

# The ORacle

Council Updates, Literacy Articles, & More!



## President's Message: Embracing the Season of Learning

Darlene Geddes

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Dear OSLA Members,

Welcome to all Oregon State Literacy Association members! I hope you enjoyed the beautiful Oregon summer with family and friends.

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Darlene Geddes, and I am honored to serve as your new OSLA president. I have served as an Oregon educator since 1993, retired from school administration two years ago and I am finishing my career teaching second grade in an Oregon classroom. Teaching and literacy are my passions and I am thrilled to be working with students hands-on each and every day. I am enjoying every moment of this fall back in my own classroom.

As the vibrant hues of autumn begin to paint our beautiful Oregon landscapes, we're reminded of the cyclical nature of growth and renewal. Just as the leaves turn and fall, making way for new beginnings, so too do we in the field of literacy continue to evolve, learn, and adapt to the changing needs of our communities.

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**The Oracle** is a digital publication issued three times a year by the Oregon State Literacy Association to share council news, literacy legislation updates, research and best practices on literacy topics, and more based on the needs of members and readers.

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Fall is a season of reflection and gratitude, a time to acknowledge the hard work we've put in throughout the year and to look ahead to the opportunities that await. In our classrooms, libraries, and communities, we see the fruits of our labor as students begin to flourish, their love for reading and learning taking root and growing stronger each day.

This season, I encourage each of you to embrace the spirit of continuous learning. Whether it's exploring new literacy strategies, engaging with professional development opportunities, or simply finding time to enjoy a good book, let's make this fall a time of inspiration and growth.

*We have many ways that you can engage in professional development:*

**OSLA Fall Conference:** You won't want to miss the 2024 OSLA Conference held on October 26th at Parkrose High School. Mark your calendars and be sure to register for this one day event with continental breakfast and lunch served.

The focus of this amazing conference is Igniting Curiosity and Cultivating Literacy for All. With 27 concurrent sessions, there is sure to be a session that will resonate with you. The keynote speaker Dr. Eugenia Mora-Flores is sure to be outstanding.

The price is right at \$60: OSLA Member, \$85: Non-members and \$30: Retired educators and college students.

**TAR/CoR:** These grants are \$100. Check with your local council about TAR (Teachers as Readers) and CoR (Community of Readers) groups, where members read and discuss all kinds of current literature.

**Literacy Grants:** Take advantage of our \$250 or \$500 literacy grants for OSLA members to further your work in the field of literacy. The deadline for proposals is November 14th.

**Patricia Gallagher Picture Book Award Nominees:** Check out our website for information on the five nominated titles and get details on involving your classroom and schools in choosing the award winner for this year!

Find out what is happening in your local council and see what other offerings they may have! Your local council is a fabulous place to network and learn.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to literacy and education. Together, we are fostering a brighter future for all Oregonians, one reader at a time.

Wishing you a wonderful autumn filled with learning, reflection, and the warmth of our shared mission.

With gratitude,

*Darlene M. Geddes, Ed. D.*

OSLA President

[oregonread.org](http://oregonread.org)



# OSLA & OCTE Fall Conference

Saturday, October 26, 2024 - Parkrose High School

This fall, embark on an inspiring journey as the Oregon State Literacy Association joins forces with the Oregon Council of Teachers of English to host the Fall 2024 Conference, "Igniting Curiosity and Cultivating Literacy For All," on Saturday, October 26, at Parkrose High School! This event promises to be a dynamic gathering of educators, innovators, and literacy enthusiasts dedicated to sparking curiosity and fostering a love for reading and writing in students of all ages.

With a rich and diverse lineup of workshops, presenters, interactive sessions, and engaging activities, the conference affords attendees the perfect opportunity to connect with like-minded professionals to explore the latest trends and techniques in literacy education and instruction. From cutting-edge strategies to time-tested practices, participants will leave rejuvenated with a toolkit brimming with ideas to transform the classroom, catapult inspiration, and empower students.

OSLA and OCTE are thrilled to announce that Dr. Eugenia Mora-Flores will be our keynote speaker. She has distinguished herself as an educator with knowledge and passion and is renowned for her expertise in language development and literacy instruction. Her keynote promises to be both enlightening and motivating. With her unique blend of humor, insight, and practical advice, she will inspire us all to cultivate literacy skills in our students and ignite their curiosity for learning.

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to learn from one of the leading voices in education, to network with fellow educators, and to be part of a conference that celebrates the power of literacy for all!

## **CONFERENCE SESSIONS**

Get a sneak peek of captivating conference sessions with sample presentations covering cutting-edge topics and innovative strategies tailored for today's educators invested in literacy best practices. Topics include fresh approaches to language development, interactive literacy activities, and fostering a collaborative classroom environment. There's something for everyone.

### **K-College:**

- ["AI & I: Accepting Generative Artificial Intelligence in ELA," Jacob Niebergall](#)
- ["Multimodal, Localized Photo Essays for Writing Instruction," Rich Rice](#)

### **9-12:**

- ["AI and Writing: Engaging Student Voices," Margaret Perro](#)
- ["Beyond Tests: Unleashing Creativity in Demonstrating Understanding," Mariko Walsh \(6-12\)](#)
- ["Superheroes and the American Zeitgeist: How Comics reflect the American Experience," Kate Moore](#)

### **6-8:**

- ["Integrating Literature into Earth & Space Science," Dayle Westhara \(6-8\)](#)
- ["The Wonder of Words: Vocabulary Routines That Build Word-Curiosity!" Beth Ferguson \(K-8\)](#)

### **K-5:**

- ["Centering Multilingual Learners in Early Literacy Instruction," Jennifer Fontana](#)
- ["Integrating Language & Literacy in Primary Classrooms: Supporting Multilingual Learners with the Science of Reading," Katie Toppel](#)
- ["Science of Reading," Dot McElhone](#)

# Legislative Update:

## Martha Sandstead and Tina Roberts

Martha Sandstead (Literacy Education Specialist) and Tina Roberts (Language Arts Education Specialist) both work with the Oregon Department of Education.

Through a collaborative effort, with input from a diverse group of educators, university researchers, and other partners, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) published [Oregon's Early Literacy Framework](#) (OELF) in spring 2023. The framework delivers an approach to comprehensive literacy instruction in order to meet the strengths and needs of all students and serves as a north star for districts. Furthermore, the framework elevates knowledge and practices that have emerged from decades of research, which have become collectively known as the Science of Reading, and incorporates findings on literacy development and instruction for student groups that continue to experience disparities. ODE is working to promote the framework through conference presentations, webinars, workshops, and the newly launched [Instructional Frameworks website](#), which launched in August 2024.

The Instructional Frameworks website houses a variety of free resources for districts and ESDs to support professional learning related to OELF, including a Canvas course, walk through tools, videos, and a robust resource library.

Concurrent with the release of the OELF, during the 2023 legislative session, the Oregon Legislature passed HB 3198, Oregon's Early Literacy Success Initiative. A key component of this legislation was the Early Literacy Success School District Grants (ELSSDG). Eligible school districts and charter schools conducted needs assessments and submitted plans for how they would leverage the funds to lift early literacy under five allowable uses: high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), professional development and coaching, high-dosage tutoring, hiring literacy coaches, specialists, and interventionists, and extended learning programs. Districts are beginning to spend the funds and implement changes to improve literacy outcomes for all students.

The Early Literacy Framework and the Early Literacy Success Initiative are groundbreaking for the state of Oregon, and we are excited to see the impact that this funding will have on early literacy practices. We look forward to ongoing collaboration and partnership with schools and districts, along with opportunities to spotlight high quality literacy practices as they are implemented across our state.

The Literacy Team is happy to connect to listen, learn, or support as we work together to promote literacy for all students across the state. Reach out to connect with our team at [K12.Literacy@ode.oregon.gov](mailto:K12.Literacy@ode.oregon.gov).

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Director: [Angelica Cruz](#)



# Teach Reading, Why?

Wade McJacobs - Secondary Literacy Columnist

Wade McJacobs taught special education for 31 years in the Tigard-Tualatin School District and is the author of numerous articles and two books. He is the founder of Student Empowerment Group, LLC. Wade lives with his wife in an empty nest in Beaverton. He can be reached at [wademcj@gmail.com](mailto:wademcj@gmail.com).

With new technologies and ease of access to them, I sometimes wonder, “Do we really need to teach reading?” Exploring this affirmative answer provides some insight into what exactly students are learning as they develop their skills in reading. Reminding ourselves of their learning may also provide guidance in how we teach.

## Reading is a Complex Skill

Reading is a complex skill that requires coordination of many elements. In this article, I will speak of reading in its simple form with awareness that those with visual or other impairments will use other systems for accessing written material.

First, in order to access text, there are vision components that we must coordinate as our eyes move smoothly across and down the page. The visual imagery that we create is also influenced by aural elements as we pronounce words aloud or in our minds. This is especially true in English where the same letters can be pronounced in different ways depending on the context. How does one pronounce “bow” or “present” for example?

As we create images and stories in our mind, we use skills of prediction to assure us of the development of the ideas. This skill involves an awareness of our expectations and perhaps also our biases as we read. Having expectations as we read, reminds us that sometimes we are wrong, so we must develop skills of resilience to recover from our mistakes in order to keep true to the intent of the author and our learning.

To read proficiently and effectively we need to access our memory or background knowledge. We need to be able to organize and analyze our memories in such a way that we can find connections to ideas in the text. The brevity of the last three paragraphs belie the true complexity of reading skills and the teaching of these skills. While each of these skills can be taught, it is the coordination of these skills into a single act of READING that is magical and mysterious.

**Every teacher who witnesses the luminescence of understanding behind the eyes of students is in awe of this amazing and uniquely human talent.**

## Why Do We Teach Reading?

It is easy to answer that we teach reading so that students are prepared for the modern reality of reading news posts, stories, letters, etc. There will be a time in the future, and not distant future, that these bits of writing will be accessed through some device that reads for us. So, if technology can substitute for the physical reality of reading, why is reading still an essential skill? As with so many aspects of teaching, the answer lies more within the students than in the instruction. Students love to be read to. They see new worlds. They meet new characters. They experience awe.

But something different happens when these experiences occur under their own power. When those funny squiggles become alive, students experience magic. They learn that they can provoke those wonderfully engaging images all on their own. Even without a picture the letters C A T, produce a flood of noises, sights, and feelings over which they have complete control. Students become powerful.

As students age, they realize words make them sad or angry or motivated, and their reality alters. When their ideas are affirmed or challenged, they feel differently about their place in the world. As their brains make connections between their current reality to new possibilities, they glow with the energy of their expanded world. They are empowered to move forward in a different direction.

## **Teach to the Magic**

Teachers are challenged and empowered today by new technologies that are provoking new ways to teach. In making these adjustments, we must not lose sight of the magic. It is important to occasionally stop and identify the moments of magic as they occur. What was once an internal magical process on its own, now may need a moment of recognition.

We can identify for the students their contributions to the reality of reading. They bring their own wealth of experiences as they interact with text. It is not enough to expect a certain measure of performance on comprehension tests. We also can ask why their minds choose to see one idea over another. How is it possible that two people reading the same words can have such diverse reactions?

Through the recognition of their contributions to the exchange of ideas, they are empowered to examine the reality of the words to which they are exposed. My 8-year-old daughter once wondered aloud after reading a story about Japan during WWII, “If we think Japan is the bad guy, and Japan thinks we are the bad guy, then is there really a bad guy?”

Reading exposes us to such diversity of possibilities, that we are empowered with the magic of curiosity. Within one mind, there exists multiple possibilities of reality. We can teach our students to feel their power of choice. The tests of comprehension that we subject them to are one reality on the given topic. Learning of one reality does not eliminate the existence of others in our minds.

Reading stimulates the coordination of activity in our brains to consider alternatives. Reading is not a passive skill of absorbing a singular author’s world. Reading is the coordination of multiple elements of our mental activities with the author’s attempt to display another reality.

We teach reading to stimulate this action of coordination in the minds of our students. Reading is like the street performer who plays an accordion, a harmonica, cymbals between knees, and a bass drum with his foot, while singing a tune. Each instrument requires practice, but it is the coordination of all of them that is truly awesome.

Reading is a single skill that asks students to coordinate many components of their mind. When the coordination is successful, magic happens. Teaching today requires that we recognize the magic. Stop and take notice. Magic occurs regularly; we can train ourselves to see it, feel it and share the awe. We teach reading to provide the opportunity to experience this amazing and empowering phenomenon.

# Children's Literature Connection

Cara Miller and Christy Koegler

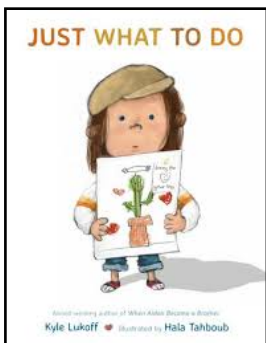
Cara Miller and Christy Koegler are Library Media Technicians in the Corvallis School District. Cara earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Literature from CSU Sacramento, and Christy earned her B.S. in Human Development from OSU, followed by her teaching licensure from WOU. After Cara's time working for bookstores and libraries, and Christy's as an elementary teacher, both love sharing read-alouds with students in their libraries. As well as many other eerie similarities, both Cara and Christy share a love of hiking, knitting, and reading, as well as spending time with their families (each of them having three children).

Welcome back to school! We are hoping to start your year off right with some amazing books to add to your library and lessons!

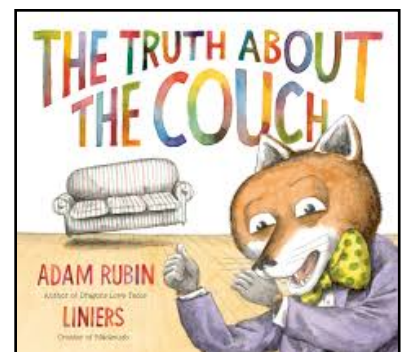
Sometimes when we are busy and trying to move efficiently through our day, messes can feel like another hurdle. ***What Can A Mess Make?*** by Bee Johnson (Henry Holt and Company) is a good reminder of the positive sides of a mess. Told in a poetic rhyming style, this story explores two sisters as they go throughout their day making messes, being creative, arguing, making mistakes, but ultimately reconciling and learning to appreciate each other. The artwork is imaginative, detailed and lends a cozy, warm feel to the book. The words and illustrations work together to create a space that feels safe to make messes, learn, and build relationship. This could lend itself to an interesting writing prompt—what other messes could be made, and what could result?



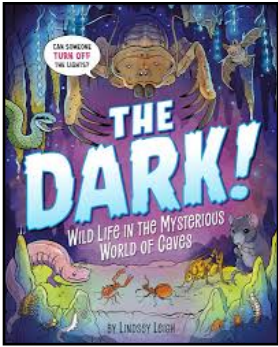
Helping kids process grief is a difficult task, and it can sometimes be just as hard to help other children know how to show empathy in a helpful way. ***Just What To Do*** by Kyle Lukoff (Dial Books for Young Readers) is a beautiful book about a child who is trying to do just that. First, when their brother's cactus dies, they draw a picture for him. But the brother says that he would like a joke instead. So when they go to comfort the next person, they come prepared with a joke, but that isn't quite right. Each time they try to help the next person, they learn that each person needs something different to help them through. In the end, the character ultimately learns that being a friend does not mean always having the answers, but instead, simply being there. This is a great book for building classroom community.



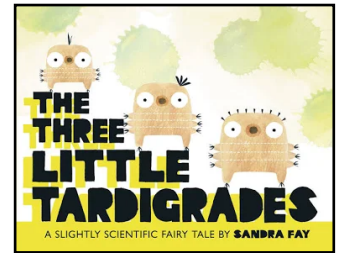
***The Truth About The Couch*** by Adam Rubin and illustrated by Liniers (G.P. Putnam's Sons) is a highly entertaining read that works for multiple ages. While with younger students you can discuss untrustworthy narrators, you could use this same story to talk with older students about sensationalism and fake news. It all starts when a fox introduces readers to couches and their uses. But when a "dangerous" use comes in ("pillow sliding"), an opossum walks onto the scene to censor these dangerous ideas. The fox continues to come up with whimsical and hilarious histories of the origin of couches, which the opossum refuses to believe until a stampede of these "imagined" characters run onto the stage. This is a great book to talk about not only freedom of reading, but also how to discern what is true vs. what is imagined, all while making readers laugh out loud.



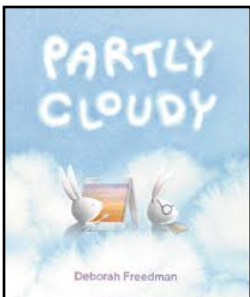
For a highly engaging nonfiction text, *The Dark!: Wild Life in the Mysterious World of Caves* by Lindsey Leigh (Penguin Workshop) is an excellent choice. This book, written in illustrated panels to evoke a graphic novel feel, begins with the definition of caves, and a look at how they form. Then the author delves into the large variety of animal and bug life in caves, and finishes with interesting elements such as “cave records” and features and different types of caves. The pages are chock full of interesting facts about the variety of life that you can find in a place that may seem quite empty. My own students will be very excited to learn about the olm, a cousin of one of the most popular animals among elementary students, the axolotl. Fun, informative, and interesting, this will be a great addition to your classroom library.



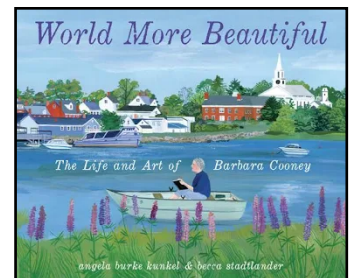
Meet Gavin, Colin, and Doug, three tardigrades that leave their drop of water and go on adventures in *The Three Little Tardigrades: A Slightly Scientific Fairy Tale* by Sandra Fay (Godwin Books). This is a great choice for kids who love unusual creatures. Written in a humorous, fairy tale style, this book actually contains abundant information about these microscopic animals that can survive in extreme conditions- even in space! Wild, bright illustrations and a humongous (to the tardigrades) wolf spider keep the excitement going, while the back matter includes more tardigrade facts and scientific terms.



Studying clouds or the water cycle? *Partly Cloudy* by Deborah Freedman (Viking) could be just the thing to read to your class. Not only are the illustrations darling (two fluffy bunnies discuss the clouds they are seeing), but this book is packed with information. I counted 23 different types of clouds mentioned in the book, and the back matter includes information about the ten main types of clouds, how clouds form, the water cycle, and other cloud-related resources. The text is both entertaining and informative. One bunny uses its imagination, seeing whipped cream and cotton balls, while the other bunny spouts scientific information about the clouds. Every mention of a type of cloud is connected to an informational box at the bottom of the page.



One of my favorite books is *Ox-Cart Man* by Donald Hall, but I really didn’t know much about its illustrator, Barbara Cooney. When I heard that a picture book biography had been published this year, I was intrigued. *World More Beautiful: The Life and Art of Barbara Cooney* by Angela Burke Kunkel (Random House) is the story of Cooney’s childhood (she bonded with her mother over a shared love of art and color) and adult years when she worked as an illustrator (a 60-year career illustrating 110 books). The story culminates with Cooney cooperating with other famous children’s book illustrators to raise money to build a new library in her town. Illustrations by Becca Stadtlander capture the essence of Cooney’s art, and the text feels more poetic than most nonfiction books, helping the reader see and feel the different colors that were so important to Cooney. In the afterword, her son writes something I would make sure to read to students. In a way children can understand, he elaborates on what she wrote in her book, *Miss Rumphius*, that we must all “do something to make the world more beautiful.”





# Learning to Read and Reading to Learn: A False Dichotomy?

Carol Lauritzen - Research & Studies Columnist

Literacy Professor Emerita

A commonly stated adage is that children learn to read and then they read to learn. Is this actually the case? In the Simple View of Reading, which is the theory behind the Science of Reading, reading comprehension is defined as the product of two skills: decoding and language comprehension. Readers need to have foundation skills plus linguistic competence (syntax, vocabulary, and schema formed from background knowledge). Consistent with this theory, a common instructional practice is for teachers to prompt students to activate their background knowledge before reading. But, how do students acquire background knowledge so they can use it to comprehend text? This question led me to explore a variety of research articles about the role of background knowledge in reading comprehension.

Smith, et al. (2021) conducted a critical review of research about the relationship of children's background knowledge and reading comprehension. The critical review included 23 studies that specifically had measures of both background knowledge and reading comprehension. The analysis of the studies found that higher levels of background knowledge enable higher levels of comprehension. This conclusion was true for both skilled and nonskilled readers. There were aspects of this study too numerous to include here (but you can read the full study by clicking on the link in the reference section). The overall outcome of the review was that background knowledge is not just an incidental aspect of reading instruction but rather essential in the comprehension of text. To learn more about how knowledge supports learning, I recommend [Willingham \(2006\)](#).

Caball and Hwang (2020) refer to the Simple View of Reading with its two aspects of decoding and linguistic competence. Much linguistic competence comes from oral language development but an additional element is knowledge of information. The authors' claim is that content-rich language arts instruction can build a knowledge base which is essential for comprehension. Time devoted to content instruction in science and social studies has declined significantly in elementary classrooms in recent years. Using reading instruction in primary grades to supplement content area teaching may support comprehension in higher grades. In a review of research, they found a small but robust set of studies that provide evidence that content-rich early language arts instruction can build both language and knowledge.

Cervetti and Hiebert (2019) state that one of the most researched findings is that the more readers know, the better they comprehend text. There are many types of knowledge that influence comprehension: knowledge of the topic, domain knowledge, cultural knowledge,



vocabulary knowledge and linguistic knowledge. These authors' premise is that while children are learning to read they are also learning from the text, a claim that is supported in the research of Torppa, et al. (2020).

In a study of leisure reading and its relationship to reading comprehension, Torppa, et al. (2020) found a strong association between the amount of leisure reading and reading fluency and comprehension among 2000 students followed from grade 1 to grade 9. The major positive association was between book reading and reading ability. In contrast time spent on digital reading showed a negative association with print reading. Poorer readers showed less leisure reading of all types of texts than did more able readers. Lack of reading fluency seems to be a constraint on leisure reading for students in the lower grades. In the higher grades, more leisure reading has a positive effect on reading comprehension. With the exception of decoding, leisure reading benefits reading development including vocabulary, syntax and background knowledge. This is similar to research results of the value of adults reading aloud to young children.

Legislation about reading has been passed in 42 states but only six of those states included the importance of background knowledge in the legislation. Oregon is not one of those six. It is up to us to make sure our students are acquiring background knowledge because of its critical role in comprehension. Students are reading some type of text so that text should contain information in the content of science, social studies and literature. Children can learn to read and read to learn at the same time. As one of my graduate advisors liked to say, "Content is the grist of the literacy mill."

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# The Fall Blues

Maika Yeigh - Families & Reading

Maika Yeigh is an Associate Professor at Lewis and Clark College, Graduate School of Education and Counseling.

It is an annual fall occurrence for me to find myself humming Green Day's "Wake Me Up When September Ends", even well beyond September 30. Not only do I love the summer with the hints at freedom and unstructured time, but the routines of fall wreak havoc on the stress levels of people in my home. Put-together children can turn into stress monsters and homes can quickly devolve into the chaos of coming and going. While things have improved over the years, fall always has a little reminder for me that this is a stressful time! Please, wake me up when this is over!

It's pretty common for kids to have good days at school, but then fall apart once they return to their families and communities. Home is typically a safe place for kids to decompress—a compliment, right?? But that still doesn't make things easier for tired parents and caregivers. Here are a few ideas that can smooth out some of the rough parts of fall while also using the literacy skills of communication ...

## **Acknowledge the success:**

First of all, congratulations. It is a success that your child knows that they live in a safe place where they will be loved and accepted unconditionally. It is an additional success that they have spent the entire day trying to understand the rules and manage their emotions. Once that part of their day is finished, they may not have additional gas-in-the-tank for keeping themselves together. For young kids, this could look like a tantrum. For older kids this could look like moodiness or repeated worrying.

## **Enter with compassion ... and a joint venture:**

It is difficult to dip into the energy reserves when your child is showing strong emotions at the end of the day. We've been holding it together all day too! Plus there are lots of things to do in the evenings, including homework and preparing food. If you have time to put chores aside, sitting with a book for a calming moment together is helpful. Five minutes of togetherness



**“If you have time to put chores aside, sitting with a book for a calming moment together is helpful. Five minutes of togetherness with your tired child can buy you an hour of calm and also strengthen your relationship.”**

with your tired child can buy you an hour of calm and also strengthen your relationship. If there is no time for that until later in the evening, put on some calming music or ask your child to help you while you chop an onion or fold some clothes. Maybe they can help with the chore, but if not, put on a song to sing together, ask your child to read something to you, or put the homework out nearby so you can talk it through while you chop and fold.

### **Build in some evening routines:**

School time is typically structured – your child needs to be in a specific place at a specified time doing a particular thing almost all day long. It can be stressful following all of the expectations. At the same time, routines are comforting for people, especially children. Instead of the evening being a whirlwind, bring in some routines to calm the space so your child knows what to expect when they get home. Having a time each day when you connect together is important for all children, but especially with teenagers. Evening literacy routines can take all kinds of forms ...

**Playing games:** Of course there are tons of games to play. My favorite (because it is easy) is anything with a deck of cards. Cribbage, Go Fish, Book – all of these require a little bit of cognitive work but are pretty easy to play. And, these are a nice way to get everyone at home together at the end of the day.

**Reading together:** There are many ways to read together and all of them have benefits. Most kids love being read to, and for a busy time keep a short book that you both enjoy on hand. But if your child has reading they need to do for school, sitting together while reading separately supports your relationship. If your child is a reluctant reader or reading something difficult, you can find the text as an audible and listen together.

Fall is full of beauty and bounty, and for many people it is a favorite time of the year. We know how lucky we are here in Oregon to have such a beautiful place for the season! It is also important to acknowledge the challenges for children and their families and caregivers. As new schedules begin, adding some literacy routines could help smooth out those rough evening moments so we don't wish to sleep it all through.



Image by [brgfx](#) on Freepik

# What's Happening with the Portland Reading Council in 2024-2025?

Allysa Davis, Co-president

*Mission:* The Portland Reading Council supports local educators and collaborates with the community to promote equitable access to literacy.

We are excited to share our focus and engaging opportunities coming up this year. Our theme for 2024-2025 is “Making an Impact.”

We will continue to support our **Teachers as Readers Book Groups (TAR)**. Members can request financial support to facilitate a book study at their school/district. Optional WOU graduate credit is available for only \$80. Last year we had 14 successful TAR groups with a total of 124 educator participants! Learn more: [www.portlandreadingcouncil.org](http://www.portlandreadingcouncil.org).



We are continuing to provide book sets so that schools may participate in the **Patricia Gallagher Children's Choice Picture Book Award**. We have ten sets available for loan, and Maggie Mae's bookstore in Gresham offers educators or schools their own set for a discounted rate. Students love participating in this project and casting a vote for their favorite book. Book sets will be available in early October.

Last year we funded four **Community Engagement Literacy Grants** and this year we are hoping to expand this opportunity in line with our mission.

2023 - 2024 Grant Winners: Heidi Blackwell, Oregon City; Gigi Lundgren, St. Ignatius School, Erika Durant, PPS; and Rachel Kimbrow, owner of Linda Letra Books. These projects included providing culturally responsive books at culture-specific events, supporting an alumni literacy mentorship program, supplying books for a neighborhood apartment community center, and purchasing books by independent Latine and BIPOC authors as well as adult ESL materials for several neighborhood Little Free Libraries.

Last year we hosted two fun educator appreciation events, partnering with local bookstores to gather and network together. We enjoyed delicious food and raffled off many amazing door prizes. Be on the lookout for our appreciation events this year!

Learn about these opportunities and more: [www.portlandreadingcouncil.org](http://www.portlandreadingcouncil.org).



# Umpqua Literacy Council

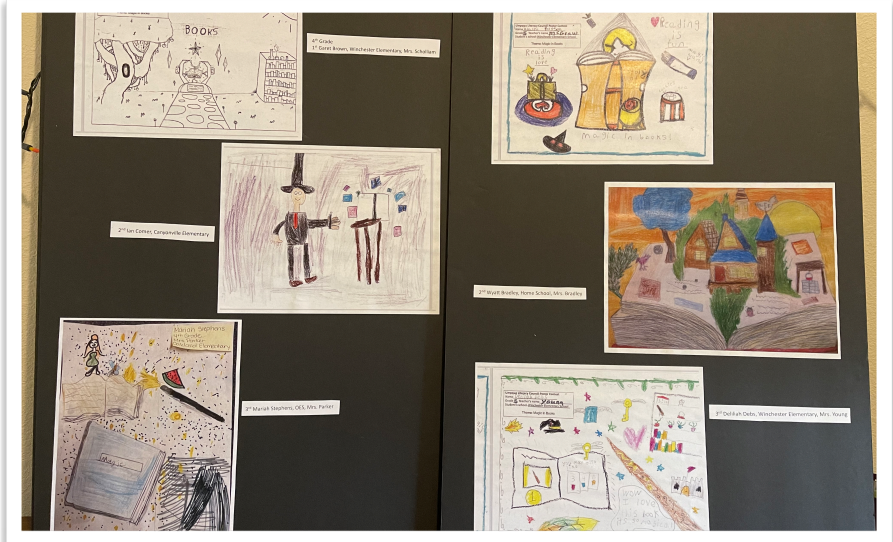
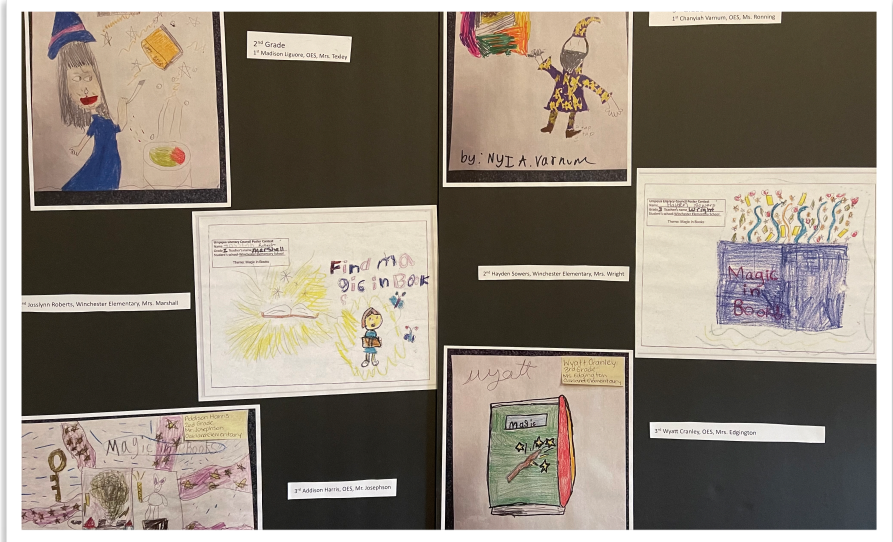
Gail Jackson-Francis

The Umpqua Literacy Council works with Altrusa International of Roseburg to give books away.

The Roseburg Elks gave us a generous grant and we want to remember Joy Malone, who helped charter Umpqua Literacy Council and was a past president with this grant.

We also had a Battle of the Books event where teachers, librarians and coaches received sets of books for there teams to read and participate in the OBOB. Gail Jackson-Francis, Luann Basque and Nancy Anderson are actively involved!

We are also happy to share some of the winning posters from our 2024 poster contest (*right*). These were displayed at the February Celebration of Literacy at Wildlife Safari February 17, 2024.



Additionally, one of our Little Libraries received a community grant of \$100 to help pay for it. (*photo at left*)

The Jo Lane Junior High School Shop Class built the Little Libraries.

After the libraries were constructed, Roseburg Parks and Recreation installed the Little Libraries in five community parks.





# Mid Valley Literacy Council

Tonya Rosling

Dustee Days are Here Again!

For a second year in a row Mid Valley Literacy Council has teamed up with the Corvallis Public Library to honor a beloved member of our community, Dustee the Reading Education Assistant Dog (R.E.A.D.). Dustee fostered the love of literacy in many of our elementary schools by sitting and listening to students read over the years. We continue to honor his memory by celebrating Dustee Days at the library each summer. Mid Valley Reading Council members made treat bags to give away while attendees listened to dog themed stories, had the chance to read with other READ dogs, and participated in other self guided activities at the library.



Above: Mid Valley Reading Council President, Tonya Rosling with Evelyn Higgins (daughter of Oregon State Literacy Association Past President, Stephanie Higgins). These are the treat bags we made to hand out to children celebrating Dustee the R.E.A.D. dog.



Left: Evelyn Higgins with the bronze statue of Dustee, the beloved R.E.A.D. dog



Right: Corvallis-Benton Public Librarian, Heidi Weisel accepts a crate full of goodies for Dustee Days from Evelyn Higgins. Heidi has partnered with Mid Valley Reading Council to make Dustee Days a success!



# Lane County Literacy Council

Priscilla Ing

Lane County Literacy Council awarded its Gayla Clark Community Partner Award to The Bookmine, in Cottage Grove, Oregon.

For three years, The Bookmine, an independent bookstore, has ordered sets of the Patricia Gallagher Children's Choice Picture Book nominated books and sold them at cost to Lane County Literacy Council.

Members of the council can preorder the book sets in the fall while the council orders sets to fill our Patricia Gallagher book bags that are loaned to participating Lane County schools.

A celebration was held at The Bookmine in August when co-owner Gail Hoelzle was presented with the Lane County Literacy Council's Gayla Clark Community Partner Award by Nanci Strickland.





## Growing Literacy in Oregon

OSLA serves educators, communities, and learners of all ages by supporting research-based literacy development that prioritizes equitable access, honors and celebrates diversity, and promotes social justice.

An affiliate of the [International Literacy Association](#) (ILA)

# Apply for a Literacy Project Grant

Current, fully paid members of OSLA are invited to apply for literacy project grants of \$250 or \$500.

The selection committee will use the following criteria in making their decisions:

- The clarity and completeness of the application
- The extent of the project's impact
- The project's cultural relevance and value in promoting literacy
- The use of effective literacy practices
- The sustainability of the project after special grant funding

Before applying, please review the [2024 Literacy Grant Rubric here](#).

2024-2025 Literacy Grant Application Deadline: Nov. 14, 2024

We want to celebrate your project by promoting it with OSLA members. All winners will be expected to write an article or create a digital artifact that can be shared in the *ORacle Newsletter* and on social media, and to present the project to your local reading council. You may be requested to share your resources and/or receipts upon notification of grant.

\$500 winners will also need to create a presentation that can be shared digitally at the OSLA 2025 conference. OSLA will support winners in this process.

Winners of the grants will be notified early December 2024. A list of winners will be published in the *ORacle Newsletter* and posted on media sources.

Visit [www.oregonread.org](http://www.oregonread.org) to see grant winners from previous years' projects.

Please email OSLA Vice President Ryann Furrer [ryann@oregonread.org](mailto:ryann@oregonread.org) with any questions.

\*Note: Only current OSLA members are eligible to apply. If you are not a current member, unsure of your membership status, or not sure of what council you belong to, please email Membership Coordinator Stacey Dolezal BEFORE applying: [membership@oregonread.org](mailto:membership@oregonread.org)