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President's Message...

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Michigan Reading Association

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President's Message...

by Colby Sharp, MRA President 2020-2021

Dear MRA Members,

The other day, I was having a particularly difficult day at school. I couldn't put my finger on why the day was so challenging. None of my students were sick or in quarantine, and everyone was being nice to each other. My lessons seemed to go over pretty well, and I was feeling proud of the growth I was seeing in my fifth graders.

I think that the 2020-2021 school year is just heavy. Educators have so much on their plates in a normal year, and now we add things like masks, quarantine, social distancing, wiping down desks, virtual learners, and so much more to the mix. I wasn't having a bad day because something went wrong that day; I was having a bad day because my plate was as full as it had ever been, and I felt a little lost about what I could do.

When I am feeling overwhelmed I often pick up a book and read, so that is what I did. We put aside the next lesson and started a new read aloud, *Halfway to Harmony* by Barbara O'Connor. We met Walter and Posey, and our classroom was transported from Parma, Michigan to Harmony, Georgia. The kids were captivated, and they begged for more. So I kept reading.

Taking the time to lose ourselves in a story seemed to turn around the day. I felt better about things, and the kids couldn't stop talking about the book. During a time where we have so much on our plates, I hope that you will join me in turning to story. I know that the power of story brought so many of us to this profession, and I believe that it will help us get through this very difficult time.

- Colby Sharp



Colby Sharp