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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
OREGON COUNCIL OF  
TEACHERS OF ENGLISH



Volume 45, No. 3  
Fall 2022



Conference Details  
Page 1-3



News & Articles  
Pages 1-4

*Chalkboard* is the newsletter of the Oregon Council of Teachers of English, an organization that has existed for over 100 years to support teachers of English and the language arts in Oregon elementary and secondary schools, community colleges and universities.

*Chalkboard* is our way of keeping our many members and friends informed about OCTE activities, programs of the National Council of Teachers of English, conferences and learning opportunities for students, research tidbits, book recommendations, and more.

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# Chalkboard

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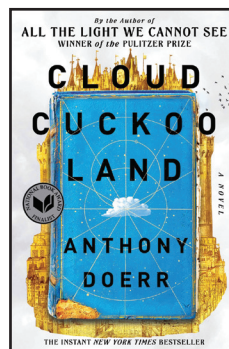
Co-Editors: Jeanne Sheets-Sagoo & Donna Sheets-Mathew

## Please Post

### OCTE Reads

By Marie LeJeune

OCTE READS had another great month of summer reading together, discussing Anthony Doerr's *Cloud Cuckoo Land* throughout July with a final zoom discussion on August 3, 2022. Weekly discussions explored the interesting intertwined narratives of the novel and the power of story in all of our lives. The group also shared powerful golden lines, connections, and predictions on a group Padlet as a shared written space. *Cloud Cuckoo Land* was selected by group members from several suggested titles that focused on libraries and their impact on our history, culture, and personal journeys.



Text to text connections were frequently explored in the weekly conversations and group members were able to recommend many amazing titles to each other for continued summer reads or classroom selections.

OCTE Reads will convene again in winter to explore a young adult literature title. Watch for an invitation and start keeping a list of books you might want to read together; OCTE Reads coordinators will be sending out another poll in early 2023.

### BOOKMARKS:

#### Call for Ideas:

Are you willing to share any of your great classroom community building ideas for the new school year? Please submit your ideas and experiences; we would love to publish you! Contact us at [publications.octeorg@gmail.com](mailto:publications.octeorg@gmail.com).

#### 2022 NCTE Annual Convention:

The NCTE national convention is live! Join thousands of your literacy colleagues on November 17-20 in Anaheim, CA to connect, learn, and energize. Registration is now open at [convention.ncte.org](http://convention.ncte.org).



### OCTE Fall Conference *Join Us!* October 22, 2022 • Beaverton, Oregon



**Keynote: Kim Johnson, Oregon author of *This Is My America* and Education Equity Leader**

Kim Johnson held leadership positions in social justice organizations as a teen and in college, and is now an author and vice provost at the University of Oregon. She maintains engagement in various organizations while also mentoring Black student leaders and serving as a graduate advisor and member of an historically Black sorority.

*This Is My America*, her bestselling novel, explores racial injustice against innocent Black men who are criminally sentenced and the families left behind to pick up the pieces. She is an award-winning novelist, with 2021 accolades that include the Oregon Spirit Book Award, Pacific Northwest Book Award and Malka Penn Human Rights Award for Children's Literature.

Her upcoming novel, *Invisible Son*, will hit the shelves in 2023!  
(From her website: [kcjohnsonwrites.com](http://kcjohnsonwrites.com))

### OCTE 2022 FALL CONFERENCE

*Groups of 5 or more only pay \$45 each!*

Email [octeorg@gmail.com](mailto:octeorg@gmail.com) for the registration code.

#### Perks from attending the Fall Conference:

- One credit available through Western Oregon University
- PDU certificates
- Reduced rate for groups of five or more
- OCTE membership
- Free book for all those registered before October
- Exhibits
- Vendors
- Book Signing

## Other Conference Presenters:



### Creating Inclusive and Engaging History Readers for Elementary Students: K-5

Melissa Schachner, Eliza Canty-Jones and Diana Kruger  
Portland Public Schools & Oregon Historical Society

Portland Public Schools (PPS) and the OHS forged a partnership with their community to create readers for their students. Learn how PPS worked with the Oregon Historical Society and a Teacher Advisory Group to create two new Portland-history readers for third- and fourth-grade students.



### Using Wordless Books to Inspire Literacy Development with Students Learning English: K-5

Michelle Schardt  
Reading Specialist / Portland Public Schools

Michelle will present a variety of wordless books representing many themes and culturally diverse authors and characters. We will explore how to use these to develop oral language, as well as writing and foundational English skills. This presentation will be useful for all ages of learners, K-5, 6-8.



### You Have a Story! : The Evolution of a Book-Publishing Project in an Elementary Classroom: K-5

Margaret Perrow and Kim Neiswanger  
1st Grade Teacher & Professor of English  
Ruch Outdoor Community School & Southern Oregon University

The presenters will share lessons from a decade of book-publishing projects in a first-grade classroom. They'll explore how the process has evolved, consider the impacts on students, and offer tools and suggestions for incorporating book-publishing into English language arts instruction.



### Dare to Read: Mindful Reading that Gives Confidence to Struggling Readers: Grades 6-8

Wade McJacobs  
Special Education Teacher/ Student Empowerment Group, LLC

Confidence first —then comprehension. Demonstrate to struggling readers that their skills can in fact improve. Empower readers with mindful awareness of image making powers of their minds. Two simple skills that require minimal time and produce dramatic effect. Find out how in this session. (Session also for grades 9-12)



### How Do I Read These Anyway?: How to Transform Yourself into a Graphic Novel Reader: Grades 6-8

Coley Lehman  
Doctoral Student & Research Fellow Teachers College

This session will begin with a brief overview of the role of graphic novels as part of a comprehensive literacy curriculum, then draw from research with a teacher book club where middle school teachers engaged in an exploration of graphic novels. Participants will see excerpts from the books and engage in discussion about the features and attributes of graphic novels. Participants will engage in a sample lesson they could use in their classrooms. The lesson will focus on the specific strategies and skills readers use to deeply understand graphic novels. (Session also for grades 9-12)



### Transformation: The Power of Poetry: Grades 6-8

Trish Emerson  
Substitute Teacher Lincoln County School District

Poetry encourages student voice, their personal expression, in a way no other genre can. In this session, participants will explore specific scaffolds for poetry—particularly using personification and metaphor. A variety of mentor texts will invite and support students' own creativity. (Session adaptable for grades 2-5)



### Celebrating Forbidden Love: A Question of Fair(ness) in Othello: Grades 9-12

Susan Elliot and Dr. Bob Bizjak  
Portland Public Schools

This presentation will look at the ways in which the themes and conflicts of Othello are as relevant today as they were when the play was originally published. The presentation will defend and justify the use of Shakespeare in today's classroom. The presentation will also investigate the intersections between the roles of the Black male and blackmail lying at the center of the nuanced story.



### Language Arts in Action: Engaging Students with Journalistic Learning: Grades 9-12

Ed Madison  
University of Oregon

As we move beyond the pandemic, teachers are seeking transformational strategies that will reignite students' imaginations and engagement. Journalistic learning, a novel educational approach developed at the University of Oregon, rekindles students' desire to learn through project-based storytelling and offers a path forward.



### Writing for Reflection in a Changing World: Grades 9-12

Delana Heidrich  
ELA Teacher Bonanza School District

Perhaps more than ever, in our quickly changing landscape, teachers need space for quiet reflection on their practice, values, and lives. This workshop provides that space by presenting prompts that guide participants through opportunities to write, draw, sculpt, and discover. (Session for general audience)



### Diversify your Style!: Grades 9-12

Margaret Williams Turner  
Mt. Hood Community College

Understanding the new types of learners we have in the classroom, this workshop will approach learning from a whole different perspective to bring learning to life! This session will explore diversified instruction with attention toward multiple learning modalities. (Session for general audience)



### Student-Driven Inquiry for Deeper Learning, Liberation, Joy, and Community: Grades 9-12

Shelly Buchanan  
Arbor School & San Jose State University

The research-based Student-Driven Inquiry framework for learning will be presented in this session. SDI fuels innate learner curiosity and differentiation by encouraging each student to investigate, write, and share on a topic of personal interest that matters. (Session for general audience)



### Teach Writing Without Making Your Eyes Bleed: Grades 9-12

Jan Priddy  
Seaside School District

In a perfect world, students write daily and teachers respond with notes of encouragement, suggestion, and correction... With a hundred students this sort of ideal give-and-take is impossible. There are strategies to achieve this goal without risking eyestrain. This presentation will include teaching strategies and specific assignments designed to teach writing and respond to it on a human scale. These include journaling & freewriting, a short essay or narrative used to teach MLA form, reader-response (RUGs), the summary (précis), and framed essays. (Session for secondary, higher education)

## Plus Oregon Spirit Book Awards!

Meet the authors of the Oregon Spirit Book Awards. Established in 2005, the Oregon Spirit Book Award is given yearly to the author of a distinguished contribution to children's literature or young adult literature that engages and encourages readers' imagination, discovery, and understanding, reflecting the spirit and values held by Oregonians.

Free Book with Registration

Chat with the Oregon Spirit Book Award Authors (OSBA): General Interest



Paul Gregorio, OSBA Co-Chairman

Join Paul as he moderates a discussion with the recent OSBA award-winning authors. This is an opportunity for participants to hear from authors and ask questions.



## NCTE Affiliate Summer Conference: Homecoming

by Trish Emerson

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Homecoming held in Louisville, KY at the end of July drew a crowd, face-to-face, together for the first time since March, 2020.

OCTE sent two board members as representatives, Trish Emerson and Heidi Hanson, to the Affiliate Leaders Meeting (ALM). The goal was to connect with other local organization leaders and to prioritize how, going forward, OCTE could best serve its members.

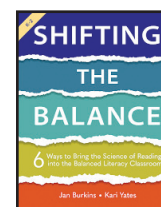
In her welcoming remarks, NCTE President Emily Kirkpatrick emphasized that NCTE is an organization that supports and is supported by its affiliates. "We need each other; we are not alone." That truth powerfully emerged as she highlighted the wealth of resources that exist and continue to grow for English education professionals in service to NCTE's mission of dedication, "to improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education."

The many discussions throughout the weekend, lively and far-reaching, targeted effective leadership, organizational sustainability, and post-pandemic resilience—the desire to move past surviving to thriving.

Trish and Heidi returned to Oregon energized and ready to work with their fellow board members. They bring with them goals, strategies, and renewed connections with committed partners to ensure that OCTE remains the professional home for literacy educators.

## Shifting the Balance: 6 Ways to Bring the Science of Reading into the Balanced Literacy Classroom

A book Review by Michelle Schardt



Anyone who tires of the so called "reading war" or the pendulum swing of literacy practices endorsed by the masses, will appreciate the research and nonsense-free approach Jan Burkins and Kari Yates take in their book *Shifting the Balance: 6 Ways to Bring the Science of Reading into the Balanced Literacy Classroom*. This book provides both the language and the science to promote keeping all that we have learned, but refining our use of instructional practices to those that are most effective. Each student learns how to read their own way, and we need to have a wide range of tools. Knowing why those tools work is science, and can help us efficiently give students the right tool at the right time.

Going into my 30th year teaching, I have a broad array of professional books that represent various schools of thought, research and instructional practices. The paragraph that grabbed me, and ensured I would read *Shifting the Balance*, is on page 1 in the introduction.

"Some argue that there is a disconnect between research and classroom practice. Some argue that things are out of balance in the balanced literacy classroom. Still others argue that the methods in many classrooms are making learning to read harder rather than easier, especially for the children most at risk of reading difficulties."

"...the methods in many classrooms are making learning to read harder rather than easier..." Teaching methods could be making it *harder* for students who are experiencing difficulties learning to read? *I could be making it harder for students to learn to read!* Swinging from one pendulum extreme to the other leaves out so much in between! In my case I have seen swings from whole language to basal readers, then from workshop approach to phonics based, and now from balanced literacy back to structured word reading skills. There is value in each of these approaches. But why? And why all the back and forth? *Shifting the Balance* goes on to explain both in a way that educators can use in their classrooms, and in their discussions when called on to explain their approach to teaching literacy. Without getting on the pendulum or joining in an unhelpful "war".

Organized around common misunderstandings, explained by the latest research, there are six chapters that broaden thinking around reading comprehension, phonemic awareness, phonics, high frequency words, the cueing system frequently referred to as MSV and text used for beginning readers. Every chapter begins with an explanation of a practice, then ends with a short summary of the science behind each. High-leverage instructional routines to make the instructional shift, complete with possible language to use, end each chapter. This is not a script but concise language that gives clear instruction to children learning how to read.

*Shifting the Balance* focuses on clear, concise instruction to teach the mechanics of reading, and gives the information we need as teachers to increase our own clarity around reading instruction. There is no need for wars, around reading or otherwise, when it comes to teaching children, just knowledge and skill. Jan Burkins and Kari Yates do us a service by combining both sides of the pendulum swings into the science and practice we can use right away in our classrooms.