

# Specialized Literacy Professionals

A Special Interest Group of the International Reading Association

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# The Literacy Professional

A publication of IRA's *Specialized Literacy Professionals* Special Interest Group

## 3rd Literacy Coaching Summit Scheduled

The Literacy Coaching Summit (co-sponsored by the *Specialized Literacy Professionals* SIG) is moving from the Lone Star State to the Keystone State for 2011. All members of *Specialized Literacy Professionals* and their colleagues are welcome to attend the summit in Philadelphia. A quality professional development experience awaits all! Those of you who attended that past two summits hosted by Texas A&M and chaired by Jack Cassidy can expect the same high standard for the 2011 summit.



Annemarie Jay and Mary Strong, faculty at The Widener University, a private university in suburban Philadelphia, will host the 3rd International Literacy Coaching Summit and Widener University Reading Conference on April 14, 15 and 16, 2011, at the Center City Sheraton in Philadelphia. The theme for this year's conference is *Literacy Coaching: Keystone to Quality Reading Instruction*. Mark your calendars now! Early registration and proposals to present at the conference are due January 15, 2011.

Rita Bean will chair the pre-conference institute on literacy coaching on Thursday, April 14th from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Registration for this event is limited to 150 attendees and requires separate registration. Jay and Strong as well as K-12 literacy coaching practitioners will also take part in the institute. Lunch is included as part of the institute.

Sessions, symposia, roundtable discussions and poster presentations will be held Friday and Saturday, April 15 and 16. Dynamic speakers including Sharon Walpole, Jack Cassidy, Shelly Wepner, Maureen McLaughlin, Barb Marinak, Stephanie Romano, Jolene Borgese, Dick Heyler, Lynne Dorfman and Rose Cappelli will share information on literacy coaching and other pertinent educational topics. Children's authors Judy Schachner (Friday) and Frank Murphy (Saturday) will be the luncheon speakers.

Widener University will offer a 3 credit graduate course at a reduced fee. Course hours for ED 566: *Foundations of Literacy Coaching* will begin at the summit. Teachers interested in taking the course must register for the summit and participate in the Friday and Saturday sessions.

Exhibitors such as Lakeshore, Reading Matters, American Reading Company, Achieve 3000 and others will have informative displays for attendees. Books by the speakers and authors will be available for sale during the conference.

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## Our Members Publish

**Julie Ankrum** (University of Pittsburgh—Jonestown) and **Aimee Morewood** (West Virginia University) co-wrote, "Teachers' perceptions of the influence of professional development on their knowledge of content, pedagogy, and curriculum," which was included in the *2009 College Reading Association Yearbook*. Ankrum was also co-author of the chapter, "Comprehending Text," in *Cases of Successful Literacy Teachers*, published by Sage.

**Camille Blachowicz, Shari Frost, Donna Ogle, and Roberta Buhle** (all from National Louis University, Illinois) were among the authors of the article, "Hit the Ground Running: Preparing and Supporting Reading Coaches for Urban Schools," which was published in *The Reading Teacher*. Frost, Buhle and Blachowicz also worked together to produce *Effective Literacy Coaching: Building Expertise and a Culture of Literacy: An ASCD Action Tool*, published by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Blachowicz additionally co-authored the chapter, "Vocabulary visits," in the book *Essential Readings on Early Literacy*, published by the International Reading Association.

**Carrice Cummins** (Louisiana Tech University) was co-author of the book *Read: Seventy Strategies to Support Reading Success*, published by Wiley.

**Linda Gambrell** (Clemson University) and **Barbara Marinak** (Pennsylvania State University—Harrisburg) worked together on the articles, "Reading motivation: Exploring the elementary gender gap," which was published in *Literacy Research and Instruction*, and "Ways to teach informational text," which appeared in *Social Studies for Young Learners*.

**Jack Cassidy, Sherrye Garrett, and Corrine Valadez** (all Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi) co-authored the article, "Literacy Trends and Issues: A Look at the Five Pillars and the Cement That Supports Them" for *The Reading Teacher*. Cassidy and Garrett worked with **Connie Patchett** (Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi) to produce the chapter, "Literacy coaching: Yesterday, today & tomorrow," of the book, *Literacy Coaching: Research & Practice*, which was published by the Center for Educational Development Evaluation & Research, and edited by Jack Cassidy, Sherrye Garrett, and **Misty Sailors** (University of Texas—San Antonio). Garrett additionally co-authored with **Debra Murphy** (Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi), the article, "There is more to nonfiction than text: Can students interpret text and visual elements in nonfiction?" which was published in *The Reading Professor*.

**Ken and Yetta Goodman** (both University of Arizona), were the subjects of a book of essays in tribute to their work, titled *Defying Convention, Inventing the Future in Literacy Research and Practice*, which was published by Routledge. Yetta Goodman was also co-editor of the book, *Changing Literacies for Changing Times*, also published by Routledge. Meanwhile, Ken Goodman created a DVD called *The Reading Game*.

**Nancy Guth** (Stafford County Public Schools) and **Tami Pratt-Fartro** (University of Mary Washington) co-wrote the book, *Literacy Coaching to Build Adolescent Learning*, which was published by Corwin Press.

**Roger Heym** (Natomas Unified School District, California) was co-author of the book, *Word Content Area Words*, published by Shell Education.

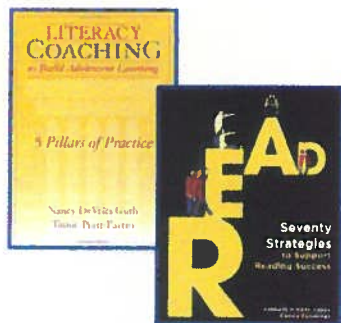
**Marty Hougen** (Higher Education Collaborative, Texas) was among the authors of the article, "Why elementary teachers might be inadequately prepared to teach reading" in the *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, as well as the chapter, "The role of teacher education programs in preparing teachers for implementing evidence-based reading practices" in the book, *Handbook on implementing evidence based academic interventions*.

**Jill Lewis** (New Jersey City University) wrote the book, *Essential Questions in Adolescent Literacy: Teachers and Researchers Describe What Works in Classrooms*, which was published by Guilford.

**Robert Rickleman and Maryann Mraz** (both University of North Carolina—Charlotte) were among the authors of the article, "Explicit vocabulary instruction for the struggling reader," which appeared in *Reading & Writing Quarterly*. They also worked together on the chapter, "Content-area reading: Past, present and future," which appeared in the book, *Literacy Instruction for Adolescents: Research-Based Practices*, which was co-edited by **Karen**



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**Wood** (University of North Carolina—Charlotte), and published by Guilford. Rickleman also contributed to the chapter, "Understanding the content," of the book, *Considerations for the Alternate Assessment based on Modified Achievement Standards (AA-MAS): Understanding the Eligible Population and Applying that Knowledge to their Instruction and Assessment*, published by the New York Comprehensive Center. Maryann Mraz was also a contributing author of the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the book, *Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum*, published by Allyn & Bacon.

**Victoria Risko** (Vanderbilt University) had five publications, two of which she co-authored with **Doris Walker-Dalhouse** (Marquette University). They were "Parents and Teachers: Talking With or Past One Another—or Not Talking at All?" and "Crossing Boundaries and Initiating Conversations about RTI: Understanding and Applying Differentiated Classroom Instruction," both of which appeared in *The Reading Teacher*. Risko's remaining three publications were "Reading Teacher Education: Building an Evidence Base" for the *Journal of Reading Education*, "When You Don't Speak Their Language: Guiding English-Language Learners Through Conversations About Text" for *The Reading Teacher*, and "Detailing Reflection Instruction: The Efficacy of a Guided Instructional Procedure on Prospective Teachers' Pedagogical Reasoning" for *Action on Teacher Education Research*.

**Michael Shaw** (St. Thomas Aquinas University) published the article, "Collecting Pennies for Peace" in *Reading Today*.

**Mary-Ellen Vogt** (California State University—Long Beach) co-authored a series of books on the SIOP model including, *Making Content Comprehensible for Elementary English Learners: The SIOP Model*, *Making Content Comprehensible for Secondary English Learners: The SIOP Model*, *The SIOP Model for Teaching Mathematics to English Learners*, *The SIOP Model for Teaching Science to English Learners*, and *The SIOP Model for Teaching English-Language Arts to English Learners*, all of which were published by Allyn & Bacon.

## ✓ Check the Red Check

Do you have a red check on the mailing label on the front of this newsletter? If you do, it means your membership in our SIG is about to expire. If you have two red checks, it means your membership has already expired. In either case, it is time to RENEW your membership. Our SIG includes as its members many prominent leaders in the field, including present IRA board members Patricia Edwards, Maryann Manning, Donald Leu, Taffy Raphael, and Ray Reutzel as well as former presidents Ira Aaron, Richard Allington, Mary Austin, Jack Cassidy, Jerry Johns, Linda Gambrell, Walter MacGinitie, Dolores B. Malcolm, Donna Ogle, Kathryn Ransom, Carol Santa, Doris Roettger-Svoboda, Timothy Shanahan, Dorothy Strickland, and MaryEllen Vogt. Many former IRA board members also belong.

### 3rd Literacy Coaching Summit Scheduled, Continued

The Sheraton (17th & Race Sts.) is a beautiful facility within walking distance to museums, restaurants and historic sites. Contact the Sheraton directly for reservations (215-448-2000) or use the link for the hotel on the conference website: [www.widener.edu/literacycoachingsummit](http://www.widener.edu/literacycoachingsummit). Conference attendees will receive reduced rates for accommodations and parking courtesy of the Sheraton. The hotel is approximately a fifteen minute cab ride from the Philadelphia International Airport.

If you have any preliminary questions about the conference or do not have access to the website, you may use the conference email: [literacysummit2011@gmail.com](mailto:literacysummit2011@gmail.com) for inquiries.

Act 48 credit through the Department of Education is available for Pennsylvania teachers who attend the conference.

While you are in Philadelphia for the Literacy Coaching Summit and Widener University Reading Conference, plan to see the sites and enjoy a cheese steak or soft pretzel. Come for the investment in knowledge, the professional networking, and the good times and good foods of Philadelphia.



## Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Reading Specialists to be Literacy Coaches



By Michael L. Shaw  
St. Thomas Aquinas College

*The experience of working as a literacy coach was eye opening. It allowed me to apply the knowledge and skills I have acquired, I listened to the teacher's concerns, identified an area to work on, helped create a plan based on the identified needs and guided the teacher through the lesson...With my ability to evaluate and create plans to meet children's reading needs, I can see myself becoming very involved with guiding the school community on better reading and writing practices.*



—Linda, first grade teacher

Linda completed this coaching initiative in our graduate MEd. Literacy program course Organizing and Supervising the Literacy Program by co-teaching a lesson with a colleague in her school. Afterwards, they reflected on the impact of the lesson on student learning. Linda is now a certified literacy specialist. She was able to have this positive experience because we taught the knowledge and skills base needed for effective coaching and planned for her collaborate and coach a supportive colleague.

### Background

In 2003 IRA made a major paradigm shift in its Standards for Reading Professionals (International Reading Association, 2004) by requiring programs applying for IRA national recognition to expand the preparation of reading specialists who work with students to include communicating and collaborating with teachers in schools. This paradigm shift reflected the expanding role of the reading specialist to effect schoolwide changes that increased student achievement. (Bean, Swan, and Knaub, 2003).

### The Challenges

This reconceptualization of the roles and responsibilities of the reading specialist to include literacy coaching raised two significant challenges for graduate reading/literacy programs:

- How can we expect inexperienced teachers to implement successful coaching when many do not have a track record of successful literacy teaching with their own students?
- How can we expect inexperienced teachers to coach experienced teachers?

### Meeting the Challenges

We focused on meeting those challenges by explicitly teaching candidates how to communicate and collaborate with teachers and putting them in supportive situations. We also made the decision to use a developmental approach based on the three Levels of coaching identified in the IRA Position Statement on the Roles and Qualifications of the

Reading Coach in the United States (International Reading Association, 2004). We increased levels of coaching as candidates developed greater knowledge and skills. Listed below are examples of our coaching initiatives:

- Level One Coaching (Informal): Develop curriculum and provide instructional materials to colleagues (e.g., Handbooks of Best Practices, graphic organizers, recommended books and web sites)
- Level Two Coaching (More Formal): Co-plan lessons with teachers, help teachers analyze student work.
- Level Three Coaching (Formal): Model or co-teach lessons, facilitate study groups, analyze a school's literacy program make recommendations for improvement, write a grant proposal, make professional development presentations for teachers.

Lastly, we embraced the philosophy expressed in the IRA 2010 Standards that graduate literacy programs are preparing candidates to have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions at the "novice [emphasis added] level of expertise." (IRA, 2010 Standards for Reading Professionals, p. 61).

### Tips for Developing Successful Coaching Initiatives in the Graduate Literacy Program

As we refined our program, we focused on developing ways to support coaching initiatives. The following tips provide helpful suggestions:

- **Communicate with principals to explain IRA requirements and ask for support**  
Emphasize how coaching initiatives provide effective professional development for teachers that leads to increased student achievement.

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Shaw, Continued

- **Use class time to implement coaching dress rehearsals**  
Our classes provide a nurturing environment for practicing coaching and providing constructive feedback to prepare coaching teachers in schools.
- **Be Flexible and Adaptive**  
Make accommodations to meet individual needs (e.g., partnering, modifying assignments).
- **Create Supportive Situations**  
Have candidates complete coaching initiatives with supportive colleagues.

**Conclusion**

Since we transformed our program to include coaching, completer surveys show that 98 percent of graduates either strongly agree or agree that they feel prepared to "Use understanding of the organization and supervision of the literacy program to be able to take a leadership role in enhancing, enriching, and reforming education." The other two percent focused on their lack of confidence and inexperience.

Preparing reading specialists to be literacy coaches who have vision, passion, and the ability to communicate and collaborate gives us great hope for the future.

**References**

Bean, R.M, Swan, A.L., & Knaub, R. "Reading specialists in schools with exemplary reading programs: Functional, versatile, prepared." *The Reading Teacher*, 56 (4), 446-455.

International Reading Association (2004). *The role and qualifications of the reading coach in the United States: A position statement of the International Reading Association*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association. Adopted May 2004.

International Reading Association. (2010) *Standards for reading professionals: Revised*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association. (Manuscript in preparation for publication).



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## Second Summit Succeeds Spectacularly

The second annual International Literacy Coaching Summit was held at Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi from April 15<sup>th</sup> to April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Nearly 400 attendees came from across 32 States, and from places as far away as Canada, Malawi and Thailand. The event was co-sponsored by our SIG along with other organizations. Keynote speakers included SIG members, Richard Allington and Misty Sailors, along with RTI Action Network advisory council member, Barbara Ehren and award winning poet and children's author, Pat Mora. The theme of this year's summit was RTI.

The conference kicked off on Thursday, April 15<sup>th</sup> with Jack Cassidy's popular pre-conference workshop, What's Hot, What's Not for 2010. Cassidy was joined by five other scholars presenting on areas of literacy that have been consistently considered "hot" in his annual poll.

The conference really got underway on Friday at 9:00 am with the first keynote speaker, Richard Allington. He addressed a full room, discussing the role of RTI in America's classrooms. Misty Sailors followed Allington for a lunch-time presentation on her research on literacy coaching in developing nations. On the final day of the conference, Barbara Ehren held a breakfast talk on effective ways to implement RTI. Pat Mora closed the conference with inspirational anecdotes and readings informed by her experiences as an author living on the US-Mexico border.

In conjunction with the Second Literacy Coaching Summit was the release of *Literacy Coaching: Research and Practice* edited by Jack Cassidy, Sherrye Garrett (both from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi) and Misty Sailors (University of Texas-San Antonio). This volume contains selected papers from the First Literacy Coaching Summit also hosted by Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi in 2009. Among the chapter authors are the editors of the volume and two of the keynote speakers, Drs. Rita Bean and Nancy Shanklin. Information on ordering this volume appears elsewhere on this page.



## Membership Form – Specialized Literacy Professionals

Checks should be made out to **Specialized Literacy Professionals** and sent to:

**Gary L. Shaffer**  
**1809 Country Club Drive**  
**Tullahoma, TN 37388-4832**

- \$10.00 (one year)
- \$15.00 (two years)

Please share copies of this form with others who might be interested.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ IRA Membership #: \_\_\_\_\_  
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