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## A Letter from the Editors

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# A Letter from the Editors

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It has been an excellent year as editors of the *e-Journal of Balanced Reading Instruction*. We are still moving forward with many of the changes we presented in the Spring 2013 issue. The most significant change has been moving to a completely digital version of this publication. Another accomplishment has been providing our membership and readers with a second issue in the fall. With these main shifts well underway, our attention is now moving towards other goals. All previous issues are in the process of being converted to a digital format and an archive will be available online for all readers. We also want to feature teachers in the field as well as pre-service teachers who represent the mission of the Balanced Reading Instruction SIG.

## INVITED PIECE

The invited piece for the Fall issue focuses on technology in the balanced literacy classroom. Authors, Shettel and Bower, emphasize that technology has a place in the classroom and demonstrate how it can assist with literacy learning. Specifically, the piece discusses the different levels of infusing the classroom with technology and provides examples of what it looks like in a real-life setting.

Shettel & Bower provide excellent ideas and resources for teachers to incorporate into their literacy lessons. They also address management of these resources and activities. The article concludes with assessing the effectiveness of technology and provides a rubric to evaluate how students are engaged during these enhanced literacy lessons.

## REVIEWED PIECES

This issue of the journal includes four diverse articles that all address significant issues in the field of literacy today. The first article, written by Cassidy and Ortlieb, builds on Cassidy's insightful "What's Hot, What's Not" annual study. Their piece seeks to find what has happened to those topics that are no longer hot through the lens of the classroom teacher. Some topics explored include, balanced reading, decodable text, and volunteer tutoring.

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The second contribution by Bell and Bogan shifts to issues addressing English Language Learners (ELLs). Their study draws attention to the challenges being faced by teachers using research-based practices to instruct ELL students. Bell and Bogan not only bring to light specific problems, but also provide solid solutions at the programmatic, teacher, and classroom level.

Adoption and implementation of a new core reading program is explored in the third piece by Reisboard and Jay. Both researchers provide a thorough account of teachers' perceptions regarding the new program, including using all aspects suggested and meeting the needs of more advanced readers.

Our final reviewed article concentrates on the significance of text selection during read-alouds. Skinner's ethnographic study brings light to the fact that opportunities to discuss, think, and comprehend are directly related to text being read. Her findings also revealed that the students gained an awareness of the difference in discussions based on the text selected by the teacher.

## TEXT REVIEWS

This issue also includes two text reviews. The professional text reviewed by Grote-Garcia is *The Road Out: A Teachers Odyssey in Poor America* by Hicks. This memoir demonstrates the power of literacy and how it can impact the lives of children growing up in poverty. Addison reviewed *Wonder* by Palacio. This adolescent literature text deals with the reality of living with a physical deformity and provides the reader with diverse perspectives as told through the experiences of each character.

## PREPARING FOR THE SPRING ISSUE

As we publish this edition of the journal we are already fast at work organizing our Spring 2014 Special Edition centered on Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in the context of balanced literacy instruction. We are committed each spring to exploring specialized topics relevant to literacy educators. At the end of this edition you will find a detailed call for manuscripts, and we encourage you to think about submitting an article, book review, or educator profile related to Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Literacy Instruction. Also, please feel free to send the editor's ideas about potential topics for the Spring 2015 special issue.