
March 2023

From the Editors...

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Recommended Citation

Block, Meghan; Borsheim-Black, Carlin; and Hicks, Troy (2023) "From the Editors...," *Michigan Reading Journal*: Vol. 55: Iss. 2, Article 3.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mrj/vol55/iss2/3>

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From the Editors...

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

As we head into the long stretch of a Michigan winter, we are pleased to share an issue of *MRJ* that shines light on many effective practices for students' literacy learning, teachers' professional development, and bringing joy into our reading lives.



Meghan Block



**Carlin
Borsheim-Black**



Troy Hicks

In our *Bridging Research to Practice* section, Melissa Blake from Jenison International Academy and Troy Hicks from Central Michigan University

document the experiences of an online professional development institute that, even though many of us are moving back to more face-to-face PD, still demonstrates ideas that can be implemented to empower teachers and support effective collaboration.

We are also delighted to share a rich collection of articles in our *Voices from the Region* section. To begin, in their article, “Why Not Sign? Classrooms as Sites of d/Deaf and Multilingual Literacy Development,” Dawnavyn James from University at Buffalo and Brianne Pitts from Western Michigan University offer an important perspective on integrating support for d/Deaf and hard of hearing students in ways that support community building and literacy learning for all students.

In their piece, “The Best Way to Learn a Pedagogy is Practice: A Project-Based Learning Journey,” Kelly Margot and Katherine Worden, a professor/teacher candidate team from Grand Valley State University, share their experiences with project-based learning from their perspectives as literacy teacher educator and teacher candidate.

Next, Rui Niu-Cooper from Grand Valley State University writes about using a learner self-narrative-based approach to support English Learners' comprehension. Niu-Cooper demonstrates the ways this approach increases ELs' engagement in learning. The learner self-narrative-based approach elevates ELs' voices and experiences as they compose meaningful texts to share their stories.

Finally, Amy Ford, Kayla Szymanski, and Isabel Slate—another professor/teacher candidate research team—from Central Michigan University, partner with Mount Pleasant teacher Rachel Derusha, share lessons learned from a digital partnership between middle school and teacher education classrooms designed to support choice reading in ELA classrooms.

In our *Critical Issues* section, Jenelle Williams, literacy consultant at Oakland Schools, along with co-authors Stacie Angel, Supervisor of Instructional Services in Berkley, Jen Wilcox, Curriculum Coordinator for

Berkley Schools, and Angie Church, Instructional Coach at Berkley High School, share the story of a district-wide collaboration aimed at offering abundant reading opportunities for all students in their article, “Centering Community in Disciplinary Literacy Implementation: One District’s Story.”

Then, Shalika Robie, formerly of the Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency, and now based in Nashville, provides us with both a post-pandemic rationale and actionable steps for using instructional technologies to assist students with disabilities.

In our *Must Reads* section, we again highlight some Great Lakes, Great Books selections with an update from Lynette Suckow, who encourages us to think about what makes a “good book” and how these books inspire the joy of reading. As always, her recommendations are timely and compelling, providing us with some great reads to get through a Michigan winter. Next, our co-editor, Troy Hicks, brings his own interest in digital literacies to a review of a new Heinemann professional text, *Expanding Literacy*, written by Brett Pierce, a producer from Sesame Workshop and founder of the non-profit Median Stories.

Finally, we share a crowd-sourced review of *Reading Above the Fray* by Julia Lindsey. The authors of this had recently participated in a 5-session book club discussing Fray’s book. This review was a collaborative effort by some participants and offers perspective on the usefulness of this book in supporting K-2 literacy instruction.

As we share this penultimate issue in our three-year term as editors of *MRJ*, we again thank the entire team that brings the ideas of *MRJ* authors to the page. In particular, this month we provide a shoutout to our graphic designer, Susan Haring, who did an exceptional job bringing our Fall 2022 issue to life with so many student contributions—and who has been especially patient with us over the past few years as we continue to copy edit (and copy edit again, and again) the PDFs she sends us in the final days before shipping *MRJ* to the printer and to be published on our website: <scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mrj>. Susan, we appreciate your contributions to *MRJ* through the timely and professional ways in which you work.

Sincerely,

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