

July 2022

From the Editors...

Meghan Block
Central Michigan University

Carlin Borsheim-Black
Central Michigan University

Troy Hicks
Central Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mrj>

Recommended Citation

Block, Meghan; Borsheim-Black, Carlin; and Hicks, Troy (2022) "From the Editors...," *Michigan Reading Journal*: Vol. 54: Iss. 3, Article 3.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mrj/vol54/iss3/3>

This work is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Michigan Reading Journal by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

From the Editors...

by Meghan Block, Carlin Borsheim-Black, and Troy Hicks

This second pandemic-infused school year has been another one of challenges for educators, students, and their families, though the challenges are not only about masks, vaccines, and safety protocols. Instead, new battles are being fought around Critical Race Theory and book bans. However, what we have come to learn is that these battles are not so much *new* as they are *renewed*, and the authors in this issue take up a number of these ideas in the articles ahead and highlight the resiliency that educators show in their classrooms, schools, and communities.



Meghan Block



**Carlin
Borsheim-Black**



Troy Hicks

In our *Bridging Research to Practice* section, we discover “The Magic of the Morning Message: Literacy Strategies Used in Preschool Classrooms.” Here, Jill Claxton, Tomoko Wakabayashi, Katherine Homant, Beth Hardin, and Shun Takai offer ethnographic research that underscores the importance of morning meeting time in the pre-k classroom to support young children’s literacy development.

Then, in our *Voices from the Region* section, Kim Peters’ article, “Virtual Literacy Coaching: A Response to Time, Space, and Resources,” describes the process her local ISD followed as they learned to leverage virtual tools to implement literacy coaching, including advice for selecting platforms, developing synchronous coaching sessions, and utilizing asynchronous reflection opportunities to increase literacy coaches’ capacity for helping their colleagues and students. From there, Dana VanderLugt, Kathy Levandoski, and Erica R. Hamilton explore ways for “Nurturing the Learning Zone: Moving Toward Hope and Possibility while Coaching through the COVID-19 Pandemic.” They, too, share coaching ideas intended to move teachers from their performance zone and into a learning zone to improve instruction. Continuing with their regular contributions to *MRJ*, we thank Laura Gabrion and Jenelle Williams for their “Taking Up the Work: Snapshots of Disciplinary Literacy Instruction, Part I.” In this piece, they share ideas for enhancing disciplinary literacy instruction at all grade levels. Next, “Using Crossover Picturebooks to Discuss Emotions,” William Bintz and Shabnam Moini Chaghervand share ideas for using crossover literature to gain perspective on and talk about emotions. Rounding out our *Voices* section for this issue, we have MRA’s vice-president and 2023 conference chair, Andy Schoenborn, who offers us “A Spark of Light in the Darkness” to describe routines, practices, and habits of mind that he incorporates into his literacy classroom to nurture independent readers and writers across a variety of teaching contexts. This piece also includes “I See You,” a poem he composed for and performed at the MRA 2022 conference.

From there, our *Critical Issues* section offers resources on a topic that has been taking over the state and nation: book bans. Here, in “Standing Up and Pushing Back: Resources for a Conversation Around Book

Bans and Censorship,” Troy Hicks, Laura Gabrion, Kathy Lester, and Andy Schoenborn offer a collection of resources to navigate the challenges of dealing with local books bans, knowing that book challenges can be stressful and time-consuming for the literacy teachers and librarians. With a link to a companion Google Doc full of even more links to additional resources, this piece can be very useful for sharing with colleagues and concerned community members.

With our *Must Reads* section, Lynette Suckow offers us her continuing insights on Great Lakes, Great Books: A New Season, sharing a variety of texts for young readers, carrying them through this season of growth and renewal with stories that range from a young girl and her grandmother nurturing a bird back to health to another young woman revisiting her father’s homeland of Jamaica, only to find herself caught in both an actual hurricane and an emotional storm of her own. We thank Lynette and the entire Great Lakes Great Books committee for their continued efforts at promoting reading around the state. Then, Amber Lawson critiques a “lock and load” literacy strategy from the Brainspring Orton-Gillingham Phonics First Kindergarten Program, with a focus on the harmful, “spirit-murdering” effects of using a gun-related metaphor for all students, especially Black and Brown children in our literacy classrooms.

Finally, as we come to the end of this issue’s introduction, it is amazing to see that we are two years into our three-year editorship. Recently, MRA’s board has put out a call for the next editors of *MRJ*. We welcome any questions that you might have about becoming editor and encourage you to look at the call for editors on the next page. Applications for the new editorial team will be due on January 1, 2023, and we look forward to collaborating with the next editor or editorial team.

Sincerely,

Meghan Block, Carlin Borsheim-Black, and Troy Hicks
Co-Editors, *Michigan Reading Journal*
mrj@cmich.edu



All stock images in this issue, unless otherwise noted, are used with permission under an open license from Unsplash.com.