

American Reading Forum (ARF) Annual Conference
Wednesday, December 5 - Saturday, December 8, 2018
Sundial Beach and Tennis Resort, Sanibel Island, FL

“All Call to Action: Literacy as a Change Agent”

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We find ourselves at a social, environmental, and political turning point that beckons us to become increasingly mindful about the changes we want to see in our schools, communities, and educational systems. Rather than allowing for divisiveness in our social fabric, we envision the study of literacy bringing scholars together in communities of research and practice to ask critical questions, such as: What are essential literacy and language instructional practices that stem from an asset-based orientation and promote cultural and linguistic diversity? To what extent are we, as researchers and teachers of literacy, examining our own assumptions and willingly entering into difficult conversations about whose literacies matter? To what extent might we be perpetuating a racialized system that has marginalized students of color for decades, and in what ways are we working to dismantle racism?

When we allow ourselves to entertain the idea of “what’s possible” rather than “what’s wrong” in education, we enter into conversations about literacy and social justice with a belief that teachers can make a positive difference in the lives of children and *all* children can learn. When we walk into a classroom with the belief in the potential of teachers and their students, we operate from an underlying assumption that everyone can grow, including ourselves. Right here, in this moment, there is always more to learn. Recognizing our own and others’ areas for growth from an asset-based perspective frames the entire notion of educational change as *progress*. This is not to say that everyone is starting from the same and equal playing field. On the contrary, the inequities in our systems are deeply rooted, and they are perpetuated when we fail to remember that the enterprise of education is, at a fundamental level, a human one. Educators hope for a system where individuals can learn through experiences with a critical lens. This can only occur if all learners (regardless of age) are given opportunities to effectively explore and construct this knowledge.

Researchers are now aiming to use literacy as a vessel to dismantle social injustice and inequalities. Through our research, teaching, leadership, and service, we have the opportunity to share resources, collaborate with one another, and explore innovative ideas. Along the way, we must remain vigilant about interrogating our assumptions and our actions to avoid committing conscious or unconscious exploitation and exclusions of people who have been historically marginalized such as those who identify as people of color, women, LGBTQ, immigrants, refugees, emergent bilinguals, disabled, and elderly.

*“I would not have you descend into your own dream.
I would have you be a conscious citizen of this terrible and beautiful world.”*
~ Ta-Nehisi Coates

This **All Call to Action** for ARF 2018 is an invitation to come together to share the ways in which our work in the areas of literacy and social justice are providing opportunities for conversations about “what’s possible” in U.S. schools, classrooms, communities today and how our work raises critical, and perhaps sometimes difficult to discuss, subjects. ARF 2018 can be a space for such conversations if we make it such.

Intention for interactive/dialogic exchange

At the American Reading Forum 2018, we seek to create a space for dialogic engagement around issues of social justice and education within the context of literacy. These engagements help to facilitate growth and strength with diversity, language, voices, cultures, and experiences. While papers, keynotes, and other standard conference attributes are certainly part of that conversation, they constitute merely an opening for discussion. We will offer multiple opportunities throughout the conference for participation online, in public forums like Twitter, and in more private spaces created specifically for intra-conference use. We will also provide multiple low tech settings for discussion in both written and verbal forms. Throughout the weekend, at various points, the conference chairs and keynote speakers will offer moments to reflect and build on the discussions that are occurring. Finally, ARF will provide an ongoing forum to continue the conversation until we are able to meet again in 2019. We have the opportunity to become a powerful voice for reform within the educational community, and we want to leverage that opportunity through the shared work of envisioning, challenging obstacles, and inspiring positive change.

Considering that the **American Reading Forum** values the work and perspectives of a diverse array of stakeholders in the literacy field, we encourage practitioners, administrators, literacy coaches, and researchers to submit proposals that speak to the overall conference theme including following sub-themes:

- Critical literacy in reading and writing
- Social justice in literacy
- Literacy with historically marginalized, racialized student populations
- Literacy teacher identity formation
- Literacies in diverse and/or out-of-school contexts
- Administrators as instructional leaders of literacy
- Literacy and language scholarship as activism
- Literacies with students and teachers of color

Keynote Speakers for the 2018 Conference

Dr. Annemarie Sullivan Palincsar, Jean and Charles Walgreen, Jr. Professor of Reading and Literacy and Arthur F. Thurnau Professor in the School of Education at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Dr. Robert Jiménez, Professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University and Co-editor of *Reading Research Quarterly*

Dr. Zhihui Fang, Professor and head of Reading and Literacy Education in the School of Teaching and Learning at the University of Florida

Dr. Kelly Williams and Nadine Hall, Co-directors of Diversity, Greenhills School (grades 6-12), Ann Arbor, Michigan. Dr. Williams has taught 9th, 11th, and 12th grade English and been the English Department Chair for grade 6-12, Mrs. Hall has taught 7th, 8th, 9th and 12th grade Social Studies.

Important Dates

August 1, 2018 – Deadline for proposals

September 1, 2018 – Feedback on proposals will be sent out via email

October 1, 2018 – Graduate student proposals must be submitted

October 1, 2018 – Early bird conference registration ends

November 1, 2018 – Feedback on graduate student proposals will be sent out

November 15, 2018 – Graduate student early bird registration ends

November 2018 – Attendees must make reservations at the Sundial

November 11, 2018 – Online conference registration ends

December 5-8, 2018 – Conference @ Sundial Resort, Sanibel Island, FL

Types of Proposals

- Paper
- Symposium
- Problem's Court
- Advancing Literacy

General Information

Proposals for papers, symposia, problem's court, and advancing literacy sessions will be considered for inclusion in the 2018 American Reading Forum Annual Conference Program if they are received by August 1, 2018. Conference proposals are peer-reviewed and all presenters are expected to register and attend the conference to present. The membership of the American Reading Forum has consistently requested that people submit proposals only if they fully believe presentation obligations can be met.

Generally, a person will appear only once as a presenter in the program but could also appear as a discussant for one of the various sessions. It is our hope that all presenters will become active conferees. All presenters are invited to submit their papers for consideration for publication in the Yearbook of the American Reading Forum. Discussants and members of the audience are invited to write reactions for such consideration. However, if the original paper is not accepted in the peer review process, related reaction papers will be dropped from consideration.

Guidelines for Submitting Proposals (All sessions will run for 75 minutes total.)

Paper sessions The program committee will schedule two to four papers on related topics in a session. If individuals submitting the proposal have not named a discussant, the program committee may appoint a discussant who will start the session and facilitate a 15-minute discussion about the papers, including comments and questions from the audience. The timing of sessions may be adjusted based on the number of presentations scheduled for the session.

Symposia Those proposing a symposium should assemble a session on one topic or multiple but related topics focused on the conference theme. Symposium proposers should name their own chairs, discussants, and any others who may have a specific role in the program. Novel approaches, ways of presenting, and/or ways of involving the audience are welcome in the symposium sessions. If additional time is needed, please request additional time on the proposal cover sheet.

Problem's Court In the first 20-30 minutes of a problem's court, the presenters should pose a persistent problem of practice or opportunity for growth in the field of literacy research and instruction, supported by theoretical and/or empirical evidence and connected to the conference theme. The next 20-30 minutes should be reserved for a facilitated, critical conversation with the audience about the ways in which this problem or opportunity has been treated in the past, what has advanced our progress, and what has hindered it. In the final 20-30 minutes, the emphasis of the discussion should move toward developing concrete actions items that individuals or small groups can continue to pursue in their own contexts. These might include directions for research, research-practice partnerships, or other steps to be initiated once the conference is completed. The session should close with a 5-10 minute wrap-up of the discussion by the presenters. Problem's court proposals should identify how many presenters will be involved in the session and their specific roles (e.g., presenters, discussion facilitators, timekeepers).

Advancing Literacy Advancing literacy presentations should describe an ongoing study, work in the planning stages, or theoretical work. The program committee will organize the papers into groups of three so that related topics will share a table. Presenters will each share for 15 minutes with 10 minutes for follow-up discussion (25 minutes total per presentation).

Materials to be Submitted with a Proposal

**PLEASE, NO NAMES ON PROPOSAL DESCRIPTIONS.
NAMES SHOULD APPEAR ONLY ON THE COVER SHEET.**

Proposal submission deadline: August 1, 2018

Graduate student proposal submission deadline: October 1, 2018

All proposals must be submitted electronically to [ARF 2018 Submission](#) and must include the following:

1. One cover sheet (include name, institutional affiliation, mailing address, cell/office telephone(s), additional presenter name(s) and their institutional affiliation, mailing address, cell/office telephone).
2. Description of proposal (including proposal type) following specific session guidelines (see next page).

NOTE: Graduate Students interested in a Graduate Student Scholarship should submit their proposals by October 1, 2018 to Nance Wilson (nance.wilson@cortland.edu). Information about this scholarship can be found under Graduate Student Award at <http://www.americanreadingforum.org/>.

Receipt of the proposal and notification of the program committee's decision will be sent electronically to the first author.

Paper proposals must include a two-to-three-page, double-spaced summary of the proposal including:

- Objectives
- Perspectives or theoretical framework
- Methods and/or techniques
- Data source(s)
- Results, conclusions, point of view
- Educational or scientific importance

Symposium proposals should be outlined in a two-to-three-page, double-spaced summary including:

- Objectives
- Perspectives or theoretical framework
- Educational or scientific importance
- Key questions for discussion (or other methods of audience participation, when relevant)

Problem's Court proposals should be outlined in a two-to-three-page, double-spaced summary including:

- Statement of problem/opportunity for growth in the field of literacy
- Historical context including perspectives or theoretical framework
- Educational or scientific importance
- Key questions for discussion/ ideas for facilitation
- Initial ideas on “next steps”

Advancing Literacy proposals should be outlined in a two-to-three-page, double-spaced summary including:

- Objectives for presenting the work
- Developing perspectives or theoretical framework
- Developing methods and/or techniques
- Key questions for discussion

Audio Visual Equipment: Data projectors will be provided; however, laptops, or other computer equipment will not be provided. Presenters are responsible for additional equipment, including adapters unique to their laptops. NOTE: Audiovisual equipment (e.g., LCD projectors, screens) are NOT provided for the roundtable sessions.

We encourage applicants, ARF members, and conference attendees to promote the conference and the research presented using social media via #ARF18.