

ReAD

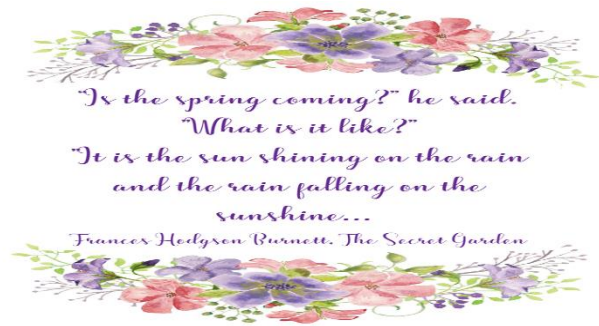
The Electronic Newsletter of the New York State Reading Association

May 2020

Volume 16, Issue 9

Editor: Sandi Kurbiel

NYSED Contributing Editor: Kristen Driskill



Issues are published every month except for December-January and June-August combined issues. (Above image from GoogleImages and Pinterest)

Don't forget, now you can become a friend to NYSRA on *Facebook*! Have you?
Thanks to all who contributed their time and expertise to our issue this month!

Inside: [NYSRA & Legislative News](#) by Sandi Kurbiel; [NYSED News](#) by Kristen Driskill; & [Literacy News/Links of Interest](#) by Sandi Kurbiel

NYSRA and Legislative News

A Message from Thea Yurkewecz, our NYSRA President:

Dear Literacy Leaders/Educators:

Greetings from the New York State Reading Association (NYSRA). We hope this message finds you and your loved ones healthy and safe at this most difficult time. While we're all working our way through these uncertain times, NYSRA leadership has decided to postpone our in-person conference to 2021. That being said, we also want to continue to offer you the quality professional development our members have come to expect from our organization.

The NYSRA 2020 Vision: *Literacy for a Changing World* Conference will become a series of virtual sessions led by invited guest speakers. We are hard at work planning live and recorded online professional development sessions. To allow as much flexibility in attendance as possible, these sessions will be scheduled for evening or weekend hours. CTLE credits will be provided for some of these sessions. We will continue to communicate about our plans in the near future.

In addition, we have extended our deadline for awards and grants until August 1, 2020. The winners will be notified this fall and recognized on our website. Please consider applying or nominating someone for their services:

<https://www.nysreading.org/content/awards-and-grants>

The Charlotte Award 2020 has also been changed to Charlotte Award 2021. We have made the decision to extend the voting until April 15, 2021. It will give everyone more time to look at the books on the ballot and be an informed voter. The ballot of books and voting can be found on the website:

<https://www.nysreading.org/content/nysra-charlotte-award-2021>

Please be advised that our leadership meeting for our local councils will be modified. We will not meet online on May 29th & 30th. Instead we will reach out personally to local councils through individual emails to get a pulse on what leadership should look like at a later date this summer or fall.

Finally, we have a lot to celebrate! The New York State Reading Association has been given the Award of Excellence (32 consecutive years) from the International Literacy Association. Our digital literacy team has also been working behind the scenes on creating an amazing updated website. We plan to launch this website over the summer. We have included a single screenshot preview of our new site below.

We appreciate your flexibility and understanding during this time. Thank you for all you do to support the New York State Reading Association community.

Best,

Thea Yurkewecz, Ph.D. - NYSRA President

Mary Miller - NYSRA President-Elect and Conference Co-Coordinator

NYSRA Charlotte Award

by Judy Ehrensbeck

The 2023 Charlotte Committee is seeking members to review books and recommend them for the ballot. The ballot consists of four categories: primary, intermediate, middle school, and high school. Interested NYSRA members please contact Committee Chair Judy Ehrensbeck at the [NYSRA](#) website for more information.

NYSRA Charlotte Committee Member Guidelines

1. The committee member must be a member of good standing in the New York State Reading Association.
2. The committee member must submit a letter of interest describing why he/she should be chosen for the committee.
3. NYSRA's Board of Directors must approve the committee member.
4. The committee member must be willing to commit several hours weekly to reading and reviewing books submitted for the Charlotte Award and maintain records of the work he/she has completed.
5. The committee member must maintain ongoing communication with the award chairperson.
6. The committee member must be willing to participate in meetings (both Charlotte and NYSRA Delegate Meetings) either in person, or via internet.
7. The committee member must be willing to be a part of a team presentation at NYSRA's annual conference.
8. The committee member must work well with others.
9. Committee members must promote Charlotte throughout their regions by creating presentations and collaborating with schools (both public and private), libraries, teacher centers, preschools, bookstores, or presenting at their local reading councils.
10. It is encouraged for committee members to obtain thoughts/reviews of book submissions not only from their own interpretations, but also through the interpretations of a child of the appropriate age/grade level.
11. All books received by the committee members may be kept by the member or donated, but may never be sold for any amount. Members will be asked to donate books for NYSRA events such as the Silent Auction at conference.
12. A committee member or the chairperson may serve for only three consecutive ballots.

NYSRA Charlotte Award

by Sharon Kelly

Co-Chair, Charlotte Award Committee

The Charlotte Award 2020 has been changed to Charlotte Award 2021. Because of the coronavirus, we have made the decision that we will extend the voting until April 15, 2021. It will give everyone more time to look at the books on the ballot, and be an informed voter. The ballot of books is on the website, at

<https://www.nysreading.org/content/nysra-charlotte-award-2021>.

If you feel that you are ready to vote, then you will be able to vote at

<https://www.nysreading.org/content/nysra-charlotte-award-2021>.

Read as many books from each ballot as you can. You do not need to read all the books on the ballot. Vote on one ballot or all the ballots, but you may only vote once on each ballot. Some upper grade titles contain adult issues. Teachers may enter the votes for their students, also. Please consider what is personally appropriate before reading. Voting ends April 15, 2021.

The Charlotte Award Committee 2021 will be putting a paragraph about some of the books that are on the ballot in *ReAD* each month. If you find something that is interesting, why not pick up the book at the library or online and read it?

Remember that when you are ready to vote, go to

<https://www.nysreading.org/content/nysra-charlotte-award-2021>.

The Walls Have Ears: A Black Spy in the Confederate White House

by Hope Irvin Marston

On High School Ballot

This is about a young girl, Mary Jane, who decides to leave her family and serve as a slave in the Confederate White House during the Civil War. She has been educated to be able to read and write, but needs to hide this to look like an uneducated slave in the South. It goes through the triumphs and the disappointments of her life in helping the Union soldiers win battles. Read this book to find out how Mary Jane helps the Union Army.

***No More Noisy Nights* by Holly L. Niner**

Illustrated by: Guy Wolek

On Primary Ballot

This book features adorable characters, and relatable problems, set against delightful and detailed illustrations. Students were eager to dive into this world and sympathize with the main character, Jackson. He is a mole who burrowed into a new home only to find that some other creatures sharing his space kept engaging in habits that prevented Jackson from getting enough sleep. Students giggled at the silly side effects of living without proper rest, and they were riveted with Jackson's creative problem-solving skills. Young readers remained enraptured with the plot and thirsty for the conclusion.

What I like best: Niner strikes a brilliant balance between presenting relatable challenges, demonstrating the cause and effect relationship between authentic issues, results, and interactions, and infusing humor and interest throughout the story. She developed characters with layers of motivation and empathy, while providing examples of mindful social exchanges.

My Brigadista Year

by Katherine Paterson

On Intermediate Ballot

Lora is only thirteen, but she leaves her family's comfortable home to go off into the rural countryside to teach adults and children how to read and write. What, you ask? How can a teenage girl leave home to live with strangers? Katherine Paterson tells a fascinating story based on the historical events of volunteers who transformed 1960s Cuba into a literate society with Fidel Castro's national literacy campaign. Become inspired by this coming-of-age story, steeped in rich cultural description and the intrigue of human struggle for a better life.



Accepting Applications Now!

NYSRA AWARDS 2020

The New York State Reading Association offers 11 amazing awards to its members. Please check out the awards packet on our website or email below for details.

Applications will now be accepted through 8/1/2020. For more information or questions:
NYSRAawards@gmail.com

[NYSRA Awards 2020](#)

by Kirsten Burke Smith

NYSRA Vice President, 2019-2020

Do you know someone who is deserving of recognition for promoting or supporting literacy? Does your local council have noteworthy initiatives, or individuals that have helped boost membership, participation, or great programming? Do you promote diversity in your literacy instruction? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions – please consider applying for a NYSRA award or mini-grant.

Applications are being accepted for the New York State Reading Association 2020 awards cycle. There are 11 incredible honors offered to members of NYSRA. The awards and mini-grants are designed to encompass a variety of members for their contribution to literacy in their schools, communities, or state-wide. There are grants for educators, community service leaders, graduate students, local literacy advocates, council initiatives, etc.

This year, applications must be emailed to *NYSRAawards@gmail.com* for consideration. The deadline for applications has been extended to August 1, 2020, but it is never too early to get your submission into us. Please also feel free to use this email for further information on awards, or any other questions you might have.



Please visit <https://www.nysreading.org/content/awards-and-grants> , or hover over the QR code here with your smartphone’s camera for details and the full awards packet.

Spotlighted Award this Month:

NYSRA Friend of Reading Award

Goals:

- To promote excellence in the field of literacy in New York State.
- To recognize individuals who contribute to the improvement of literacy instruction in New York State.
- To recognize individuals who promote the importance of reading in the daily lives of children and adults.

Criteria:

- Is noted for the promotion of the importance of reading in the daily lives of children and adults.
- Is recognized as a supporter of NYSRA and its purposes.

[College Reading Educators \(CRE\) of NYSRA](#)

Did you know that NYSRA also has teaching resources for educators at the *collegiate* level? Here is a segment from their website:

“CRE is largely based online through our list-serv where members share resources, updates, job postings, and other relevant information for teacher educators. CRE convenes annually at the NYSRA Conference to review business, legislation, trends, needs, and the like. We also host a session at the annual NYSRA conference where presenters focus specifically on items related to literacy teacher-education at the collegiate level.”

Check out the link above for more information, and please contact Keith Newvine at that link if you have any questions.

Advocacy News May 2020 BOD

by Barbara Vokatis, Ph.D.
NYSRA Advocacy Chair

COVID-19 Outbreak

As the COVID-19 outbreak resulted in suspending K-12 school operation, school districts are trying to provide alternative ways of supporting students academically during this time. To help K-12 teachers incorporate remote learning during this time of emergency, SUNY Oneonta created a special website to provide this support. The website is <http://remoteEd.org/>. The website has weekly events to help teachers, leaders, and school stay connected and support one another.

Other resources include:

- PBS educational programing: <http://www.nysed.gov/news/2020/state-education-department-and-new-yorks-public-television-stations-announce-expanded>
- a new [Continuity of Learning website](#) launched by NYSED, featuring resources to provide districts and teachers with increased options to keep students engaged in learning
- the New York State Museum for [Virtual Field Trips](#) every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 1:00 p.m. (EDT)
- Site about incorporating virtual field trips: https://knilt.arcc.albany.edu/Incorporating_Virtual_Field_Trips?fbclid=IwAR0P5D6QsqMcifb_DcSB7YDI0JhqpDdUQcnT4qcr8ntPxewua5AzjlS-obU

Dyslexia Legislation

Link that includes the currently used definition of dyslexia:

<https://www.medicinenet.com/dyslexia/article.htm>

Both senate and assembly bills made it to the respective education committee and have remained there. We continue to encourage members to comment to their local legislators before the bill is introduced and voted in in the New York State.

Link to the proposed legislation:

https://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?default_fld=&leg_video=&bn=A08697&term=2019&Summary=Y&Actions=Y&Committee%26nbspVotes=Y&Floor%26nbspVotes=Y&Memo=Y&Text=Y

Link to the site listing assemblymen and senators:

<https://www.aqeny.org/find-your-new-york-state-legislators/>

The following points discussed in Dr. Donna Scanlon's presentation on this topic at the NYSRA conference in November 2019 could be considered in comments to legislators. Dr. Donna Scanlon is a professor at the University at Albany and Director of Child Research and Study Center. Her research focuses on children who experience substantial difficulty in learning to read and on how to prevent and remediate these difficulties. She also leads "Early Literacy Leaders" (ELL) group. Currently, she considers a collaboration with NYSRA to write a letter to our legislators for consideration in connection to the proposed legislation.

The points on dyslexia legislation to consider:

- While dyslexia is defined as a disability with a neurobiological origin, it is impossible to determine whether a child's reading difficulty is neurobiological or not (everything we do is neurobiological in origin – the question is whether the difficulties some children experience is due to underlying neurobiological differences or to experiential/instructional differences) .
- Word reading difficulties can occur for a variety of reasons, such as limited understanding of the workings of the alphabetic code, limited engagement in meaning making while reading, or limited oral language.
- Dyslexia screening is already required by many states but there is no broadly accepted way to identify someone as being at risk for or being dyslexic. In the research literature there is not a clear distinction between reading difficulties and dyslexia. The terms are used interchangeably.
- While there is no broadly accepted way to identify someone with dyslexia, the dyslexia legislation suggests that multi-sensory sequential phonics is the approach to choose for intervention. However, there is no evidence this approach is superior to other approaches to intervention for word reading difficulties. Research shows that improving in phonics skills alone does not result in improving comprehension (Torgesen et al., 2007).
- There are also potential risks associated with identifying children as dyslexic: lowered expectations and reduced sense of efficacy.

Further resources to consider regarding dyslexia legislation:

- A podcast interview Dr. Scanlon recorded several months ago: <https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/interview-dr-donna-scanlon-dyslexia-reading-difficulties/id1448225801?i=1000444024572>
- A link to a recording of Joe Elliot's (first author of *The Dyslexia Debate*) talk for ACARC from September 2019 (<https://vimeo.com/364608773/4b7d8db0c7>) – which is a powerful commentary on where things currently stand relative to dyslexia legislation and what we should be advocating for.
- It is also recommended to read the book by Elena Grigorenko entitled *The Dyslexia Debate*.

Law Day 2020

by Mary Miller,
Education Services Director
New York News Publishers Association

Mary Miller at the New York News Publishers Association's News Media Literacy/Newspaper In Education program has developed a 15-part series of features based on the Law Day 2020 theme —*Your Vote, Your Voice, Our Democracy: The 19th Amendment at 100*— to commemorate the centennial of the transformative constitutional amendment that guaranteed the right of citizens to vote would not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex. American women fought for, and won, the vote through their voice and action.

In addition to the multi-part series of features (English and Spanish), the project comes complete with a 19-page teaching guide, including graphic organizers and audio podcasts. The resources examine the voices of those that, throughout our nation's history of enfranchisement, fought for the right to vote. We will also explore the continued struggle to have all people, all voices, truly represented. To download these resources, go to <https://nynpa.com/nie/lawday.html>.

DayByDayNY

by Marisa Gitto, Senior Reference Librarian:
Educator Librarian, NYS Library

DayByDayNY is a calendar for literacy in English and Spanish. There are engaging activities, stories, poetry and crafts for young children. The Spanish version can be utilized for all students who are starting to learn Spanish.

In Spanish:

<http://daybydaynysp.org/2008/04/24/24-de-abril/>

In English:

<http://daybydayny.org/>

Eric Carle Museum Blogs: These blogs provide art suggestions to make at home and explore picture books:

<https://www.carlemuseum.org/blogs/making-art>

Center on Response to Intervention: From the “Resources” link, educators, and parents are able to review webinars and training modules to review strategies for RTI:

<https://www.rti4success.org/resources>

The New York Times: A great article on how children's authors are helping parents at home. Some featured authors include Mo Willems, Grace Lin, Amie Kaufman, Oliver Jeffers, Peter H. Reynolds, etc.:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/20/books/writers-entertain-kids-virus.html>

The Teaching Books Blog: Authors share their inspirations about their books. Virtual lesson plans, activities, and a Book and Reading Engagement Kit are provided:

<https://forum.teachingbooks.net/2020/03/virtual-learning-options-with-teachingbooks/>

Dimenna Children's Museum at the New York Historical Society: The museum offers Zoom meetings for children and families such as *Reading into History* program, *Living History at Home* program, and storytimes and crafts at home:

<https://www.nyhistory.org/childrens-museum>

Storytimes, children, teens, and adult programming: visit your local public libraries' websites for more information on virtual programs.

New York State Education News

by Kristen Driskill

NYSED Contributing Editor

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response

As you know, New York State is in a state of emergency regarding the outbreak of COVID-19. Both K-12 and higher education institutions across the state have been and remain closed. NYSED developed a website dedicated to providing information and guidance for P-12 schools, colleges, and universities, which you can access [here](#).

Here is a list of updates as of this month regarding the current crisis:

- [2020 elementary- and intermediate-level State assessments are suspended for the remainder of the school year.](#) This applies to the grades 3-8 ELA and Math assessments, Grade 4 and 8 science assessments, NYSESLAT, and NYSAA for grades 3-8.
- [NYSED has delayed the rollout of state assessments aligned to the grades 3-8 Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts \(ELA\) and Math for one year, until Spring 2022.](#) Similarly, alignment of state assessments to the NYS P-12 Science Learning Standards will begin Spring 2023.
- June 2020 administration of all NYS Regents exams has been cancelled. NYSED has provided guidance regarding everything having to do with graduation requirements, which can be seen [here](#).
- [The College Board has provided a few options for students taking AP exams.](#) Students can take a 45-minute online free-response exam, they have access to free resources up until the exam date, and if already registered for an exam they can choose to cancel at no charge.
- On April 6, NYSED released emergency regulations to ease the burden on all educators. You can read a summary of the regulations [here](#).
- [There is now a "Learn at Home" program available in partnership with NYSED and 9 public television stations.](#) As of March 23rd, students in grades pre-K through 12 have access to educational programming on PBS stations. Programming for grades Pre-k-4 will be on one station, and programming for grades 5-12 will be on another. They can be viewed for free over-the-air with an antenna or cable.

- [NYSED has released guidance for parents regarding COVID-19, which was last updated March 27th.](#) [NYSED has also released guidance for schools in response to COVID-19, which was last updated March 18th.](#) Earlier in March, [guidance for colleges and universities was released.](#)

- NYSED has shared a resource as part of their #NYLearnsRemotely initiative for virtual field trips. The NYS Museum offers field trips every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 1:00 pm. You can access the resource [here.](#)

Literacy News and Links of Interest

by Sandi Kurbiel

ReAD Editor

May is Get Caught Reading Month!

Find ways to get on board with this national celebration of reading, sponsored by the Association of American Publishers. Although not all of the suggestions are feasible right now, many can be modified for home usage.

Literacy Ideas for the Month of May

Find some ideas for noteworthy dates in the month of May here.

Resources for Learning at Home

Find some resources from *Reading Rockets* for the many students who are now at home.

Online Reading and Writing Apps

Find a list of 17 online reading and writing apps recommended by ILA's *ReadWriteThink* website.

NYS Center for School Health

Find many COVID-19 and other physical and mental health-related resources for both educators and students here.

Affordable Internet Service

Find help for the many students who cannot currently afford the internet services necessary to correspond with schools and online learning.