to share an idea or strategy, please send it to Joyce Jennings, joyce.jennings@comcast.net. All contributions are due the first Friday of each month.*

CARA Elections will take place March 15-31. If you are a member of CARA, check your email for your online ballot!

CARA Awards

Check out awards for teachers, literacy leaders, and administrators on CARA’s website! Click [HERE](#) for more information and applications.
Spotlight on Technology

Spotlight on Technology is a new feature of the CARA Newsletter! We welcome our monthly columnists, Drs. Becky McTague and Linda Pincham, both faculty members of Roosevelt University. We look forward to their sharing ideas for teacher to incorporate technology into their instruction.

Kahoot

Using a game format in the classroom allows students to be active and engaged. However, some teachers do not know how to use a game-based learning platform especially a technology-based web tool. One game-based learning platform that I have used in my classroom is Kahoot! Kahoot is a game-based learning platform that enables a teacher to create multiple-choice quizzes, which can be accessed through a web browser. The quizzes can be for any subject, questions can be multiple choice or other formats, and students earn points. The simplest version is free, while versions that are more sophisticated have a fee involved.

I have found Kahoot easy to use and my students have found it fun! One way that I have used Kahoot is to review material from a textbook chapter or to check for comprehension of a text. Another way, that I have used Kahoot is to review vocabulary. Sometimes I create the Kahoots, but I have also had students generate the Kahoots. I have even had groups of students produce Kahoots for other groups about different aspects of the material that we were studying.

The quizzes are quick and easy to use in a classroom and the game-based learning platform engages students with the material as well as vocabulary. To get started with Kahoot in your classroom use the following link; https://kahoot.com. So have some fun and start Kahooting!

Dr. Becky McTague
Associate Professor at Roosevelt University

Not a Member?

Don’t miss out on CARA News and Events! Join CARA and Illinois Reading Council today to ensure that you have access to all the wonderful professional learning opportunities!

- Discounted registration fees to all CARA and IRC events, including conferences!
- FREE members-only access to IRC’s Wired Wednesday Webinars – great PD, and you can participate in your PJs at home! AND you can earn free clock hours!
- FREE members-only access to IRC’s Book Clubs – great online book discussions with other teachers about some of the seminal professional books in literacy, and another PJ PD opportunity! AND free clock hours!
- Information about upcoming events from professional organizations throughout the state